

ED H. MOORE

By Charles Evans

Very few thinking men and women who ever looked upon the face of Lincoln did not see there the traces of a rugged and stormy life. One of those who served with him through the terrible days of 1861-1865, said that never could he forget the grief he saw when he looked into the eyes of Abraham Lincoln.

Whatever may have been the form and face of Ed H. Moore, United States Senator from Oklahoma in the years 1943 to 1949, in his earlier life, those who saw him in his latter days found in his rugged form and features unmistakable proof that his life had ranged through the experiences of poverty, in association with the poor and needy, and that whatever life had brought him, it had been won upon a hard fought battlefield.

This man, who was given the honor by the electorate of Oklahoma of being given the highest position a State can offer to any man, was born on a Missouri farm on November 19, 1871. Like hundreds of other American's he received his best training in the universal farm life, in a pioneer home with scant furnishings, the round of daily chores and farm work that was not restricted by any eight-hour day, but reached high up through necessity to include that range of service rated as from sun-up to sun-down, the daily grind that demanded sacrifice and self denial on the part of all within the home. All this, Ed H. Moore learned from teachers more serious, more capable, and when understood, more ennobling than any other given to mortal man. Recently in a convention, embracing 300 of the most eminent men of America, a census was taken of their birth and origin. Out of these, more than 235 were born on the farm.

After a rural school education had been obtained, he broke away from a small farm in Nodaway County, Missouri, to teach school in the surrounding region. As many another of great leaders has done in his early manhood, he turned from the school room and fixed his eye upon the law, entering Kansas City Law School he graduated in 1901, and with keen eyes and close analysis, he concluded that an expansive life lay in that strange new land—the Indian Territory. He went to Okmulgee, and with Mr. Edgar T. Noble of that city, formed a legal partnership. From the first, this combination of Moore-Noble prospered, and in subsequent years it became one of the largest and most powerful law firms in the State of Oklahoma. In 1910, this partnership was dissolved and Ed Moore set out to form an oil career which became the very working substance of his after years and brought to him not only immense fortune,

but revealed his unwavering courage, his remarkable discernment, and his profound honor and nobility as well.

He organized the Independent Oil and Gas Company, incorporated it with \$250,000, and as one of his friends said, "His magical touch transformed this business into a venture which, eleven years later, he sold to the Phillips Petroleum Company for some forty millions of dollars." These Napoleon's of commerce are seldom satisfied. Mr Moore went on into the development of the Holmes Field of Okfuskee County; he developed pools in Creek and Seminole County and entered Kansas and California to widen his oil empire. In this world of the Oklahoma and American oil industry, he not only conquered, but as he entered the domain of larger living, his reputation and character equally enlarged and engaged the attention and admiration of his fellowmen. Here he met Lew Wentz, the philanthropist, Eugene Lorton, the great editor, the Phillips brothers, mighty industrialists, Lloyd Noble, a millionaire benefactor, all of these and more of every vocation, profession, creed or party, knew that they met in this man one who knew his rights and the rights of his plain neighbor, and knowing these rights, dared to maintain them.

Senator Moore took his citizenship as he did his oil business—dead in earnest. Throughout his life, up to the age of seventy-one years, he had been a party Democrat. In 1940, Governor Leon Phillips, appointed Mr. Moore as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention, which nominated the late President Roosevelt for the third term. Upon seeing the trend of the New Deal, and thoroughly displeased with the platform and policy of the Democratic party, he declared in almost strident terms his opposition, which led him at last to a nomination by the Republican party as a candidate for the United States Senate in 1942. The nature of his character was revealed in this campaign for his friends and enemies alike marveled, as one said: "He did everything in the books to defeat himself." Although he met in this senatorial arena, one of the most formidable and brilliant Democratic United States Senators, he won and took his seat in the United States Senate on January 3, 1943. A newspaper said of him that he took his job as United States Senator seriously, and quoted the Senator as saying: "The job of Senator in these terrible times is no laughing matter." His figure in the United States Senate in the filibuster of June 1946 took on immense proportions. America saw in him at this time a man who was willing to fight, and to fight hard, for what he considered was right. He retired from the United States Senate upon his own volition. Two months before his retirement on November 19, 1948, Senator Moore observed his 77th birthday and the press reported that he arrived in Tulsa on that day by plane from Duncan and that he said: "I am feeling fine; I don't feel any older."

In early life, Ed Moore had married Miss Cora McComb, daughter of a Lamar, Missouri physician. They were never blessed with children, and perhaps out of this grew the continuous provision in his life for the care and education of a great number of worthy young men and women. Although given without ostentation, his friends knew that he was a generous patron of churches, schools and hospitals. In his last days he developed a very beautiful home at 2431 East 29th Street, Tulsa, of Georgian style, an exact duplicate of the home at Alexandria, Virginia, where the Moore's resided while the Senator was serving in Washington. Here, on the morning of September 2, 1950 at 11:25 death came to this stalwart man. Some members of his family had been buried in the city of Okmulgee and there is where he wished to lie, and there is where, through the years to come, the Oklahoma people who loved and honored him will find his resting place.

Governor Roy J. Turner, when advised of Mr. Moore's death said: "I feel that a great loss has been suffered by the State through the death of one of Oklahoma's pioneers in industry—a man who took an active interest in the civic affairs of the State." Mr. Norris G. Henthorne, editor of the *Tulsa World*, stated: "Mr. Moore's death represents a great loss to Tulsa and Oklahoma. He was a man who faced adversity with courage. He never avoided an issue. He was the pioneering spirit that went into the building of this nation."

So, if the youth read of this man's life, let them know of a truth, that as they see him come from a poor farm home, finding his education in the now almost despised one-room school, observing him as an obscure country school teacher, and then moving into law and then industry and finally, in the highest seats of power in the greatest senatorial forum of the world, let them take heart, let them repeat and without reservation, know, that the old fashioned stanza they have read somewhere is still the best and highest guide to character and power:

"The heights by great men, won and kept
Were not obtained by sudden flight;
But they, while their companions slept
Were toiling upward in the night."