

Sooner Portraits

Oklahoma's Silver Tongued Orator and a man who learned to read

and write at 19 are adding prestige to their alma mater.



JOSH LEE

Like a Mustard Plaster

Trying to tell Oklahomans about Josh Lee, '17 ba, is like trying to inform Missourians about Harry Truman.

Josh Lee, the wit and humorist, has been known to Oklahomans since he worked his way through the University by giving lectures and speeches at community gatherings and gained the title of Oklahoma's "Silver Tongued Orator." He became even better known when he was elected to congress in 1935 and two years later was elected to the senate.

While in the senate, Josh gained the reputation as "the wit of the senate." His hair-trigger thinking, his wide range of finger-tip knowledge and his constructive humor carried him through the senate with flying colors. After serving one term in the senate he was appointed a member of the Civil Aeronautics Board by President Roosevelt. He has served seven years as a member of this board and has been reappointed to serve six more.

Josh was born in Alabama but his family moved to a ranch in the Indian Territory when he was three. The family lived in a sod-house three miles west of Hobart where young Lee attended a frontier school. He later attended Oklahoma Baptist University and graduated from the University of Oklahoma.

His father, a country doctor, derived a part of the family's income by operating a farm. It was here that Josh learned "the number of backaches in a bale of cotton."

Upon graduation he joined the American Expeditionary Force and spent ten months as an "assistant buck private" in France. While overseas he wrote a small volume of verse, "Soldier Rhymes." Returning to the University he became

head of the speech department and held that position for 16 years until he resigned to enter politics.

After a sizzling campaign, he was elected to Congress from the fifth Oklahoma district, securing more than the combined votes of his five opponents. His career in the House was distinguished by his efforts to equalize educational opportunities throughout the nation; providing long term, low interest rate loans to farmers and taking the profits out of war by licensing munitions manufacturers and commandeering money and material, as well as men in wartime.

In 1936, he announced his candidacy for the senate and "covered Oklahoma like a mustard plaster on an aching back." He made as many as ten speeches a day and astounded the country by being elected in a race that had Oklahoma's political giants.

Lee's versatile background, rich in educational training and experience, has gained him recognition as one of the greatest orators in American public life. George Creel, writing in *Collier's* said:

"Josh Lee is the closest approach to Delsarte that this country has ever produced. Watching him speak is a post graduate course in synchronization, for not only are his voice and hands symphonic, but even his ears and toes contribute to swelling harmonies."

Books by Lee include a text on public speaking, "The Battle of Cognac and Other Soldier Rhymes," and "How to Hold an Audience Without a Rope."

A Diligent Student

Nothing short of "amazing" can describe the career of A. N. "Jack" Boatman, '14ba, '16Law.

It's not what this Okmulgee lawyer has done—it's how he's done it. His academic record will certainly hold up as being one of the most unusual in O.U. history. When he arrived in Norman in 1908, he was 21 years old and had just begun to read and write! But eight years later he could point with pride to a highschool diploma, a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Bachelor of Law Degree.

This is the accomplishment of a man who could not read and write at the age of 19. His scholastic record at the University gives all the indication that he had had excellent highschool training. He became a member of Phi Delta Phi, a international legal fraternity requiring a "B" average as one of its membership requirements.

Other University honors included business manager of the University of Oklahoma Magazine and the Sooner Yearbook and membership in Sigma Delta Chi, professional journalism fraternity. He was also one of the first members of the campus chapter of Kappa Sigma social fraternity. Boatman was a member of the Student Forum, William's Club court, YMCA cabinet and was second president of the Student Council. And in 1914 he served as president of his junior class.

Boatman attended college when it was a common practice for students to work their way through school. But Boatman was a particularly

diligent worker. He worked as a student assistant, hotel clerk, dishwasher, cleaner and pressed clothes. And as he expresses it, "I did everything else but steal, and may have done a little of that to get through the University."

During World War I, Boatman was commissioned a second lieutenant at Fort Logan H. Roots training camp. He was discharged a first lieutenant at Newport News in 1918.

"Jack" has always been active in civic affairs. He is a member of the Chamber of Commerce, the Lions Club, Boy Scout Court of Honor and the Masons. He has served as a member of the State School Board Association, Okmulgee School Board, of which he was president for six years and was county attorney of Okmulgee County from 1924 to 1929. He also served as mayor of Drumright.

From 1924 to 1925, Boatman was president of the Alumni Association. During his tenure of office, he conducted special campaigns for alumni membership. In Drumright he succeeded in getting every alumni in the city to sign up.

Boatman, who is married to the former Lucille Maud Bowden of Virginia, is the father of three, two of whom are now attending the University. They are Edgar Ray Boatman and Lucille Marie Boatman. Jack Holland Boatman, who is now a practicing physician in Butte, Montana, attended the University from 1939 to 1941.

Boatman is a member of the law firm of Steele and Boatman in Okmulgee. He has been a member of this firm since 1916.



A. N. BOATMAN

► H. V. McDermott, '20ba, chairman of the department of physical education for men, attended the national convention of the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation in Dallas, April 18-22.

► Franklin C. Morris, chairman of the department of engineering drawing, has returned from Texas A.&M. College where he attended a meeting of the American Society of Engineering Education, April 6-8.