

Why All the Fuss?

Mrs. Ollie Owen, mother of Ted, Bill and Bennie, passed her 101st birthday this year. Because he wanted proof that people lived to be a hundred, Paul Updegraff, Jr., was taken for a visit. Here is a report written by his mother.

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

Youth met age last month when Paul Updegraff, Jr., 7, called on Mrs. Ollie Owen, 101.

It came about like this.

Paul, Jr., came running in from school one day and said to me, "Mother, no one ever lives to be a hundred, do they?"

"Why, yes, of course," I answered.

"Well, then," he continued in a scornful sort of voice, "Tell me one."

For a minute he had me until I remembered "Mother Owen."

We have known the Owens, Ted and his wife Henri, for years. Never a night that we go there for dinner club meeting but that every member calls on Ted's mother in her room, decorated so tastefully by Henri and Ted with window cornices and antique pieces.

Mrs. Owen remembers each one of us, asks about our children, and seems to take

such special delight in seeing us that I never think about her age, and as a matter of fact, I can't even remember when I first met her.

But I do remember my first meeting with Henri. She came to my home town as Miss Henrietta Pyeate, the new school teacher from Arkansas. And she gave us highschool girls a bad time because the boys went for her in a big way. That was the year we wore our long hair in huge puffs over our ears. She had the largest puffs we had ever seen.

As for Ted, a couple of years later, I came to O.U. for my freshman year. Bill and Ted Owen ran the Sooner Shop on Varsity corner, and Miss Ima James' physical education girls bought their gym suits there.

The quip that Ted handed over the counter along with those black pleated bloomers, did much to restore the self-con-

fidence of a homesick kid away from home for the first time.

Years later while working for George Wadsack in the registry office, "the peanut gallery stories" of Bill Owen over a coke in the only open place on the corner in August, the union pool room, was a welcome interlude to a day of record filing.

And now, after thirty years, to have to be reminded by our son to go calling on someone he should have met sooner, brought me up short.

Mother Owen and the photographers were waiting when Paul, Jr., and I arrived. I had rounded him up by taxi from Lincoln school playground when he failed to stay put by the telephone after three o'clock.

His daddy hadn't helped out either by taking the car on important business to Oklahoma City.

After a couple of poses, we sat down to visit with the tiny person who cannot understand why people are so interested in her.

She had candy ready for her caller, and he looked her over carefully while rocking in the chair she pulled out for him.

Ann Olivia Ring was born in New York City, on Nassau street February 24, 1850. Named for her father's sister who lived with the family, her name was shortened to Ollie, to avoid confusion between the two.

"And do you know," she remarked, "even when I was married, I couldn't get Mr. Owen to put Olivia on the license. He said he had known and courted Ollie, and he didn't intend to marry Olivia."

She couldn't remember the date, but did know her age, 22, when she married George Henry Owen, a heater in the steel mills, at Covington, Kentucky.

They went immediately to Chicago.

"Will and Ben were born there," she told me, in the way all mothers date things, by events in their children's lives. A succession of moves followed—Aurora, Indiana; Centralia, Illinois; St. Louis, Missouri; Wheeling, West Virginia; Arkansas City, Kansas, and finally Norman, Oklahoma.

Her bright eyes looked into mine and



Paul Updegraff, Jr., 7, replete in the latest Hopalong Cassidy togs, chats with Mrs. Ollie Owen, 101. Paul wondered if anyone lived to be a hundred years old. Mother of O.U.'s Owen "boys," Mrs. Owen proved the point when young Paul paid her a visit.

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L. McCall, Jr., '50, also of Norman, February 24 in the University Kappa Alpha Theta sorority house. At the University, Mrs. McCall was a member of Kappa Alpha Theta sorority and Lieutenant McCall was affiliated with Sigma Nu fraternity. The couple is living in Lawton where McCall is stationed at Fort Sill.

Signs of the Times . . .

lar capacity with Headquarters, Eighth Army.

John T. Taylor, Jr., '50pharm, formerly stationed at the San Diego, California, training station, is now stationed at the United States Navy Hospital, Memphis, Tennessee, as a hospital apprentice.

Lt. Frank E. Weeks, '47bs, United States Army, is stationed with the 160th Infantry Regiment, 40th Division, Camp Cooke, California.

Lt. Jack R. Mills, '50arch, Norman, recently completed specialized training as a radar observer at Randolph Airforce base, San Antonio, Texas. A bombardier-navigator in World War II, Lieutenant Mills has been retained as a radar instructor at Randolph in the B-29 program at that base. He and Mrs. Mills, the former Earline Simon, '49fa, live in San Antonio.

Capt. Joseph E. Johnson, '40-'49, former Stillwater attorney, was called to active duty with the United States Army early in January. He is stationed in Yokohama, Japan.

Lt. Charles J. McPherren, '50Law, former Oklahoma City attorney, has been attending the Air Support Specialist School at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Upon completion of the course, he returned to Camp Polk, Louisiana, prior to the 45th Division's departure for overseas duty.

Lt. C. Ned Hockman, '50bs, former extension specialist in motion picture production and supervisor of the University's motion picture unit, was recalled to active duty with the Army early in February. He is stationed with the Second Combat Camera unit of the Airforce at Wright-Patterson Field, Dayton, Ohio, in the production of training and documentary films.

Sooner Portraits . . .

didn't keep him from receiving a teaching fellowship in his senior year at the University.

He received his M.A. degree in school administration in 1917 and went into the Army as a second lieutenant in the Air Service. When he was discharged in 1919, he became superintendent of schools at Holdenville, Oklahoma.

From 1920 to 1925 he was U. S. Veterans

Administrator for Oklahoma with headquarters in Oklahoma City. He spent one year, 1925, in his own real estate and insurance business and then became assistant director of medical extension in the University Extension Division. He remained there until 1934 when he became field consultant for the Oklahoma Municipal League.

In 1936 he became lay director of medical education for the Tennessee State Medical Association. From 1938 to 1945 he was lay director of medical education for both the Tennessee Medical Association and the Oklahoma State Medical Association. Since 1945 he has held the lay directorship of the Tennessee Medical Association.

Kibler married Lois Harris, '16ba, in 1917. Their two sons, Paul '39-'41, and Eugene, '42-'43, attended the University.

The travel which Kibler says has put so many miles on himself has been part of his numerous jobs. He stretches his travel-weary limbs on hunting and fishing trips. Deep sea fishing has become his favorite sport.

Association . . .

talk," wrote club secretary Mrs. O'Wanah Pickins Shelton, '44-'47.

As proof of the interest the Biological Station holds for the Sherman-Denison group, their next meeting is tentatively scheduled for the station in May. William Marsico, '40ms, was elected president at a business meeting to succeed Col. William Morgan, '27ba, who had moved out of the club area.

Comanche County alumni followed up their recent organization meeting with a "Charter Night" program March 22. Guy Brown presented the charter which was received by club president Karey Fuqua, '36 bus. Held in Lawton, the meeting was headlined by a double feature movie program—the Sugar film starring Bud Wilkinson and all-star cast, and the O.U. Personalities film starring many of the individuals who helped build the University.

Wagoner County alumni held a business meeting March 30 to discuss a fund raising campaign. In addition, the O.U.-Nebraska football game was unreeled. Frank Spence, '41journ, club president, was in charge of the meeting.

Mrs. Owen . . .

she chuckled as she recalled the names of the different places.

"Sometimes I can remember, then I forget, but you can always ask Will," she told me.

"I still write to children of my neighbor

in Aurora," she continued, "And Arthur, my son living in Washington state, as well as my two girls, Birdie and Olive were born there. The two girls are dead now, you know. And in St. Louis, George, he drowned later, and Ted were born."

Asked about any historical figures she remembered, she told me she saw both Garfield and Cleveland on their campaign tours, Garfield in Aurora and Cleveland in St. Louis.

"See my star pieces," she said, pointing to a neatly piled stack of quilt blocks. "You know I always have a bunch of those around."

A close look at one revealed a perfect fitting together of the bird design in the cloth as well as a bang-up job of putting the intricate pieces of the star together.

"And my dresses for the little children of the Congo," she went on. "Art's daughter is a missionary there. She was by to see me. She is going back soon."

Two pieces of brightly colored cotton were sewed together into a rectangle. She explained that an inset will be placed in each side for the child's arm, and a draw string run through the top to secure the garment to the small body.

I was afraid she was growing tired, as had Paul, Jr., who was visiting with Henri in the living room, but she wanted to tell me about her birthday cards.

"This year I only got 140 cards. Last year, on my hundredth birthday I got 198. They are still coming, though. Only Monday, the postman brought 22. I feel kind of sorry for that young fellow, having to come to our door every day."

But you could see she was pleased, even though she seemed a little puzzled as to why strangers would want her picture.

"I have been thinking of traveling around. Maybe I could make some money. Seems a lot of people never saw a 101 year old woman."

She walked with us to the door, thanked Paul, Jr., for coming to see "Grandma," and then went back to her room.

As we walked along in the bright sunshine of an Oklahoma day, I marveled about this woman who had lived through four wars, seen presidents most of us read about when forced to, lived in eight different states, reared seven children, and was still well and in possession of all her faculties.

But Paul, Jr., interrupted my thinking to say, "Mother, when she squeezed my hand, it sure felt tight."