

significance is the fact that he conferred 2,151 of the 2,532 graduate degrees given by OU up to this time.

Said Roscoe Cate: "In the face of increasing enrollment and decreasing revenue, the way in which Bizzell maintained and even raised the scholastic ideals of the University during such a period of stress is perhaps his greatest achievement, although it is intangible and not so obvious as the physical improvements made on campus during the earlier years of his administration."

Cate pointed out that critics sometimes remarked that Bizzell "is not a good politician—he doesn't know how to deal with the legislature." "Yet, it might be said," said Cate, "with good reason, that President Bizzell is probably the only man in America who could have acquired \$560,000 for a library building.

"Sixteen years have passed since William Bennett Bizzell . . . came to Oklahoma to dedicate his energies and abilities to building and developing this state university.

"As he prepares to retire . . . and become president emeritus and head of the sociology department, a survey of the eventful years of his administration shows that President Bizzell has fulfilled the promises of his inaugural address to the utmost. In material progress, and in scholastic reputation, the University of Oklahoma has become

a vastly different institution than it was when he walked into the president's office in the summer of 1925, hung up his hat, and went to work on a thousand different problems.

"To some, it may seem that sixteen years have passed rapidly, that this period is only a short time. Yet it represents one-third of the entire life of the University. With all due respect to the valuable and capable work of the early administrators, it may be truly said that it is this last third of the University's life that has seen it flower into full stature as a well-rounded, mature institution."

"What pride and joy must be his as he looks out upon this campus and back across the years!" observed Joe Looney, president of the Board of Regents. "Even more, what greater pride and what greater joy must be his as he gazes in retrospect upon the thousands of young men and women passing across the commencement stage into an active life of good citizenship and useful service! Yes, he has done infinitely more than to lead in building a fine University. He has led in building life and character—manhood and womanhood—for Oklahoma.

"Oklahoma is proud of Dr. Bizzell for what he is. Oklahoma is grateful to Dr. Bizzell for what he has done. He has richly earned from the state of his adoption the righteous verdict of 'well done, good and faithful servant.'"



## THE BRANDT YEARS

**I**N EVERY sense of the word—when it came to the selection of Joseph A. Brandt as the next president of the University—the job sought the man.

No one conducted any special campaign in his behalf. What happened was that the Board of Regents wanted a man with a southwestern background, preferably an Okla-

homan and preferably a graduate of OU. They wanted a cultured, scholarly man, one who was comparatively young. It was concluded that Joe Brandt met these qualifications better than anyone else.

He had to be persuaded to take the post, because, in the first place, he was very happy as director of the Princeton University Press, where he had gone in 1938, and had already turned down three other offers that were more attractive financially. But, also, he was well aware of the enigmas that had plagued Bizzell, and of the bleak outlook in the way of educational appropriations in his home state.

"Joe, don't go back to Oklahoma," he was warned. "You can't operate a university without money."

But he came, and became the first alumnus to serve as president of the University. "Anyone who is an alumnus has a natural affection for his alma mater," he said. "Even if you have an errant child, you are still going to have affection for him." Brandt, a sandy-haired, quick-witted scholar with a diversity of intellectual interests, was leaving a successful career as a college professor and publisher.

"I love the University of Oklahoma, as all my intimate friends know. Therefore, when the Board of Regents approached me, I was deeply moved. Nevertheless, the decision Mrs. Brandt and I finally made was extremely difficult and probably no person ever approached a university presidency with greater reluctance than I did. I have been most happy in publishing, and the kindness which Princeton has shown me and my family added to our reluctance to change careers.

"Naturally, at this moment, with the telegrams rolling in and long distance calls disrupting my peace of mind, I feel like a cub reporter covering a five-alarm fire.

"It is a great honor being chosen as president of my alma mater, and I appreciate more than I can say the opportunity to repay in part Oklahoma's kindness to me in giving me a free education. But I learned long ago that honor is merely a synonym for hard work. The regents have chosen me to succeed a hard-working president, and I appreciate the task before me.

"The greatness of Oklahoma is going to be measured in time by the hard, clear thinking her citizens do, and if the University of Oklahoma can contribute that quality, we need have no fear of the future.

"Almost every university faculty has its own peculiar quality, and it has been the fortune of Oklahoma that its university faculty has been willing to pioneer in a number of distinctive fields of learning, and, it is our hope that, in a short time, we can acquaint every citizen with a more intimate knowledge of the extreme loyalty and distinguished services so many of the University faculty have rendered. If the people of the state will share the sincere enthusiasm and vision of the service their university can render all the people of Oklahoma which members of the Board of Regents hold, we think that the future of the school as it enters its second fifty years will be an unqualified success."

Brandt was not one to mince words, and he didn't waste anyone's time with small-talk. At a press conference, he was asked, "Do you plan a lifetime as president of the University of Oklahoma?" "I may be here for only one year," Brandt replied. "I'm on trial here. But the state of Oklahoma is also on trial by me." The reporters nearly

dropped their pencils, for it was highly unusual for a man in his position to make such a remark. But, a short time later, he was to establish his position with the University in an even stronger way. It began six days before he was to take office, when he received a telephone call which moved him, of all things, to resign the presidency. The call came long distance from Maurice Halperin, an assistant professor of Spanish at OU, who was teaching a summer session in Tallahassee, Florida.

"Joe, I've been fired; you've got to do something about it."

"Why were you fired?"

"I don't know. They didn't tell me. I was just fired."

"You know how rumors can go," Brandt recalled. "Halperin was pretty much to the left, and some people thought he was a communist. But, apparently no charges had been made against him at all. Then I called Lloyd Noble, who was chairman of the Board of Regents, and asked if Maurice had been fired and what the reason was. He replied that it had been recommended, but no reason was given for doing so. 'Well, Lloyd,' I said, 'you are going to have a telegram in the next hour saying that you have no president, because I don't want to become president of a university where they don't respect academic practices. I don't want to become president of a university which would be black-listed by the AAUP [American Association of University Presidents] and which doesn't provide a person accused of something with a written documentation so that he can defend himself before a proper tribunal.' Lloyd said, 'Don't do that.' I said, 'Well I'm doing it.'

"So there Sallye and I sat with our furniture packed, waiting for our moving man, living in a state of great disarray. It really was distracting. The board had to do something; so they arranged a special meeting in Chicago which I attended, and we wrangled all day long. It was freely admitted that there had been no charge made. There had been no written charge of any character, and I was adamant about the fact that you must have the proper

*Brandt delivers an address at a WWII memorial service.*



hearing before the proper committee. . . . We finally compromised with a one-year appointment. Halperin was on tenure, and there had been no criticism as to whether he had 'indoctrinated' anyone while teaching Spanish. So, as I say, he was reinstated without prejudice only for a year.

"The actual story, as I later learned, was that Halperin had owned a Soviet gold bond which, at that time, I think, paid seven per cent, which is a very good investment. Then, when the Hitler-Stalin deal came along, he sold the bond. That doesn't seem to me to be a strong index that he was a communist. He probably should have retained it. The banker was violating all kinds of ethics in reporting it; the University was violating all kinds of canons in accepting this kind of information without informing Halperin. The point is that there are times when you have to take a stand which makes demands of you, and this was one which I couldn't ignore. I couldn't come down here with this kind of situation. We would have been blacklisted, and what a way to start. . . .

"But, the whole matter did resolve a sticky problem by establishing a committee of tenure and grievances, which, I understand, is now functioning perfectly. People can no longer be removed without cause; you have no university when that's possible. Anyway, I withdrew my resignation and came back to Norman."

Although realizing that changes are not always popular, Brandt did not hesitate to seek reform. In essence, the University he returned to was an oligarchy. His objective was to make it a democracy. Feeling the need to prepare for the future and revitalize the University administration, he was to institute a number of changes designed to give the faculty more participation in University affairs, to give new responsibilities to younger members of the faculty, to emphasize the University as a whole instead of its various divisions, and to concentrate attention on making education the first charge of the public conscience.

Brandt was not the only former OU student to receive new administrative duties. Another alumnus, Dr. John G. Hervey, was named the new dean of the law school, succeeding Julien C. Monnet, who had given 32 years to the faculty since founding the School of Law. Journalism professor Fayette Copeland, a 1919 graduate, was appointed to the newly created position of counselor of men, and Dr. Roy Gittinger, of the Class of '02, who had been dean of administration from 1926 to 1941, was now dean of admissions.

This also marked the era of the first all-alumni athletic association, with Jap Haskell as athletic director and baseball coach, Snorter Luster succeeding Tom Stidham as head football coach, Bruce Drake serving as basketball coach, and John Jacobs as track coach.

Elsewhere, aviation was taking a big stride forward at the University with the presentation of a gift of \$10,500 from the estate of the late Max Westheimer of Ardmore to OU for the purchase of an airport site for student pilot training. Walter Neustadt announced the gift as a memorial to his father-in-law.

In politics, Robert S. Kerr, who attended the University in 1916, was elected governor of Oklahoma; Josh Lee, a 1917 graduate, was re-elected to the U.S. Senate, and alumni Mike Monroney and Jed Johnson were returning to Congress. In sports, Gerald Tucker was blossoming into

an All-American basketball player, and observant major league scouts were looking over a slugging outfielder from Cloud Chief named Dale Mitchell.

In early December of 1941, grim-faced students filled the Field House to hear President Roosevelt's war message to Congress following the Japanese attack of Pearl Harbor. Almost immediately afterwards, a recruiting office was set up at the Armory to accommodate scores of students seeking to enlist in the armed services.

It was a time for all good men to come to the aid of their country, and, as public sentiment became more and more concerned over the nation's safety in a chaotic world, the University was again left with those either too old or too young or physically unfit to serve. Things were certainly going to be different in the next few years, but, as Roy Gittinger, who had just written the first official history of the University, prophesied during the darkest days of World War II: "When this period of storm and danger is over, the University . . . will again be ready to face the future with confidence and with ideals unchanged."

**D**ESPITE THE catastrophic burdens on education brought about by World War II, it is amazing the number of things that Joe Brandt was able to accomplish during the short time he was president.

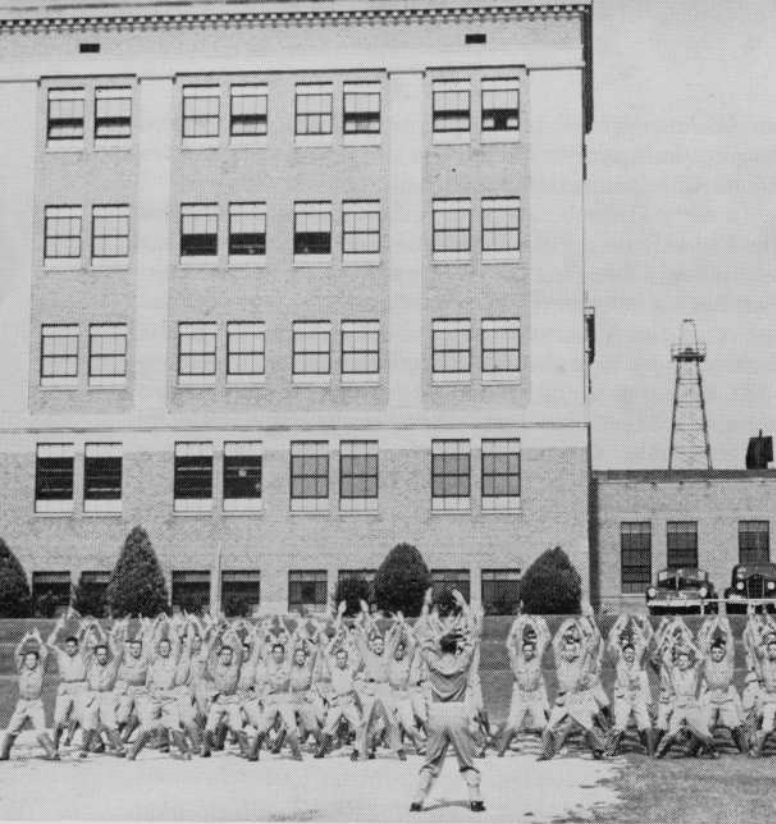
In the midst of the near impossibility of acquiring federal assistance, a serious drop in enrollment (hastened by the lowering of the draft age to 18), the take-over of large dormitories on campus by Army and Navy personnel (making it extremely difficult for many students to find adequate housing), the absence of young members of the teaching staff who had gone off to war, and any number of hair-graying problems and disheartening setbacks, Brandt instituted the first in a series of changes that resulted in the University's rebirth as a democratically run institution. These were much-needed changes that "have withstood the test of time and are today monuments to his foresight."

Actually, the basic idea for a University College began years before when Brandt was student editor of *The Oklahoma Daily*. A classmate of his had discovered that, after spending three years in the engineering college, engineering was the last field he wanted to go into.

"According to his calculations," Brandt said, "he had wasted three years. I discovered more and more cases of this sort. In most cases, freshmen have no idea of what they want to do in life . . . and, as president, this was in my memorandum to the regents: 'We have to find some way in which a student has some time to orient himself, to find what he wants to do, his true inclination.' They were enthusiastic about it."

Before Brandt established the University College, freshmen, upon enrolling, entered directly into their major colleges. Under his new program freshmen would complete a common curriculum embracing the basics of a liberal arts education before selecting and entering a major field of study. University College was begun as a freshman-sophomore program which has since been modified to include only freshmen, but the principle operates today as Brandt conceived it.





*Khakis were omnipresent on campus during war years.*

Another of Brandt's major achievements was his work in founding the Research Institute and molding it into a million-dollar operation. It was set up specifically for coordinating campus research and providing faculty members with a means of finding research support (for the humanities as well as science). The Institute undertakes research for all levels of government, business, and industry.

"Research," said Brandt in 1942, "is the heart which pumps the blood of life into industry. The greatest contributions our university will make to Oklahoma during the next fifty years will be in helping create an industrial society. Just as the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College has helped agriculture, so will the University help industry. The engineer and the scientist working in his laboratory on the campus on problems that, to a layman might seem most abstract, will in reality be laying the foundation through his discoveries for the employment of thousands of persons in the future.

"Even with the great handicap of practically no space for research, the University of Oklahoma Research Institute has in its brief year of existence already begun the exploration of a dozen major problems, and from some of these may come the beginnings of new industrial development. In many ways, the Institute is the most important single institution during these critical years, in Oklahoma.

"The decentralization of industry as a result of the war gives Oklahoma a marvelous opportunity to start even with many older states, but we must also be alert to the need for providing for the conversion of war plants to peace plants. . . . The possibilities are limitless and fascinating. They require imagination and leadership, and I hope our university can do its share in the task ahead.

"In the purely educational field," Brandt continued, "I hope the University will be able to demonstrate continued leadership. There is no greater task in life than to help young people get the right start. Nor is there any reason at

all why our University cannot give the youth of Oklahoma the best in education. I must confess that I cannot understand the few who are afraid of quality in education; if we are going to spend the money of the taxpayers in training youth, ought we not spend in such fashion as to give the utmost in return?

"The University will continue to march forward, as it has in the past, with the welfare of the state as its first consideration. During the war, the University must give its every nerve to the war effort. Yet, in doing so, we must not forget that on universities devolve many of the problems of peace."

Among Brandt's most meaningful and certainly most controversial innovations were those involving faculty participation in matters of policy. The Faculty Senate, composed of elected leaders representing different areas of the University, replaced the old Administrative Council, or Dean's Council, as a policy-making body, thus giving the general faculty, for the first time, full representation. Brandt also substituted rotating department-chairmanships for the department-head system.

There is a difference. The so-called "heads" had complete, autocratic control of their respective departments, the decisions they made seldom being subject to appeal by their faculties. "Chairmen," on the other hand, were to be appointed for four-year terms merely to preside over democratic departmental meetings.

Brandt also initiated the appointment of deans for five-year terms, and provided for a survey of their work before approving reappointments. This measure has since been modified to eliminate the specific term of office.

These democratic procedures, controversial though they were when Brandt started them, are taken for granted today by a faculty which has a voice in the University's administration.

"I tried to put some of the ideas which had been agitating in the minds of the OU faculty for years into reality while I was president," Brandt said. "Long before the advent of Sputnik, I knew there was something wrong with American education. . . ."

Brandt also instituted the idea of preparing agendas for the Board of Regents and successfully campaigned for teacher retirement pensions. "Policemen and firemen were getting them. Why not teachers?"

Brandt made it quite clear from the beginning of his presidency that he would discuss matters with anyone at any time, whether he be dean or janitor. He disclaimed his title of chief executive and preferred being called "Mr. Brandt" or "Joe."

"He doesn't care to be called President Brandt, because it sounds too high hat for his taste," said Kenneth Kaufman. "And he will probably go up in blue smoke (not tobacco smoke either) the first 2,000 times he is called 'Dr. Brandt.' As one member of the Princeton University Press staff put it, 'There's nothing pontifical about Joe Brandt.' And Joe Brandt he is.

"He is a red-headed Oklahoma cyclone of energy and enthusiasm. . . . They say he is the only executive in existence who can carry on six conferences at once. He strides from his office to the staff offices, and back, trailing tobacco smoke behind him like clouds of glory, talking like a whirlwind, and he has them all jumping to keep up with his flow

of ideas. When he first came, they wanted to ask him to get an interpreter, so they would know what he was talking about. Now they merely ask him to take his pipe out of his mouth.

"Whatever happens at OU will be three-fourths Joe Brandt and one-fourth policy. So far as concerns a program or a project he believes to be right or necessary, he can be as stubborn as a mule and as irritatingly persistent as a horsefly; as far as Joe Brandt and his personal prerogatives and feelings are concerned, he is the most unassuming person you will ever meet. His regard for the rights and feelings of others amounts practically to a religion.

"He bristles with ideas. It was proverbial while he was at OU that when everybody else reached an impasse, it was time to call on Joe Brandt; when anybody else had one idea, he would have a dozen. And one of his ideas would contain the right answer. He never lets up, yet he always pushes the thing to be done and keeps himself in the background. His work has every claim, he himself none at all. His capacity for complete and all-absorbing enthusiasm is as boundless as it is contagious. He can get wildly excited over anything, great or small, he happens to be engaged in.

"He has courage, unlimited energy, tolerance, kindness, loyalty, love for people, honesty, an unshakable faith in humanity, ideas, an enlightened viewpoint, a balanced judgment, a wide experience—and, with it all, humility. And this last is proof conclusive that he is a very great man."

Rather ironic is the fact that Brandt, the former college president, considers being a full professor as the highest honor a man can achieve in a university.

"The university is a community of scholars made up of professors and young people training to become scholars. What is a president? He is a servant of the professors. There has to be someone to call the turns, see that the classes meet, etc. A university presidency when all is said and done is a dead-end street. Where do you go from there? I'm not demeaning the fact that being a university president is a great honor. It is. But, if someone asked me to be one again, I'd tell him 'hell no!'"

Brandt insists that he never wanted the job at OU. Yet he accepted it. The challenge it offered and a natural affection for the institution are the magnets which attracted him. An early speech of his bears this out:

"I realize that I am giving up the easy job, in a career that I love, to take the hard job. It will be worth the while if all Oklahomans can be made to look upon their university with the pride which the people of New Jersey and Connecticut have for Princeton and Yale . . . Oklahoma will be what we choose to make it. Oklahoma and the Southwest are the last strongholds of American culture. The great dream would be to place the cultural resources and treasures of which the university is a repository at the disposal of the whole state. The great opportunity lies in the fact that we are creating a culture, and, if we are wise, we shall give that culture a conscious guidance and direction.

"I want the University to become the center of ideas for the state.

"As the function of the agricultural college is to restore lost soil to fertility, stimulate agricultural production, help the farmers solve their economic and social problems, in

short, to make their lives at once more secure, richer and happier, so it is the function of the university to be guide, counselor and friend to industry, the professions and the whole social fabric.

"Stemming from the thought that the university should be a place brimming with ideas, is the principle that in the future no teacher will be employed unless he is (1) a sound scholar in his chosen field, and (2) an original thinker and a man who will stimulate students to think. A body of citizens who cease to think is the most dangerous of all elements a society can have."

**B**RANDT SAID early in his career that, if the state government ever meddled with the University, he'd quit. Quit he did in the winter of 1943 after the University's budget, already drastically low, was cut. This time, he could not turn down an unusually attractive offer to return to the field of publishing as director of the University of Chicago Press.

"The Board of Regents accepts the resignation with the greatest reluctance," said Joe W. McBride, president of the board, "and only after the board has exhausted every means to prevail on him to remain with the University as president."

Brandt explained in his letter of resignation: "While I made it clear at the time I came down to Norman that I did not propose to make a university presidency my career, I had hoped to continue with my work here for a longer period. But one does not choose the time when opportunity knocks. This offer from Chicago, which came like a bolt from the blue, I consider the biggest challenge and opportunity I have ever had come my way. I would be doing myself and my family a grave injustice if I were to reject it for the will-of-the-wisp future which the financing of Oklahoma's higher education holds.

"No president of this university can ever be comfortable as long as he knows that worthy faculty members are eking out an existence at salaries far lower than day wages paid common labor; nor can any president bring in invigorating new and young faculty members with assurance that their gifts can be developed through adequate financial recognition. If Oklahomans would only gain the vision of the real service their University could render, they would feel no pride in a \$7,000,000 balance in the state treasury; a balance largely achieved at the expense of education—the foundation stone of the state."

The University of Chicago Press was the nation's largest when Brandt took over its directorship. He drew heavily on his experiences in making "scholarship readable" at the OU Press and the Princeton University Press. He later left Chicago to become president of the Henry Holt Publishing Company in New York City. Nearing retirement, he is currently a professor at UCLA, where the "founding man" established a graduate department of journalism in 1949. In looking back over two decades, Brandt believes that the effects a university presidency can have on a man are not much different today from what they were then.

"You just can't win. Look at Clark Kerr, one of the greatest university presidents. He made free speech possible on the campuses, and he was crucified."

Many observers concluded that Brandt's resignation at OU was intended as a "fire alarm" to awaken the people to the University's problems. The *Oklahoma City Times* published an editorial under the caption "Oklahoma Thrown for a Loss":

"The resignation of Joseph Brandt means a loss to the state for reasons that must be frankly faced. One reason is that it came about because of a badly applied program of economy, which was laudable in general, but worked to weaken some of our vital functions of education. It was economy applied in the wrong places.

"Another reason is that President Brandt had a vision for a great revival of practical effort to conserve and utilize Oklahoma's unique natural and human resources, through a research division and intensified attention paid to land use, applied science, agricultural wealth, industrial capacity and decentralization that would bring Oklahoma energy and wealth back to Oklahoma. The interior states are in grave danger of losing these elements of strength to the big eastern metropolitan centers, in a constant drain

that has already set in, and he foresaw this trend and was building for a new and energetic campaign of true and broad-gauged conservation. Through such a program, education gets away from academic dreaming into practical service.

"The ground can be regained if the appointing powers find an outstanding man who will see such a vision of Oklahoma's greatness."

Finding such a man was not easy. It would take the combined efforts of the Board of Regents and a special faculty committee presided over by Dr. George L. Cross, 38-year-old acting dean of the Graduate College. After studying any number of people for the post, one of the committee members finally suggested, "I think we have a better man right here than any that we've interviewed. Why don't we offer the presidency to Dr. Cross?" It was unanimous, and he took the position on an acting basis the first of January, 1944.

No prediction was offered as to when a permanent president would be selected.



## THE CROSS YEARS

**G**EOERGE LYNN CROSS was born on a farm near Woonsocket, South Dakota, in 1905, and attended grade school and high school there. He graduated with a bachelor of science degree from South Dakota State College in 1923 and received his master's degree from the same institution a year later. It was then that he married the college beauty queen, Miss Cleo Sikkink, also a science major, who was completing work for her degree.

He received a Ph.D. degree from the University of Chicago in 1929, and, during the following year, did scientific research on plant proteins at the university as a research fellow with a Rockefeller grant. From Chicago he went to the University of South Dakota as head of the botany department, a post he held four years before being appointed to the OU faculty.

He advanced rapidly at the University. After being