

Sooner Scene

THE Naval Air Technical Training Center, south of Norman, has been disposed of by the federal government. Seven hundred fourteen acres were granted to the University of Oklahoma and the City of Norman. On October 17th, the remaining acreage was auctioned to private bidders, bringing a total price of \$1,044,661.85.

Dividing and disposing of the base marks the close of an era during which more than a million men were trained here as technicians for the Naval Air Service. For several years following World War II, the University occupied a portion of the base for overflow classes, laboratories and student housing. O.U. students of the post war years will remember the improvised arrangements that were made to use the base to the best advantage. Many still have vivid memories of the terrible winter morning when five students lost their lives in the BOQ fire. A later fire destroyed a classroom building that was being used by the School of Geology. Lost in this building were geological maps and other records representing a lifetime of work by Professor A. J. Williams and other geology professors who were using the building at that time.

Happier memories of the base involve the parties and the Sooner Scandals held for several years at Building 92, the parties at the Officer's Club, the wonderful golf course built by the University along the east side of the base, the excellent facilities for intramural sports in Building 92 and the nearby athletic fields.

All of this is now past, and a clue to the future may be found in the present division of the 1,000-acre base. The University received a grant of 500 acres containing 40 buildings. This property includes such facilities as 180 apartments, a swimming pool, the 18-hole golf course with all buildings in that area, and a half section of undeveloped land along the west side of the base bounding the Continuing Education Center on the north and the Oliver Wildlife Reserve on the south.

The City of Norman will receive Building 92 and the area adjacent and to the north bordering on the city limits. A city park will be developed in this location.

The remainder of the base was disposed of at the auction in the following manner: Thomas E. Nix of Oklahoma City was high bidder at \$306,000 on full mineral rights on 714 acres and one-half the royalty on the remaining 428 acres. Incidentally, this included all of the rights to the University-granted land since none of the royalty was included in the grant.

Four parcels of land, including many buildings and one-half the royalty, a total of 428 acres, was purchased by Leon C. Giesick of Norman for a total of \$727,461.85. The only other items included in the sale were seven buildings which were purchased to be removed from the site at a price of \$11,200.

That portion of the base received by the University is an extremely valuable addition to the campus and brings the total acreage of the University campus to 2,924. The land and facilities will take care of both present and future needs for expansion.

—R. BOYD GUNNING

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