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Robert L. Owen (left) and Thomas P. Gore at the Washington birthday dinner Saturday.

Old Friends Turn Clock Back, Honor Owen on 89th Birthday

By JOHN E. KING
(Oklahoman-Times Washington Bureau)

WASHINGTON, Feb. 3.—Five United States senators from Oklahoma, including the two now serving and three who have served since the admission of the state in 1907, gathered with members of the house delegation from the Sooner state and other friends Saturday to honor former Senator Robert L. Owen at a luncheon in the speaker's dining room in the national capitol. It was Senator Owen's eighty-ninth birthday.

A large birthday cake topped with red rosettes and bearing a single red candle surrounded by the inscription in red lettering "89th birthday anniversary, Feb.

5, 1945" was presented to the honor guest as photographers snapped flashlight photos and the assembled friends applauded.

Representative Jed Johnson, chairman of the delegation presided. At his right sat Senator Owen, to his left Senator Thomas P. Gore, who with Senator Owen served as the first United States senators from Oklahoma. Former Senator Josh Lee, now a member of the civil aeronautics board, and Senators Elmer Thomas and Ed H. Moore, now representing Oklahoma, also were at the speaker's table.

All Pay Tribute

Senator Gore, Senator Thomas, Senator Lee and others paid high tribute to the honor guest for his service in the senate, where his work in enacting financial legislation was outstanding. Senator Owen is best known as co-author with Senator Carter Glass of the federal reserve act, often referred as the Owen-Glass act. For the last dozen or more years, Senator Owen has been interested in promoting a global alphabet by which English can be made a world language, easily written and easily understood in all languages and by all races.

Senators Owen and Gore, both now residents of Washington and both now blind, are the only living members of the senate that was sworn in to office in 1907, and both continue active in behalf of the state they represented for many years.

A Long Life Span

Senator Gore reminded the guests that the span of Senator Owen's life represents almost one-twentieth of the time since the star of Bethlehem stood over the manger as Christ was born; considerably more than one-half of the time since the birth of this republic; and that during this span the senator has witnessed more human progress than has been made in all

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Clock Turned Back as State Honors Owen

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the years since the beginning of recorded history.

Recalling that he and Senator Owen had been elected by the Oklahoma state legislature of Dec. 10, 1907, and that they were sworn in as members of the senate on Dec. 16, Senator Gore turned to Senator Thomas with the remark that he, as a member of that legislature had stood for both of them; Senator Moore later reminded the group that he also had voted for the election of both Senators Owen and Gore. Senator Gore recalled that he was elected on his 37th birthday. Senator Thomas said he is proud of having placed Senator Gore in nomination for the senate and in having supported both Senators Owens and Gore.

Days of Antiquity

The present senator recalled conditions in "those days of antiquity" and compared them with conditions today.

Senator Owen responded to the words of praise spoken by the various guests, recalled his service in the senate. How he had retired voluntarily after eighteen years to devote his time to his family and to his own interests, and told the group of his global alphabet and of his dreams that it may be used to banish ignorance and bring peace and happiness to the whole world.

The senator told the group that he had just received from Governor Kerr of Oklahoma acknowledgement of receipt of a medal that had been given by Thomas Jefferson to Thomas B. Chisholm, senator, Owens' grandfather. The medal is to be deposited in the State Historical Society Museum at Oklahoma City.

One Gold Bracelet

Representative Johnson displayed a gold bracelet, explaining that the bracelet had been presented by Senator Owen in 1913 to a young girl in Oklahoma who had written the winning essay on sewing. That young girl, he said, is now Mrs. Ross Risley, wife of the congressman from the Eighth district.

Among the guests in addition to the two senators, the three former senators all eight members of the house from Oklahoma were Mrs. Robert L. Owen, Mrs. Thomas P. Gore, Mrs. Elmer Thomas, Mrs. Jeb Johnson, Mrs. Victor Wickersham, Dr. Janet Meade, former professor of languages at the University of Virginia and now Johns Hopkins university and now secretary to Senator Owen; Judge Royce Savage of the northern district of Oklahoma; Miss Hazel Comstock, Oklahoma City, secretary of the Oklahoma State Society of Washington; Robert Brougham, Guy H. Woodward, an attorney associated with Senator Owen; Harry Walker, whose father was a homesteader in Oklahoma in 1904; Walter Emory, secretary to Commissioner Walker of the FCC; and Miss Marie Moore-Stewart of Oklahoma City, now with the Democratic national committee in Washington.