

The President Speaks

By DR. GEORGE L. CROSS

Topic for discussion this month is radio station WNAD and the Oklahoma School of the Air. The History of both the school and the radio station provides an interesting sidelight on education in Oklahoma.

FAMILIAR as we all are with increasing enrolments in the public schools and colleges, here's an enrolment story that's hard to believe.

The Oklahoma School of the Air, a series of eight programs designed for elementary grades, is broadcast regularly over WNAD, the University's radio station. Last fall, the pupils listening to at least one of the series increased from 7,000 to more than 35,000 in the short period of two months. This rapid growth is typical of the encouraging response given to the full daytime schedule of WNAD, the oldest educational station in the southwest.

The story of WNAD is as fascinating as the School of the Air's success story.

Its beginning dates back to November 1920 when Maurice L. Prescott, '24bs, '31eng, an engineering student, began operation of a spark coil transmitter in the basement of his home at 426 West Eufaula Street in Norman. His call letters were 5ZG.

With a group of interested students, Prescott, now connected with General Electric Company, Schenectady, New York, was granted a license for operation on 360 meters, with 100 watts power, and unlimited time. The School of Electrical Engineering sponsored the project, with the late Dr. O. W. Walters, '20ba, '21bs, professor of electrical engineering, backing the group.

WNAD, the call letters assigned, went on the air immediately, giving play-by-play broadcasts of athletic events, as well as popular phonograph music. Power was only 50 watts.

The next year, the station became part of the laboratory equipment for electrical engineering, and the license was issued in the name of the University. Prescott was succeeded by C. E. Bathe, '25bs, '33ba, now with Oklahoma Gas and Electric Company, Oklahoma City, as chief operator.

Operating on 1180 kilocycles, WNAD had numerous changes in its power until 500 watts was authorized in the spring of 1926, and in November 1928, it was ordered to share time with KGGF at Coffeyville, Kansas, on 1010 kilocycles.

Willard Darrow, '20fa, '23ba, Oklahoma City, then an assistant professor of violin, was program director from 1925 until 1927, when Ted Beard, '21ba, alumni secretary, and then director of the town and country service of the University extension division, assumed the position.

Even though WNAD's power was increased to 1,000 watts in 1934, the station continued to share time with KGGF, until 1941, when it assumed full daytime status, and was assigned to 640, its present location on the dial.

Studios for WNAD have been located in several campus buildings. For many years, a small studio and a transmitter were located in the engineering laboratories building. In the fall of 1932, a modern \$5,000 studio was constructed in the Memorial Union building, where the *Sooner Magazine's*

offices now are located. When the Union tower was completed in 1936, WNAD moved to the two top floors, where two studios and a small number of offices were built.

Until 1941, the station's transmitter was in the Engineering Laboratory building, with a very inefficient antenna. In that year, it was moved to the second floor of the southeast corner of Owen Stadium, and a new 300-foot radio antenna was built on the golf course.

Technical directors of the station have included Dr. C. V. Bullen, former assistant professor of electrical engineering, who served from 1928 until 1931, and Clyde L. Farrar, professor of electrical engineering, who has served since then.

From 1925, when reports of reception were received from all parts of the United States and from many of the Canadian provinces, it has been recognized that the station is an important factor in bringing the University before the nation. Programs are prepared to reflect the high educational standards of the University.

Former managers at the station have included Walter Emery, '37Law, now an official with the Federal Communications Commission, in Washington, D. C.; Homer Heck, '35, currently production manager for the Central Division of the National Broadcasting Company, Chicago; Harold McCollum, '34ba, who died recently in Los Angeles, California, where he managed a retail radio and service store; J. F. Malone, '37ba, manager of an Oklahoma City laundry; and Virginia Hawk Sears, '37. John W. Dunn, present director, was named in 1944. H. H. Leake, former production manager, now is working with the extension division at Oklahoma A. and M. College.

At the present time, WNAD is preparing to use, beginning February 1, its new modern transmitters, both AM and FM, located on a 22-acre site six miles northwest of Norman, where a 405-foot tower now is in place. With an application pending for an increase in power from 1,000 watts to 5,000 watts, WNAD has purchased a new Western Electric 5,000-watt AM transmitter and a 3,000 watt FM transmitter. With the addition of Frequency Modulation, the University will have complete radio coverage at all times of the day. WNAD will continue to operate on a full daytime schedule, signing off at local sunset.

As the technical and other facilities of WNAD have grown, so has the staff which is charged with the responsibility of operating the broadcast services. At the present time, WNAD has some 25 professionally-trained radio people and the staff is organized on the same basis as any efficiently-run 1,000 watt station.

During the past year, WNAD was on the air some 2,962 hours, presenting over 10,000 programs. A total of 1,972 persons including 147 faculty members participated in station activities, on a no-fee basis. Civic leaders from at least 60 Oklahoma towns have been given the opportunity over



WNAD to acquaint the state with resources of their towns.

WNAD listeners may be found in 500 Oklahoma towns, 132 towns in north Texas, 89 in southern Kansas and 13 in western Arkansas. The average listening audience is estimated to be approximately half a million people.

But to get back to WNAD's School of the Air listeners. Originally, during the first semester of 1946-47, two in-school programs were prepared by WNAD, in co-operation with the University laboratory school. The programs were designed as a teaching aid, particularly for rural teachers, to enrich the curriculum of elementary schools.

The response to these two programs, one on music and the other on woodwork projects, and others on citizenship and rhythms in the spring, was so favorable that the School of the Air was made a permanent feature of WNAD. A full time director, Jesse Burkett, '47ed, was employed in September 1947, to direct and co-ordinate the programs.

That fall, two different classes were taught, one on elementary science, another on art, and in the spring of 1948, the program service was expanded to include five series of programs, directed to various grade levels from 1 to 8.

This year, the Oklahoma School of the Air has offered eight programs: 2 in music, RHYTHM AND SONG, directed by Mrs. Dolly Connally, '26 bfa, '47ma, assistant professor of music education, to supplement music instruction; and MAKING FRIENDS WITH MUSIC, directed by Dan Hayes, a program of music appreciation, using the extensive library of recorded music at WNAD. NEWS ROUNDUP, written and presented by WNAD staff members, is designed for grades 5 to 8. A story program, AT THE END OF THE RAINBOW, was worked out by staff members and the Department of Library Science. Dr. L. T. Rogers, professor of Health Education, directed the planning and presentation of SPOTLIGHT ON HEALTH, for grades 5 to 8; and Dr. J. O. Hassler, professor of mathematics, presented the stories of the planets on OUR NEIGHBORS IN SPACE. LET'S MAKE THINGS, the woodwork class taught by Lonnie Huddleston, '31ed, '37m.ed, assistant professor of Education; and KNOW YOUR OKLAHOMA, a conservation program, also were part of the series.

To familiarize teachers with the new service, a program bulletin for the Oklahoma School of the Air was prepared, containing an introduction by Dr. Oliver Hodge, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and a letter of endorsement from Governor Turner.

In response to the bulletin, 153 teachers requested materials for one or more programs and the pupil enrolment grew to more than 7,000 students from 21 counties. The State Health Department became

very interested in the health series, and reprinted several hundred copies of the teacher's manual for health, which were distributed to county health units and other interested people over the state.

Last summer, 2,000 bulletins were sent to teachers listing the fall programs, and in two months, School of the Air enrolment jumped from 7,000 students to more than 35,000. The number of counties participating increased from 21 to 42, and the number of teachers requesting teachers' manuals, which are prepared by those in charge of the programs, increased from 153 to almost 500. Requests continue to be received, and indicate an enrolment of more than 50,000 students before the close of the current school year.

Letters from teachers indicate that the in-school listening has provided seven curriculum-enriching functions for the participating schools. First, it has provided materials and information not available to the ordinary classroom; second, it serves as a means of bringing to the classrooms resource people from the University faculty and from state and county departments of government who could not possibly visit each school personally; through on-the-spot descriptions, it provides listeners with experiences they otherwise might not obtain; it provides a variety in the daily program, stimulates pupil imagination; it provides an aid to slow-reading pupils; it provides up-to-the-minute news coverage, written for the elementary grade level; and it provides a certain amount of in-service training through the demonstration of teaching methods and techniques employed by the radio teacher.

And, incidentally, it provides close contact between the school and the home, since many parents listen regularly to the programs their children are hearing at school. It also provides a challenge to the University to extend its service to thousands of boys and girls and hundreds of teachers in the state.

Thus, we see how a small gadget which once intrigued an electrical engineering student now serves the whole state in bringing about the betterment of Oklahoma citizenry.

Good music and accurate well-timed news reports continue to be the framework for WNAD's programming, which stresses educational, cultural and informative types of programs. WNAD's library of recorded music is one of the most extensive in the southwest. More than 10,000 recordings of the world's finest music are used. In addition, the various musical organizations as well as individual talent among students and faculty members of the School of Music are included in the programs.

Rackley Appointed Dean

John R. Rackley, '31ba, '35ma, dean of the Teachers College of Connecticut, was appointed dean of the College of Education at the monthly meeting of the Board of Regents, December 8.

His appointment was made effective by the Board of Regents on or before July 1, 1949. In addition, he was named professor of education.

He comes highly recommended as an administrator and teacher alert to educational problems, Dr. George L. Cross said.

Rackley's selection places a native Sooner in one of the state's key educational positions and comes with University plans already underway for expanding the College of Education. A new \$525,000 graduate education and classroom building, including construction cost and equipment, is request number two on the O.U. building program.

Except for a few weeks, the College of Education has been administered since August 31 by an in-

terim committee of three faculty members. The deanship post was left vacant when Dr. A. E. Joyal resigned to become president of California State College, Fresno. H. E. Wrinkle, '22ba, '31m.ed, has served as committee chairman with W. B. Ragan, '22ba, '28ma, and Frank A. Balyeat, '11ba, '18ma, as members.

The new dean was born in Lambert, Oklahoma, and attended Cherokee High School. In addition to his University degrees, he holds a Ph. D. from George Peabody College, Nashville, Tennessee, where he was granted a scholarship and student training fellowship. He also has done graduate work at Vanderbilt and Yale Universities.

Dr. Rackley started his teaching career at Britton High School in 1930, serving until 1937. Then after two years on the Webster Junior High School staff, he taught history at George Peabody College. From 1939 to 1942 he was assistant professor of social science at the Teachers College of Connecticut, New Britain, Connecticut. In 1941, he was promoted to the position of associate professor.

After three years in the U. S. Army Signal Corps, where he rose from second lieutenant to captain, he returned to the Connecticut College as veterans' counselor and professor of social science. Since 1946, he has served as professor and dean of the college.

Active in professional groups, he is a member of the Connecticut Education Association, National Education Association, National Council of Social Studies and the American Association of University Professors. He also contributes to educational magazines.

Nance Views Kerr's Views

United States Senator Robert S. Kerr, '16, in a guest editorial written for the *Oklahoma Daily* recently, stated the Oklahoma of today is depending on its youth to carry on the traditions of its pioneer fathers.

The senator foresees a bright future for the state, predicting that:

"Oklahoma youth will meet that challenge. To do so will bring their state its greatest progress and it will give them their finest opportunity."

He listed three programs which should lead to a greater Oklahoma, including conservation and reclamation of the soil, greater development of state industry, and improved transportation facilities to increase industrial production.

In a recent number of the *Purcell Register*, State Senator Jim Nance wrote in his column, "As the Editor Views the News" about Senator Kerr and the future of Oklahoma. The article is reprinted below:

"The new senator from Oklahoma, Robert S. Kerr, is a natural-born political salesman. And there is a vast difference between business salesmanship and political salesmanship. The business salesman is required to possess special knowledge of his own particular material or product. He need not be versed or skilled in other lines. The political salesman must, however, be a veritable encyclopedia when it comes to meeting the issues and furnishing information of proposals and projects for an entire state. The political salesman must also be spectacular, dramatic, romantic, impressive and wise. He must have the answer and the picture to every problem. He must assuredly be public spirited, enthusiastic and above all, a tireless worker. He must be personable and a good visitor.

"And I have temerity to say that Bob Kerr possesses all the qualities and characteristics above mentioned. Bob Kerr gave almost one-half his time to public relations for Oklahoma while serving as

governor. He made contacts. He developed important political friendship, and he won the heart of the man who has just been reelected president of these United States. He gave Oklahoma new rating everywhere in the nation. Naturally he improved his own position politically speaking while serving the state. His good work was recognized by fellow Oklahomans and he was promoted to a place, higher in rank, where he may continue to serve Oklahoma more effectively in the national picture. His salesmanship ability will give Oklahoma success never dreamed of before in all the days that are past.

"Bob Kerr has dedicated himself to a program of state development. He has been preaching navigation, reclamation, soil conservation, flood control, parks, lakes and playgrounds all the years of his public service. Many persons believed that he advocated a program that could never be achieved. Many such persons have lately changed their opinion. Bob Kerr had gone to work on that program for Oklahoma as United States senator even before he was inducted into office.

"He held meetings up and down the watershed of the principal rivers of Oklahoma. He organized public and technical information on that great national development program that will eventually come to Oklahoma, from the federal congress. Kerr will be a leader in that program. He will be prominent and active when Oklahoma needs a man at the planning table. Oklahoma soil and resources are going to be developed. Oklahoma will grow only as we are able to develop and use our natural resources. The future was never more promising. Oklahoma people have at last learned how to develop their own leadership and then place that leadership in position to serve them.

For the Love of Mike

Oklahoma women have a voice in radio, too. And more of them are working with men behind the mike as improved training facilities are made available.

"Oklahoma is an ideal spot to prepare women for radio work," says Dr. Sherman P. Lawton, University co-ordinator of radio instruction. "Here you can find the grass roots of radio—the many local station problems."

O.U. radio training offers the practical side. Students learn how to sell a contract, plan advertising, collect bills and operate a station in the best community interest.

Twenty-five coeds are enrolled in radio speech, five in radio journalism and twelve in radio drama. Facilities for the school recently have been expanded with the completion of Kaufman Hall. The school gained five new studios—among the most modern and best-equipped in the country. Classrooms and the campus radio station KUVY are located there.

Retirement Age Set at 65

At a recent meeting of the University Board of Regents, the retirement age for University staff members from administrative responsibilities was set at 65, President George L. Cross announced.

Dr. Cross explained that when a faculty member reaches the administrative retirement age, that does not necessarily mean his employment with the University will end.

He pointed out further that the status of a staff member's other academic titles is not affected by retirement from administrative duty.