

# Faculty



DR. N. A. COURT . . . O.U. professor of mathematics

## Dr. N. A. Court Finds Math, Humor Pleasing Combination

By BUD BAER, '47  
O.U. Journalism Senior

A scientific-looking, bushy headed University professor of mathematics after explaining the complexities of a blackboard full of equations suddenly queries a student in the class.

"Vat's de color of green cheese, Mr. Abercrombie?"

This is nothing unusual in the class of Dr. Nathan A. Court.

Not that he's simple or that he can't figure out the answers, the chubby little mathematician who has become an institution on the O.U. campus likes to keep his class in good humor, and he does just that with his conservative witticisms.

As to being simple—that's hardly Dr. Court. You see, in his 31 years with the University he has done other things besides teach. He has established a world-wide reputation through books and numerous articles he has written. Today he is considered one of the most learned men in the field of mathematics.

His latest published articles include two in the 1946 Duke Mathematical Journal. Also a series of radio broadcasts he gave over WNAD last semester are going to be published soon in Mathematics Teacher.

He takes pride in showing two articles, "The Motionless Arrow" and "Geometry and Experience," which were printed in Scientific Monthly, a magazine that is very particular in its selection of the material it publishes. Another of his articles, "Mathematical Asides," will soon appear in Scripta Mathematica.

Dr. Court has had two books published. "College Geometry," a college text which was his first book, came out in 1925. His other book, "Modern Pure Solid Geometry," is an advanced text in mathematics published in 1935.

The Einsteinish-looking professor has a past worth mentioning. When he came to this country from Poland in 1911, he could neither read nor write a word of English. He had a doctor of science degree from the University of Ghent, Belgium. Upon his arrival, he started school at Columbia University on a post doctor's course. Within

a few months he was teaching night classes at Columbia on the side. He mastered the English language quickly through his classmates and students did accuse him of giving them headaches from his lectures in broken English.

In 1912, Dr. Court married Sophie Ravitch, '22ma, a girl he had known in Warsaw. She has been an important factor in Dr. Court's achievements. Mrs. Court often lends a helping hand along other than domestic lines.

Dr. Court's real name is Altshiller. He had it changed in 1915 and decided upon the name of Court as a grateful gesture to the court of justice which obligingly altered it for him.

Before coming to the University in 1916, Dr. Court did two short hitches at Washington State University and the University of Colorado.

The live-wire mathematician hasn't neglected his duties as a professor with all his extra-curricular activities. He was recently lauded by the University administration for never missing a class since 1916 because of personal illness.

One of his favorite quips goes like this: "Vat is a voice crying in de vilderness?" he asks.

Upon the reply "I don't know" he answers, "Dat's de eight o'clock whistle on a non school day."

Students who have taken classes under Dr. Court attest to his thoroughness in instruction. He demands accuracy from his students and he has the reputation of getting his subject across to them.

Dr. Court's association with the University of Oklahoma has meant much to the scholastic rating of the institution locally, nationally and internationally.

Dr. George L. Trager, professor of modern languages at O.U., will "go back to the Indians" this summer for research on their languages. Trager has received a grant from the American Philosophical society to do field work in linguistics with the Taos and Picuris Indians in New Mexico.

## President Cross Salutes . . .

In his regular weekly broadcast over University station WNAD, President George L. Cross salutes an outstanding O. U. faculty member or employe who has served the University for many years. The following excerpts are from several recent broadcasts.

"I should like to tell you about the oldest living sociologist in the United States. He is a man who has devoted 40 years of unselfish service to the state and the University of Oklahoma. He is Dr. Jerome Dowd, professor emeritus of sociology and a specialist in the field of social control.

"Professor Dowd was born March 18, 1864, in Carthage, North Carolina. He attended grade school in Charlotte, obtained his master's degree from Trinity College in 1896, and studied in Europe from 1898 to 1901. He began his teaching career at Trinity College and taught at the University of Wisconsin before coming to the University of Oklahoma in 1907 as professor of sociology . . .

"The versatility of Professor Dowd's accomplishments and the scope of his leadership are shown by the fact that he started the departments of sociology, economics, anthropology; the School of Journalism; the School of Commerce and Industry, which later became the College of Business Administration; and the School of Social Work . . . During the years, Professor Dowd has taught and inspired as many top-notch economists and sociologists, perhaps, as any other teacher in the United States. Two of his major students have returned to the University to head important activities in the field of sociology. Dr. Leonard Logan is professor of sociology and director of the institute of community planning, and Dr. Wyatt Marrs is professor of sociology and chairman of the department of sociology.

"A prolific, but thorough, scientific and popular writer, Professor Dowd has contributed to many outstanding publications. He has written more than 12 books, and all of them have been widely accepted and praised . . .

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President George L. Cross (left) congratulates Dr. Jerome Dowd, professor emeritus of sociology and a specialist in the field of social control, after a recent weekly broadcast over University station WNAD. The oldest living sociologist in the United States, Dr. Dowd has served the state and the University of Oklahoma unselfishly for 40 years.

"Professor Dowd is loved by his students, admired by his friends and respected by his colleagues. Perhaps the most engaging of all his qualities is his grand sense of humor. Recently, when our personnel office requested a report of his activities during the past year, he ended his report with this statement: 'I milk the cow with the crumpled horn and hoe in the garden.' He once lectured me at length about the evil effects of smoking and ended by recommending what he said was a good brand of pipe tobacco.

"Professor Dowd has served under every president of the University. All have admired his courage and determination, and all have respected his scholarship and integrity . . .

"On July 14, 1946, I had the happy privilege of notifying Dr. Dowd that he had been made professor emeritus of sociology by the Board of Regents . . .

"Today at 83, Dr. Dowd is mentally alert, physically active, and full of faith in the future. He is not the type to sit idly by as the world passes in review. He is still part of the parade. He is still engaged in research and writing, and eager students come to him for counsel and advice."

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"Dr. Lucille Dora was born March 2, 1881, in Charleston, Illinois. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Christian College, a Master's Degree from Helmut College, London, Ontario, and still another Master's Degree from the University of Paris. The degree, Doctor of Letters, was conferred upon her by the University of Montpellier in France. She also has studied at the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva, Switzerland.

"Dr. Dora joined the staff of the University of Oklahoma in 1908 as professor of French and head of the department of Romance languages. She served also as dean of women from 1908 to 1910.

"During her 39 years on the campus, Dr. Dora has become, in the words of Chief Justice Fletcher Riley, 'An institution in her own right at the University of Oklahoma.' Popular as a teacher, her classes were always filled with eager students whom she taught not only the rudiments of the French language and a feeling for the spirit of the French people but also the essence of the finer way of life . . .

"During the school year 1920-21, Professor Dora took a leave of absence to study and travel in France and Europe . . .

"Not only a brilliant teacher, Professor Dora has devoted much time to research and writing. Her published books and other writings include: *Paine, Crusader, Patriot; Brunetiere, Critic; School Systems of France; The French Salon 17th and 18th Century; France; and La Pauache*. At the time of her retirement, she had amassed data for two plays, one on the colonial period, and one on the Napoleonic Era.

"The scope of her research is indicated by the titles of her published papers; 'French Apostles of Peace'; 'Prospects of Society Since 1595'; 'Historical Import of Balzois Novels'; 'Puritanism in American Politics'; 'Cinema Toujours Imperature.'

"Because of her outstanding record as a teacher and as a writer, and because of her important contributions through research, Dr. Dora has been recognized by many professional organizations . . .

"Through the years, Professor Dora has made a definite contribution to the people of Oklahoma and to their state University. On the occasion when she was made professor emeritus of French in 1943, President Brandt wrote: 'Through all the years that I have known you, I have admired not only the grand way you have taught, but your ever ready interest in anything that made for the advancement of the University of Oklahoma.'"

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"John Beggs Cheadle was born December 13, 1874, in Wilkesville, Ohio. He received his Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of Kansas in 1898. He then taught for two years in the high school at Pleasanton, Kansas. He received the degree, Bachelor of Law, from the University of Chi-

cago, and he then practiced law at Altus from 1903 until 1908. He later received the advanced degrees, Doctor of Jurisprudence from the University of Chicago and Doctor of Juridical Science from Harvard University . . .

"When the Law School at the University of Oklahoma first opened its doors in September, 1909, a class of 47 members was awaiting instruction. The faculty that year consisted of only two members—Dean Julian C. Monnet and Professor John B. Cheadle . . .

"Professor Cheadle is one of the really outstanding legal educators in America today. He has gained wide recognition as an author. His casebook on *Indian Land Law*, published in 1932, is widely recognized as an authoritative work. His textbook entitled *Public Utilities* is another outstanding contribution. His other books, including *Life, Liberty and Democracy* and *No More Unemployed*, illustrate the diversity of his interests. But he has contributed also, and frequently, to the leading law journals, and he has served as a member of the Editorial Board which published a volume of constitutional law articles under the title, *The State and The Nation*.

"Professor Cheadle is a 'lawyer's lawyer' as well as a great law teacher. Many of the state's outstanding attorneys call on him frequently for advice and opinions on many phases of the law. He has served on a number of committees of the American Bar Association, especially the special Committee on Public Utilities, the Committee for Improvement of the Administration of Justice in Oklahoma and the Committee on Improvement of the Law of Evidence . . .

"Professor Cheadle is a member of Phi Beta Kappa . . . and many other learned and professional societies . . .

"His interests and abilities, however, are not confined to the profession of law. He has served the University in many other important capacities. His contributions to many faculty committees are especially worthy of mention. He has served as dean of the faculty and administrative assistant to the president. At present, he is legal advisor to the president . . .

"One of the finest tributes that can be paid a member of our faculty is to be selected for a Davis Ross Boyd professorship. This honor was conferred upon Dr. Cheadle January 15, 1946. The canons for selection, as established by the Board of Regents, state that 'to qualify for a David Ross Boyd professorship, a faculty member must have demonstrated over a period of years his vigorous performance and leadership in teaching, counseling and guidance of students.' Professor Cheadle certainly fulfills those qualifications in every respect. He has served the University well during his 38 years on the faculty."

## Faculty Notes

In recognition of his contributions to the natural gas industry in the south and southwest, W. H. Carson, dean of the University College of Engineering has been awarded an honorary life membership in the Southern Gas Association.

J. Bruce Wiley, assistant professor of electrical engineering at the University, was re-elected to the Norman city commission.

Dr. William E. Livezey, professor of history at the University, is author of a book, "Mahan on Sea Power," just released by the University Press.

Barre Hill, professor of applied music at the University, has been the leading man in the "Ziegfeld Follies of 1935" and the opera "Pelleas et Melisande" at the Chicago Civic Opera.

Dr. William M. Sattler, associate professor of speech at the University of Oklahoma, recently was elected executive secretary of the Central States Speech Association at its first postwar meeting held in Columbia, Missouri.

Need a new ash tray? Dr. Robert A. Hardin, professor of industrial education at the University, can whip one up in no time at all. Out of such simple ingredients as sawdust and sulphuric acid, Hardin has developed a strong, durable and cheap plastic, suitable for many uses, which he hopes to patent in the near future.

Certificates of achievement awards were presented to the University and to three faculty members by the Bureau of Navy Personnel for outstanding service to the naval college training program. Educators receiving awards were W. H. Carson, dean of the College of Engineering; Dr. H. A. Shoemaker, assistant dean of the School of Medicine, and James C. Mayfield, '28ba, manager of the University book exchange.

Advance registration for the annual Boys' State to be held on the University of Oklahoma campus June 7-14 has already reached a record of 450 and is continuing, according to Dr. H. V. Thornton, professor of government and director of the "state."

Citizens of Boys' State, which reproduces local and state government organizations, will be housed in barracks on the University's South Campus, the former naval air technical training center.

Facilities of the South Campus, including mess hall, infirmary, gymnasium, baseball diamonds and playing fields, will be available to delegates, and movies are scheduled for recreational periods.

A number of O.U. alumni and faculty members, whose names have long been identified with the literary, participated in Religious Book Week activities in Oklahoma early this month.

They included alumna Dr. Angie Debo, '18ba, '33ph.d, Marshall, Oklahoma; Foster Harris, '25ba, assistant professor of English at O.U.; Stewart Harral, '36ma, director O.U. School of Journalism; Dr. Cortez Ewing, associate professor of government; Dr. M. L. Wardell, professor of history; Dr. Carl C. Rister, research professor of history; Walter S. Campbell, professor of English.

Dr. Royden Dangerfield, administrative assistant to the president and professor of government; Dr. H. C. Peterson, associate professor of history, and E. E. Dale, '11ba, research professor of history.

The University Department of History held an open house in the Union Woodruff Room the afternoon of April 22.

## Prof. Kate Barbour to Retire

Kate Barbour, '02ba, '21ma, assistant professor of education at the University, will become professor emeritus on June 1 and retire from active teaching duties.

Miss Barbour has been a member of the O.U. Laboratory School faculty since 1923 and before that was associated with the Norman public school system for more than 12 years as well as teaching in Wichita Falls and El Reno.

During her long and active career as an education leader Miss Barbour served four years as Cleveland County superintendent of schools.

She is a member of Kappa Delta Pi, national honorary education society, and Pi Nu Epsilon, mathematics organization.

In recognition of Miss Barbour's 24 years of service to the Laboratory Schools, the faculty of the College of Education honored her at a tea in the "Y" lounge of the Union Building recently.

Pharmacist John Barbour, for whom O.U. students recently celebrated "John Barbour Day," is a brother of Miss Barbour.

## Newby Wins O.C. Council Race

A prominent alumnus who scored a victory in Oklahoma City's elections last month is Errett R. Newby, '08ba. With the backing of many of that city's business leaders, bankers, professional men and churchmen, Newby registered 848-vote margin of triumph in the Ward 2 councilman race.

Newby is a trustee of the Will Rogers Memorial school fund at the University of Oklahoma and has long been active in University activities and Oklahoma City civic affairs.

Prior to 1919, when Newby moved to Oklahoma City, he was secretary and registrar at O.U. He was secretary and head of the land department of Buttram Petroleum Corporation for 23 years before resigning recently to enter private oil business.