

Under Cover

By DAVID BURR, '52ba

SOME of the requests that cross the editor's desk cannot be answered satisfactorily. Some are beyond our powers to produce. Some are best forgotten.

A highly improbable one appeared about a month ago. But for some reason, the improbability made the attempt for an answer all the more intriguing. This was the situation as I know it now:

Derek Buitenhuis, a British student majoring in drama at O.U., received a scholarship to attend Yale University for the second semester. In order to conserve funds, he decided to hitch-hike.

Outside the city limits of Norman, he was picked up by a man who was going to Shawnee. From conversation that followed, Buitenhuis learned that the man was an O.U. graduate, a geologist and a resident of Shawnee. Nothing more.

When the British student, who starred in the Drama School's production of Romeo and Juliet in December, left the car, he also left an expensive Italian-made camera and a pair of worn gloves.

Once man and car had disappeared, Buitenhuis had little or no way of finding his Shawnee benefactor. He continued on to New Haven and Yale. In mid-February a letter addressed to the editor of *Sooner Magazine* arrived, inquiring if it would be possible to place a notice of the lost camera and gloves in the magazine.

Since it was nearly a month to publication date, a telephone call to the *Shawnee News-Star* seemed a good answer to the dilemma. The next day the newspaper carried a page-1 story of Romeo's plight. A couple of days went by and then, just about closing time, a man appeared carrying the missing articles. He was the driver of the car and he was only waiting until he knew where to return the articles before doing so. He would prefer, he said, that his name not be used, as a matter of company policy was involved.

The next day, gloves and camera were in the mail. But this was not the end of the drama. A few days ago a letter arrived from Buitenhuis. It said in part:

". . . Normally, I don't think one could have held out much hope of ever seeing a

camera left in a car again, but somehow, because I had lost it in Oklahoma, I felt this case would be an exception to the general rule . . . An action like this merits the warmest thanks all around. It helps to restore one's failing belief in the goodness of human nature. It will be one of the many good impressions of America I shall take back with me to England when I return home."

I, too, despaired of ever recovering the camera and gloves. And like Buitenhuis, I found the act of human honesty and kindness a source of comfort.

ANYONE WHO ATTENDED the University after World War II remembers the construction boom that hit the University—a boom that tore up sidewalks, left streets tracked with muddy tire marks, and allowed grass to grow at its own risk. Since the boom, a great deal of time and effort have gone into landscaping the University grounds.

By 1950 lawns were beginning to be seeded and sodded, evergreen bushes and trees were being placed in permanent positions, and flowering shrubs, seeds and bulbs were making their presence known. Each year something new is added to make the "Campus beautiful by day and night."

As spring of 1955 drew near, the farm, still in this transplanted farm boy, began to show a resurgence. Each day as I walked to the office and across the campus, I watched with interest the progress of grass, the emergence of tulips by the Law Barn and the budding of trees and bushes.

In the sweeping semicircle in front of the Art Museum, the grass switched from a vivid green to a pinkish-white as the wild spring flowers opened. By the 10th of March trees were considering the possibility of budding. The flowering varieties were already showing the first color of their blossoms.

Everywhere there was color. And strength. And a new aliveness.

Perhaps it comes to everyone, this feeling of rightness that exists when the winter opens its door to spring. I don't know. I do know that I experienced such a feeling.

Spring is always my time for optimism.

Then, one morning in mid-March, my optimism fled. Overnight the cold wind had driven the plants to a cover of snow and ice. The living things were numbered. Today they look a little tired and worn, as humans do who experience too much for them to bear.

But the sun is shining again. Spring is beginning to make its second entrance. Perhaps the buds will never open with their colorful secrets but the grass will have its new coat of green and the trees will produce their leaves. The secret of nature is its persistence.

IN AN ATTEMPT to simplify voting procedures, the ballot for the annual election of Executive Board Members of the Alumni Association has been mailed to you apart from the magazine.

By the time this publication arrives, you will have received your ballot. If you've put it in some pigeon-hole and decided to do your voting later, we urge you to change your plans and vote today! The Association needs your expression of preference if it is to best serve the interests of all its members. Remember, the voting deadline is May 1.

CLASS COMMITTEES for the 1955 Reunion of Classes will be announced in next month's magazine. But if you need to plan vacations well in advance, the date for this year's Reunion is June 5. Classes of 1900, '05, '10, '15, '20, '25, '30, '35, '40, '45, and 1950 will meet.

As usual, the Reunions will be held in conjunction with Commencement. Those graduates who have not attended a class meeting in many years will find the Reunion period a time of catching up with campus developments and of seeing old friends. It's a chance to look backward at school days, to look at the present as the seniors graduate, and to look forward to the continued development of the University.

All members of the Reunioning classes will receive special notification by letter. Why not set June 5 aside now, however, as a day at your University?

DEDICATION

This magazine is respectfully dedicated to the students, alumni and faculty of the College of Engineering. And especially is it dedicated to the Dean of the College, W. H. Carson, who is completing his 30th year as a member of the O.U. Engineering faculty.