

The Class of 1939

BY ROY GITTINGER, '02BA

Alternating moments of optimism and pessimism marked the period 1934-1939.

The number of degrees conferred in the two commencements of 1939 was 1,403 compared with 1,067 five years before. The number of students enrolled in residence in 1938-39 was 7,786 compared with 6,500 in 1934-35. The appropriation for salary and maintenance for 1938-39 was nearly \$1,600,000 with \$33,000 additional for the Geological Survey and over \$700,000 for the School of Medicine and the two hospitals at Oklahoma City—an increase of more than 60 percent in five years.

The campus covered 217 acres in 1939 since 45 acres had been added in 1935. Two new buildings were completed and occupied in 1936, the Business Administration building and the Biological Sciences building. During the spring and summer of 1936, the memorial tower (omitted in the original construction of the Union Building), rising one hundred feet above the ground, was completed with funds advanced by President Bizzell and a number of the alumni with WPA help. In the tower are located the main studios of radio station WNAD. A tower clock with a dial on each of the four faces was located in the upper main story. The Memorial Union, as originally planned, was not completed and fully equipped, however, until two years later.

It is in order here only to call attention to the extension and enlargement of the Union now in prospect.

Correspondence study and short courses received renewed interest, and three additions to the extension service were made in September, 1937. The broadcasting station, the in-service extension classes, and visual education were established separately. In January, 1938, an entirely new service was added to the division—the Oklahoma Family Life Institute.

In the spring of 1938 the University of Oklahoma Foundation was established to receive and administer gifts and bequests to the University of Oklahoma. This foundation, reorganized in 1945, is still active. Complete details may be obtained by writing to the Secretary of the University of Oklahoma Foundation.

In September, 1936, the Museum of Art was formally established with Professor Oscar B. Jacobson as director. The University has received gifts of paintings and other objects of art for many years. The two rooms in the Art Building which have been assigned to the Museum of Art can accommodate only a small part of the collections owned by and on loan to the museum. The Matzene-Wentz collection and the Woodruff Collection merit special mention. The paintings of these collections have been temporarily installed in the Woodruff Room and the lounge of the Oklahoma Union, and in the University library.

In September, 1934, the Department of Public Speaking became the Department of Speech. Interest in the speech arts has been maintained since the beginning of the University. During the early years literary and debating societies and the Oratorical Association were important. Debating as an intercollegiate activity had been especially important from 1910 to 1925. Plays were produced from the first years of the century. Students supported one or more dramatic organizations. Beginning

about 1927 interest in the drama became increasingly important. The Playhouse, an association of faculty members and students interested in dramatic productions, had its beginning at this time. The University Players, made up of advanced students, and Buffalo Mask, an honor society, are outgrowths of the Playhouse.

About 1934 a quickened interest in speech as opposed to drama became apparent. Debate and oratory continued to receive attention but emphasis was placed upon the study of speech as a science with special effort to foster correct speech. Remarkable results have been secured in speech correction. On the whole the development of the speech arts, including drama, has been a worthy feature of the history of the University.

For many years both faculty and students were very proud of the friendly spirit noticeable on the campus. Until 1925, perhaps, a nod and a smile and "howdy" would be exchanged by all passing students. By 1935 greetings were only for acquaintances. The loss of the friendly spirit came naturally. The growing numbers at the University made recognition of students and faculty difficult. Then, too, the earlier students had come from farms and from small towns. As Oklahoma itself ceased to be almost entirely rural and as the student body of the university was recruited from urban areas, the newcomers who reached the campus did not expect to exchange greetings with strangers.

Students in fraternities had many opportunities for social contact and perhaps did not mind the lack of general friendliness. Students not in fraternities needed organizations to cope with the new conditions. In last month's article the formation of the Independent Men's Association in the first semester of 1933-34 was mentioned. During 1935-36, the Independent Women's Association was formed, with membership and purpose similar to the Independent Men's Association. These organizations are interested in the social life, as well as the scholarship, of nonfraternity students and have constantly demonstrated their value on the campus.

A state university must depend for its support and growth upon public favor. Financial support must be secured through the state's governor and legislature. During the years under consideration the legislature was usually as generous as possible with the state's educational system, but beginning with 1931 Oklahoma's governors for three terms were not especially favorable to the University. During most of the five-year period under consideration the governor was E. W. Marland, who served from January, 1935, to January, 1939. Governor Marland came to office with high hopes and high aspirations. He had been head of a large corporation and had won the loyal and devoted support of his employees. It is necessary here only to remind the reader of the statue of the Pioneer Woman at Ponca City—Marland's gift to the public.

In 1932 Marland had been elected to Congress from the eighth, or Enid, district of Oklahoma, and in 1934 he easily won the nomination for the governorship and later the election without special difficulty. Accordingly, Governor Marland came to office flushed with his political successes and with the aid of interested associates he persuaded himself that he could and should go on to higher office. He did not wish to wait until he had com-



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pleted the governor's term to which he had been elected, but instead spent his energy and the resources of the governor's office in an attempt to secure the Senatorial nomination. His bid was unsuccessful both in 1936 and in 1938. His perennial candidacy interfered with the success of his administration. The University could not be a source of help in his ambition, and accordingly received little attention from him. By the end of his term the public felt that Governor Marland had thrown away the opportunity he had had to be a useful and successful administrator.

In the primary campaign of 1938 one of the leading candidates for the democratic nomination for governor was Leon Phillips, better known as "Red" Phillips, who had received the degree of LL.B. from the University with the class of 1916. Phillips had been active in state politics for some time and was an opponent and critic of Marland's administration. As a graduate of the University, Phillips had evidently expected the undivided support of the alumni in the primary campaign. It is doubtless true that most graduates of the University were supporters of Phillips and were greatly pleased with the idea that, for the first time, an alumnus might be governor of the state. Naturally, this support was not unanimous as Phillips' opponents were bound to receive a segment of the so-called "university vote." Unfortunately, Phillips, when he became governor, remembered only the opposition he had met from certain quarters and disappointed the great majority of the University graduates who had expected so much from him.

The Phillips administration was successful in the main. In the space of ten years the state's finances had become tangled—to put it mildly—and the new administration reorganized the state's financial system and gave it a solid foundation. But Phillips, while he was governor, at no time displayed a sympathetic interest in the University and at times seemed to take delight in criticizing the University officials and in sniping at President Bizzell whom he evidently blamed for not using his influence to bring him (Phillips) the undivided support of the alumni in his political canvass. It seemed to the people of the state that the governor's attitude toward President Bizzell was indefensible and hardly worthy of the governor of a great state. He displayed other personal and po-



Theta Kappa Phi

Founded at O.U. in 1934

Kappa chapter of Theta Kappa Phi was formally installed into the national brotherhood on January 4, 1934. It developed from a local Catholic fraternity on the University campus. There is a striking similarity between the growth and advancement of Kappa chapter and the national fraternity. The beginnings of the national also were made only with a supreme amount of perseverance and initiative of the individuals involved.

Subsequent to its installation, Theta Kappa Phi at the University of Oklahoma expanded into one of the most prosperous chapters in the nation. From the small handful of Catholic men who had become members in 1934 there grew an adequate membership of 35 by the time fall of 1938 had rolled around.

Theta Kappa Phi had also been gaining prestige and prominence on the campus. Such members as Bill Elias, who was elected president of the Ruf-Neks, Wilfred Coleman, engineer from Newfoundland, Oran Buck, an outstanding leader, and many

others gave to the fraternity the leadership it so greatly needed. The house was well on its way to real success when the disaster of Pearl Harbor hit the United States in December of 1941.

As other fraternities on the campus, Theta Kappa Phi went inactive in 1942 because of the drain of the armed services. The house, which was then located at 535 South Boulevard, was generously offered to the U.S. Navy for their use by the Rev. Eugene J. McGuiness and the Rev. Francis C. Kelley, bishops of Oklahoma City and Tulsa. The house was returned to the fraternity in the spring of 1946, and the chapter was reactivated the following fall.

A tremendous organizational problem faced the lone member, Thomas E. Getchius, who returned to the campus after hostilities had ceased. It was due mainly to his efforts along with the encouragement and financial assistance of a faithful alumnus, Mr. John W. Delaney of Oklahoma City, that the

chapter was able to regain its feet. It was Getchius who laid the firm foundation upon which a nucleus was built. In the fall of 1946 and the ensuing semester only fourteen men were accommodated. However, due mainly to the unceasing efforts of those fourteen the fall of 1947 found the chapter with a membership of twenty-five.

The organization now has many plans for the future. All schemes are pointed towards one goal, the re-establishment of Theta Kappa Phi as a growing dynamic group at the University of Oklahoma.

The following is a brief summary of the ideals, purposes and objectives of Theta Kappa Phi. It is an organization for Catholic men. Its objective is three-fold, religious, social and scholastic. Theta Kappa Phi believes that a practical solidification of these attributes into a vibrant brotherhood will result in a man in which the honor and ideals of college training are preserved.

litical faults and foibles that brought criticism upon him. Governor Phillips retired from office unpopular and with little political influence. A later generation doubtless will forget his faults and will remember only his constructive service for the state.

Since President Bizzell's administration of University affairs was soon to come to an end this seems a good time to say something about the accomplishments of his 16 years of office. It might be noted that the library had grown from 65,000 volumes to 225,000 volumes, besides 12,000 pamphlets and 8,000 volumes of uncataloged government documents—these, in addition to several thousand volumes in the Law Library. (In passing it must be stated that the official name of the University library is now the William Bennett Bizzell Memorial Library.) It is not possible to sum up in the same way the advances made in 16 years in physical equipment—laboratories, collections and buildings for university use, but the changes were equally great.

When President Bizzell took over, the enrollment in residence was a little over 5,000 with 325

in the Graduate School and by the end of his administration the total enrollment, in spite of ups and downs, had increased 50 per cent and enrollment in the Graduate School had increased 500 percent. An even better idea of the growing importance of the University in the development of the state may be gained when the number of degrees conferred is considered. Bizzell, during his 16 years as president, conferred 18,206 degrees in comparison with 5,259 degrees conferred in the 33 years together of Presidents Boyd, Evans, Monnet, Brooks and Buchanan.

As has been mentioned already, 1,403 degrees were conferred by the University in June and August, 1939—1,074 on June 5 and 329 on August 1. The 1,403 degrees were distributed as follows: arts and science, 354; business administration, 150; education, 122; engineering, 172; fine arts, 83; law, 85; bachelor of science in medicine, 40; doctor of medicine, 52; nursing, 29; pharmacy, 23; masters degrees, 285; doctor of education, 2; doctor of philosophy, 6.

Many of these graduates have served their country well—some have lost their lives in service—

and many have already begun to make names for themselves in Oklahoma or the nation, but it would hardly be possible to make selections for honorable mention. Here is wishing the best of luck and God's speed for them all.

This is the eighth in a series of nine articles. The ninth and final in the series will deal with the University from 1939 to 1944 (including two new presidents and the impact of world war) and with the class of 1944.

No Atomic Autos—Yet

Oklahomans needn't expect atomic-driven machines in the near future. That's from a man who knows, Summer T. Pike, acting chairman of the atomic energy commission.

Not that scientists aren't busy. But he debunks what he calls "Buck Rogers ideas" regarding use of atomic energy to operate cars and ships, for example.

He pointed out that the present atomic program serves a double purpose. Bombs can be used for power purposes if they aren't expended. This is the first munition where that has been possible, he said.