

Dallas: An Opportunity To Relax!

By Ruth Foreman Updegraff, '28ba, '40ma

Many writers play up the annual O.U.-Texas game in Dallas as an invasion—the two teams with their followers likened to opposing armies—and the Cotton Bowl the battleground.

But, to me, in the middle of having two rooms built, a flower show school to run, a journalism class to meet and two children to corral, the weekend offered an opportunity to relax.

Friends of Paul's, (Updegraff, '30Law) the Briggs Todds, from navy days, furnished the backdrop—a well run house, children near enough the age of our two to play with, a couple with similar interests—and an Oklahoma team that had a chance. It looked good.

After sending acceptable excuses to school, we left Friday around eleven. An inkling of what lay ahead came in Pauls Valley when we were unable to get lunch at our favorite drive-in.

We realized it more at Davis when the waitress announced, "No more hamburger meat."

But when we hit the traffic in Denton, we knew beyond a doubt that Oklahomans were on their way.

Funny books, crayolas, a supply of apples and carrots, kept our six-year-old son amused. Our ten-year-old daughter, Elizabeth, directed her daddy by means of a road map and I looked longingly at purple thistles to use in flower arrangements.

And so we came to Dallas about forty-three, hot and ready for the particular brand of hospitality that Texas dispenses.

We got it in the form of one of Mrs. Todd's dinners and the pleasure of testing all the latest gadgets in their recently acquired four-bedroom house in Alexander Addition, off Abrams Road.

Briggs Todd is a banker and this year the big game came on the heels of Columbus Day, a legal holiday. As a result, he had to work Friday night in order to get off on Saturday. That left Paul and me with an evening on our hands. We drove downtown, parked within two blocks of the

Adolphus, and went over to see whom we should see.

Col. Jerome J. Waters, commanding officer of the ROTC, and Mrs. Waters were just leaving the hotel. He had four tickets to the Aggie game he wished to dispose of. Close examination showed them to be stubbs of the O.U.-Texas Aggie thriller. "I've sold them four times already," chortled the Colonel.

About that time Henry Browne, '30bus, Oklahoma City, came up. He and Paul had played tennis together at O.U. He gave us a pair of "South Pacific" tickets. It was then eight-thirty, curtain time. We grabbed a cab, the driver turned off to a side street and we were in our seats just as "Bloody Mary" and the seabees came on stage.

When the lights came up at the end of the first act we saw Joe McBride, '28bus, Anadarko, and Mrs. McBride (Clella Lemarr, '27ba) two rows in front of us. Jack Luttrell, '38ba, '41Law, our next door neighbor, was battling the coke line in the lobby. He and Joe Nell (Watters, '38fa) had driven down with Lt. Comdr. A. E. Howell and Mrs. Howell of Norman.

Mrs. Graham Johnson from force of habit was standing in line waiting for Graham, '19ba, to get a coke.

Virginia Carlow Biggers, '31ba, '49m.ed, was waiting for Bill, '30Law, her lawyer husband from Wewoka. Our daughters had been together in Camp Shahama, Lake Murray in June so we had something to talk about.

After hearing Janet Blair make a gallant try to take off Mary Martin, supported by the orchestra, the show ended, and we made a dash for the first street car. Bill, '34eng, and Mary Lelia Kidd Holmes and Mrs. Gomer Jones caught the next one. Mr. and Mrs. V. C. Bratton were in the crowd, too.

None of the reported rowdiness was in evidence at midnight in the downtown area when we found our car and drove to the Todds, although students and police were

Another View

It's doubtful that Dallas-bound Sooners took time out to feel any sympathy for the wretches left in almost deserted Norman on Big D weekend. Any such sympathy would have been out of place had the Dallas horde known what happened in Norman when the final point was kicked by Big Red.

Like raindrops on a window pane, the stay-at-homes collected around blaring radios in little puddles of tense emotion. Probably the screams and nail-biting were even more intense than in the Cotton Bowl itself; those in Norman could only look at their radio while the Dallas crowd roared.

When the gun ended the game, noise on Campus Corner sounded like an echo of the sound waves which had been surging out of the Cotton Bowl. Car horns blared, people shouted, and an ancient vintage auto circled the campus while its occupants played Boomer Sooner on a tuba, clarinet and drums.

Far into the night the noise continued, increasing in intensity as the first Sooners came home from Dallas. Everyone was tired, but who could go to bed? Big Red had won again, and Monday was going to be a holiday.

milling in the blocked off area around the Baker.

Next morning baby sitting trouble developed, so Mrs. Todd and I did a quick trade about. She was a College of Industrial Arts girl from Denton and had no interest in her husband's Texas University. I, being from O.U., had little interest in the Oklahoma Aggies, especially when they were doped to lose to SMU.

So Paul, Elizabeth and myself set out for the fair at ten o'clock. The Updegraff luck held; we parked outside the park within one block of the entrance.

Showing the fair to a youngster is something you should try if you have feet that will hold up. The bright spot was the "Lost and Found Children" maintained by a Dallas department store. All kinds of toys, air conditioning, free television and kindly police officers were on hand. The lost kids were the smart ones at the fair, unless it was the 300 mothers who got lost on purpose. As one kid told the officer, "I'm not lost. It's my mother."

The try for entrance to the bowl at twelve

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All-American honors—Leon Heath. There was much lamenting concerning the loss of backfield stars George Thomas, Darrell Royal and Lindell Pearson. Graduation managed to make a shambles of the 1949 line—something no opponent was able to do. So what happens. A new group of pig-skin personalities make their pitch. And what a pitch it is. Names on the tongue of fans after three games would probably read something like this: Heath, Weatherall, Vessels, Arnold, Jones and Anderson. If the fans can handle tongue-twisters, other names like Clark, Catlin, Keller, Mayes, Janes, et al., would be bandied about.

The first two names on the list will undoubtedly be on one or more All-American rosters. Leon Heath, the mule train from Hollis, is proving himself every bit as good as the dopesters figured. His running game has been nothing short of spectacular and his precision blocking is a marvel to behold as well. He catches passes like an end. In short, in a season where good fullbacks are throwing their weight around—two of the best seen hereabouts in a long time were Smith of Texas A.&M. and Townsend of Texas—Heath will do to take along.

Then there's a boy by the name of Weatherall. He's played as many dramatic roles as John Barrymore. To begin with Jim boots the conversions. And he's been right successful in his first three encounters. He's kicked 10 extra points and missed one. But the one he missed was a lulu as mentioned earlier in the story. Again in the Texas game a win depended upon his toe in circumstances quite like the A.&M. brush. This time he didn't miss. He was named lineman-of-the-week by the Associated Press following his brutal line play in the Texas A.&M. game. Following his selection he said, "Gosh, am I surprised. But I don't think I really deserve it." The Texans have reason to rue the loss of the White Deer, Texas, highschool graduate. (See October 1950, *Sooner*).

If Billy Vessels doesn't make the grade from an unknown freshman to All-American sophomore halfback this year, he must certainly be considered a top candidate for Sophomore-of-the-Year. "Curly" is from Cleveland, Oklahoma. He came of age as a member of the Big Red in Dallas when he scored two touchdowns and ripped off 76 yards rushing against a fine Texas line. He caught two passes for 22 additional yards. He looked good against Texas A.&M. and Boston College and must be one of the players Bud meant when he spoke of his team improving each week.

The hero of the Texas A.&M. get-together may have been Weatherall but he certainly shared honors with Claude Arnold, senior quarterback from Okmulgee.

Arnold appeared as fit a replacement as anyone could hope for to fill the Mitchell and Royal title roles. With less than two minutes to go and trailing 27-28, Arnold moved his team down the field with as pretty a flurry of passing as you would care to see. With the clock running out he took his time and generated the team to a spot four yards away from a touchdown. That was all Heath needed.

The line offers more greats in the image of Burris, Walker, West, Dowell, etc. Dean Smith, senior tackle from Tulsa, was a standout defensive performer against Texas. Clair Mayes, senior guard from Muskogee; Frankie Anderson, senior end from Oklahoma City, and Bert Clark, junior guard from Wichita Falls, Texas, add something extra to their work. Yes, the Wilkinsons sport many individual standouts but it is the team play that has played such large and beautiful dividends.

As this is being written, the Sooners are riding in the exact spot in national rankings as they completed the 1949 season—No. 2. Whether they can bypass Army or Southern Methodist for the top rung remains to be seen. This reporter has already had ample demonstration of what the Big Red can do. In the September issue of *Sooner Magazine* he wrote that if O.U. defeated Texas he would believe in miracles. Well he does. And just to show that one error in guessing has not dimmed the editor's ardor for sooth saying, check the following:

1. Leon Heath and Jim Weatherall will make more than one All-American selections. Heath should be on the AP first string and Weatherall on the second.

2. Heath, Weatherall, Vessels, Anderson and Mayes will make All-Big Seven. Bert Clark is a good candidate also. Arnold will probably miss because of a quarterback at Iowa State named Bill Weeks.

3. Wilkinson will not be coach-of-the-year. He'll be at the top of the balloting and might repeat except for the notable reluctance of the experts to let a coach keep the honor two years hand running. For the *Sooner's* money, Bud deserves the title even more this year than last.

4. A bowl game is certainly in the offing if the team wants it. What bowl they'll play in probably depends on who the opposition will be. If SMU should make it to the Cotton Bowl, sentiment would undoubtedly favor a match to see which is the best in the Southwest.

But enough speculation. In a sports season already spiced by the Whiz Kids of Philadelphia, the Sooners are writing their own ticket. And they're doing it in much the same way as the youthful baseball team. With poise and heart—the stuff that champs are made of.

Dallas . . .

forty-five resulted in the only casualty of the trip—the loss of Elizabeth's tartan weskit. But a kewpie doll on a stick made a good substitute and after twenty minutes or so we made it inside.

Jack Nossaman, another lawyer of the class of 1930 from Sherman, Texas, hailed Paul. Ned Hockman, '49ed, University motion picture producer, and Mrs. Hockman were eating lunch and Mrs. J. J. Truscott, Shawnee, O.U. booster and garden club enthusiast was entering the gate. Reuel Little, '27Law, Oklahoma City, was also there.

Charles Young, '40Law, Oklahoma City, supreme court marshal, expressed surprise at seeing Paul. He thought the University would cut off his ticket supply because of the suits Paul had been involved in.

In my opinion, someone had done pretty well by us. We caught a breath of air on the way up to section 102, row 32, one row removed from the top of the double-decker, and most of the spectators were former Oklahomans. At least you don't have to apologize when your team makes a good play.

Seated nearby were the Belknaps—Harold, '25ba, Lucille, '43ba, '50ms, Hal and Kay—of Norman. Lawrence Wilson, '34, Tulsa, and Max Cook, '39ba, '41Law, Clinton, were within shouting distance. Crystal Risinger, '27ba, and sister Golda Risinger Unkerfer, '30ed, from Muskogee were down the row. Lloyd Swearingen, '20bs, '21ms, and wife and Ansel Challenner, '25eng, '33m.eng, and wife were over to the right. Joe Fred Gibson, '34ba, '36Law, Oklahoma City and Mrs. Gibson, (Marion Hauck, '35ba) were seated near the Joe McBrides who, like the Oklahoma Aggies and the law class of 1930, seemed to be everywhere.

Working my way through the crowd at the half to the student side, I found out how the five million dollars was being spent. Ice at twenty-five cents a cup available only through a retail dealer amounts up.

The closing whistle of the game, fans milling, bands marching, gave me a chance to catch my breath and realize that Bud Wilkinson's Big Red had done it again. I would not have to use my philosophy developed through twenty years of seeing the Sooners win six and tie one. I could let go and enjoy the game, the ride back home, and finally home which looked better than anything I had ever seen—dirt and carpenter's shavings notwithstanding.