

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

PUBLISHED INDEX FOR *The Chronicles*, VOLUME XXIX

Members of the Oklahoma Historical Society and others receiving *The Chronicles* regularly can obtain the published Index for Volume XXIX, 1951, compiled by Mrs. Rella Looney, Clerk Archivist, by addressing a request to the Oklahoma Historical Society, Historical Building, Oklahoma City 5, Oklahoma.

SPECIAL COMMUNICATION FROM DR. ANGIE DEBO

The following letter has been received from Dr. Angie Debo, of Stillwater, Oklahoma, protesting the publication in *The Chronicles*, Vol. XXIX, No. 2 (Summer, 1951), pp. 224-47, of a letter by Mr. J. B. Wright, of McAlester, a native Oklahoman who served many years in the U. S. Indian Office to the Five Civilized Tribes in Oklahoma:

117 N. Knoblock
Stillwater, Okla.
January 31, 1952

Dr. Charles Evans, Editor
Chronicles of Oklahoma
Historical Building
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Evans:

I have waited too long before writing this letter, but finally at the urging of friends, I have decided to make a friendly protest against your publication in the Summer issue of the *Chronicles* of a letter by Mr. J. B. Wright of McAlester criticizing my *Five Civilized Tribes of Oklahoma: Report on Social and Economic Conditions*.

In all my career as a writer I have never replied to a review of one of my books. A reviewer is supposed to be a scholar in his own right, and his judgment is entitled to respect. If he makes a mistake, it is his own reputation that suffers. Thus if Miss Wright had reviewed my *Report* unfavorably, I should have made no objection, because she is a distinguished historical writer who has earned the right to criticize. But this is different. It is simply a letter from an individual correspondent.

I can sympathize with this writer, who is justly proud of his Choctaw blood and humiliated at the publicity given to the degraded condition to which some of these once great people have been reduced. But because of the intensity of his personal reaction he has not been able to read my *Report* objectively. Thus he has made statements about it which I wish to correct. I shall take time to reply to only one he takes up.

He says that I "am inclined to generalities. A reader might be led to believe that all Indians are placed in the same category . . . ministers, . . . men of wealth, etc., and classify them."

As a matter of fact I have made this distinction consistently throughout the *Report*. On page 1, speaking of this successful group, I said:

"They became leaders of the new composite society, and their traditions and their history became an important part of the state's cultural heritage. This fact is of basic significance." And in a footnote I stated, "This is discussed more fully in—" and I gave page references to two of my books.

On page 8 after describing the plight of landless Indians, I said:

"There are of course many 'landless' Indians of all these tribes who feel no lack. They make their living in the world outside—at skilled or unskilled labor, in the professions, in business. They constitute no problem, and require no rehabilitation."

On pages 27-28 after describing the policy of educational loans for Indians, I said:

"Many more attend college through their own or family initiative without outside help. These are unknown to statistics, but their presence is plainly apparent on every Oklahoma campus. They enter fully into student activities and graduate into the professional and business life of the general population. Many are making careers for themselves in distant states."

My *Report* of course, was not concerned with what I characterized as "these completely adjusted Indians." Naturally the major part of the work was devoted to those in need of rehabilitation. But even with this depressed class I cited instance after instance of hopeful response to opportunities. I described the progress of several who had become "successful farmers by any man's standards," and characterized their children as farm boys that would have been a credit to any community in the United States." And in my final summary on page 34 I said—still speaking of this underprivileged group—"It has been clearly demonstrated that the Indians do respond to agricultural opportunities, that they do benefit by educational training."

I shall not make my letter tedious by answering Mr. Wright's other objections. This reply to his first one should show that my *Report* received something less than a just evaluation in the *Chronicles*. I am sure you did not realize that in throwing your pages open to a private correspondent you were placing me in a difficult position, and I know you will permit me this defense.

Cordially yours,
Angie Debo

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF *Books Abroad*

An event in Oklahoma of international significance celebrated in January, 1952, was the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of *Books Abroad* that has been subsidized from its beginning by the University of Oklahoma and has served as "an indispensable tool of research in comparative literature, in bibliography and library science." Volume I was launched as a small magazine of thirty-two pages in January, 1927, through the Department of Modern Languages in the University of Oklahoma, under the leadership of Roy Temple House¹ who is internationally known for this step toward the ideal of World

¹ W. A. Willibrand, "Roy Temple House," *The Modern Language Journal*, Vol. XXXII, No. 5 (May, 1948), The University of Oklahoma.

Literature. A paper² read at the celebration of this Twenty-fifth Anniversary, by Dr. W. A. Willibrand, now Consulting Editor, touches briefly on the history of the development of *Books Abroad*, from which the following excerpts are taken:

"Back of *Books Abroad* was an adventurous type of hard work and also a dynamic vision which seemed to make failure impossible. This spirit of adventure, this unrelenting pursuit of a vision was thoroughly Oklahoman. One might compare the first year of *Books Abroad* with the many hundreds of towns and villages that sprung up in Oklahoma immediately after the different land openings. Our pioneer leaders knew what American communities were supposed to look like and they proceeded to build accordingly, intensely eager because of an intense awareness of personal adequacy to meet the hardships as well as the opportunities of pioneering. Roy Temple House, his first two associate editors, [Stephen] Scatori and [Josiah H.] Combs, together with their gifted advisory editor, Kenneth C. Kaufman, were each of them known to have a deep and far-reaching cultural inheritance, a linguistic versatility and a style of expression that rendered them totally adequate to the new editorial venture. . . .

"Recognition came quickly to *Books Abroad*. In its second issue, spring 1927, there were contributions by distinguished professors at the University of Chicago, Stanford, Johns Hopkins, and New York University. When Volume One was complete the list of prominent regular contributors had grown considerably. A magazine with such a precocious infancy could no longer take its proof-reading workers by surprise when they saw contributions by distinguished American and European masters of the written word: Carl van Doren, Channing Pollock, Burns Mantle, Clifton Fadiman, Joseph Wood Crutch, Sinclair Lewis, Alfonso Reyes, Jacinto Benavente, Jacob Wassermann, Ezra Pound, George Bernard Shaw, Thomas Mann—all of these and many more sent pieces to the youthful journal.

* * * * *

". . . . *Books Abroad* began to be listed in 1935 and 1936 by Litchfield's *Classified List*, Lyle's *Periodicals for the College Library*, Ulrich's *Periodical Directory*, and Ayers *Directory*; but it was not until 1941 that its articles began to be listed in the *International Index to Periodical Literature*. . . .

"There are certain kinds of literary research which can well be done at the University of Oklahoma, thanks to *Books Abroad* and its extensive card files. I think particularly of the European authors who made their homes on the American continent (not only in the U. S.) during the quarter-century covered by the volumes of *Books Abroad*. Men like Thomas Mann, Heinrich Mann, Franz Werfel, Ernst Toller, have been the subject of repeated studies; but many others have been neglected out of all proportion to their merit. Here I should like to mention the Swiss-American poet and philosopher, Gustav Mueller, and the Franco-German-American writer and editor of *Books Abroad* Ernst Erich Noth. Both of them began to be recognized long ago by some of the most reputable European publishers. When Mueller's sixth volume of poetry appeared last year I pointed out in the American-German Review that his work deserves to be studied. The same thing is true of Noth, whose talents and vital contacts with European letters bode well for his continued progress in creative work. . . .

"Mueller is one of many internationally significant authors who have given profound substance to the mid-twenties' dream of Roy Temple House. The spiritual meaningfulness of that dream is being carried forward nobly

² This paper titled "On the 25th Anniversary of '*Books Abroad*,'" by W. A. Willibrand, has been recently published (1952) in *The Oklahoma Quarterly*, at the University of Oklahoma.

by Ernst Erich Noth, who in a little more than two short years has won the admiration and the loyalty of the living first collaborators and readers of *Books Abroad*."

REPORT OF E. H. KELLEY, OKLAHOMA STATE BANKING DEPARTMENT

The Chronicles for summer, 1951 (Vol. XXIX, No. 2, pp. 173-6) contained an article "Oklahoma City Historical Markers," which reviewed the project promoted and completed under the auspices of *The '89ers*, by which this organization marked a number of outstanding historic sites in Oklahoma City in 1939, with a small bronze plaque or tablet erected at each of the different locations and bearing an inscription giving a brief history of the site marked. This article presented a list of seventeen of these bronze markers giving the exact inscription on each, located at the different historic sites in Oklahoma City.

On the south side of the main entrance to the Huckins Hotel, 20 North Broadway, Oklahoma City, is one of these bronze tablets erected by *The '89ers* to mark the site of the Citizens Bank established here in 1889. The inscription on this marker reads as follows: "*This tablet marks the site of the Citizens Bank. The first bank opened for business May 30, 1889. James Geary, President, L. A. Gilbert, Cashier and A. L. Welsh, Asst. Cashier.*"

Mr. E. H. Kelley, of the Oklahoma State Banking Department, who is known as the "Roving Ambassador" for the Historical Society in his work in the Banking Department over the state, is compiling a history on banks and banking in Oklahoma. He has stated that his purpose is to publish a Bank Directory covering the opening date of all private, incorporated territorial, state chartered and National banks that ever operated in either Indian Territory or Oklahoma Territory or the State of Oklahoma. Since the date of the opening of the Citizens Bank in Oklahoma City to be given in his Bank Directory will not be in agreement with the date of the opening of this bank appearing in the inscription of the marker, cited above, Mr. Kelley has presented a brief summary of his research in this matter. He finds the date of the opening of the Citizens Bank in Oklahoma City to have been in the first week of May, 1889, instead of the last week (May 30) as recited on the bronze tablet erected by *The '89ers*. Mr. Kelley's report giving citations from his research and his comments in this matter with reference to the Citizens Bank of Oklahoma City are as follows:

The Organization

Irving Jeffs Bunky, *The First Eight Months of Oklahoma City* (Oklahoma City, 1890), p. 74:

"Citizens Bank on the southeast corner of Main and Broadway was the first to open for business in the Territory. James Geary, Fox Winnie and A. L. Gilbert were in the City at the opening and on the 27th day of April,

it suddenly occurred to them to start a bank, and acting on the impulse, they set to work and by May 30th they had a building up and were doing business."

Comment:

There is no doubt in my mind about the date of organization. I have set the date at April 27th 1889, after discussing this matter with several citizens interested in banking, who were on the ground, having made the run to Oklahoma City, and whose memory places the date at about the date set by Bunky. Preparations for opening took time. There were checks and deposit tickets to be printed, books to be purchased, forms of notes and drafts to be made, and since the "Times" did not come off the press for its first issue until May 9th 1889, the organizers would have to obtain their supplies of printing from out-of-town sources. Proof of this statement follows. Bunky did not set the date of opening of the bank in his book—he merely stated that by May 30th 1889 the bank building was up and they were doing business.

Bunky, *op. cit.*, p. 35:

"The Oklahoma Journal was established by A. C. and W. W. Scott under the firm name of 'Scott & Scott'. A large and well assorted plant was shipped from Iola, Kansas, about the time of the opening, arriving in Oklahoma City May 1st. The first copy of the paper, an 8 column folio was issued May 9th and was the first paper published in Oklahoma City. The first issue of the paper was called 'The Times'. The name was changed in the next issue, May 16th to *The Oklahoma Journal*."

The Commercial, Ogden City, Utah, Saturday, May 18, 1889:

"W. H. Hicks handed us a copy of the Oklahoma Times yesterday of May 9th. It is a healthy looking eight column weekly and contains some remarkable statements about the new town. That the paper was issued under the most embarrassing conditions appears from the announcement that part of the material was still in the car and the rest in three different shanties in the city."

Comment:

The clipping from Utah has been deposited in the Historical Society. The Oklahoma Times of May 9th 1889 is in the files of the Historical Society and the Advertisement of the Citizens Bank appears in this issue, along with an Add of The Oklahoma Bank, showing and stating there were two banks in operation in Oklahoma City on that date. It was necessary to seek information covering the opening of the Citizens Bank, from sources outside of Oklahoma Country, which had not yet been designated as a Territory.

The Opening

The Oklahoma Almanac & Industrial Record of 1908, p. 50, col. '2:

"The Citizens Bank was the first financial institution to begin business in Oklahoma City."

Marion Tuttle Rock, *Illustrated History of Oklahoma* (Topeka, 1890), p. 78:

"The Citizens Bank was the first to do business in Oklahoma City."

The St. Louis Republic, St. Louis, Mo., May 7, 1892:

"Oklahoma City: Mr James Geary was born in Missouri. He was one of the first men on the ground here, and his bank The Citizens, was the first one opened in the city."

Reminiscences of '89ers (Book in Carnegie Library, Enid, Okla.), p. 105:

"James Geary; He organized and opened the first bank as The Citi-

zens Bank, May 3rd 1889 and was its president until selling out in July 1892 to Captain Stiles and others."

Kansas City Times, Kansas City, Mo.:

"Oklahoma City, I. T. May 2nd 1889: The Citizens Bank opened its doors for business today. It is the first bank to engage in business in this city."

Carters Monthly Magazine:

E. R. Brown, Editor of Times-Journal, Oklahoma City, wrote an article on Oklahoma City, which was re-printed in *Carters Monthly Magazine*, an extract from which is as follows: (P. 6, picture of James Geary; p. 7, picture of Citizens Bank as the first bank in Oklahoma City, and p. 8):

"Mr. James Geary was on the site of Oklahoma City before the opening and was eye-witness to the stampede for lots by those arriving on the afternoon of April 22nd 1889. Mr. Geary had seven cars of lumber on the site of the city three days in advance of the opening. As soon as the hour set for opening arrived he had men and teams at work distributing lumber on the lots staked off and had no difficulty in disposing of it. At the end of the fifth day Mr. Geary had erected 39 buildings, thus affording accommodations for the stocks of goods being brought into the city for sale. Mr. Geary also organized the Citizens Bank, which was ready for business eleven days after the opening (May 2nd). It was the first bank of the city. Mr. Geary was President of it for three years."

The Indian Chieftain, Vinita, I. T., p. 1, col. 6:

"Oklahoma City, I. T. May 3rd 1889:

The Citizens Bank opened its doors yesterday and it is the first bank to engage in business in this city."

Comment:

The clippings from the *St. Louis Republic* and the *Kansas City Times* and the full article in Carter's Monthly Magazine are in the Oklahoma Historical Society's files. *The Indian Journal*, Vinita, I. T., is in the Historical Society's files also. Since the majority of opinions have set the date of May 2nd, 1889, as the opening day for the Citizens Bank in Oklahoma City, I have selected that date for my Bank Directory.

Among some of the items shown above are statements subject to contradiction. Bunky states that the Citizens Bank was the first to open in the Territory. My research does not bear out this statement.

E. E. Brown in his article states that James Geary was on the ground before the hour of the opening of the Oklahoma Country, by the "Run" of April 22, 1889. He may have been down to make arrangements for all that has been said but an article appeared in *Cosmopolitan Magazine* for September, 1889 (Page 361), written by Hamilton S. Wicks, stating that Mr. Geary was in the caboose with him on his way to Oklahoma on April 22nd, 1889. I obtained a photostat of this article which I have deposited in the Oklahoma Historical Society. Then again, the papers in Oklahoma City show the Citizens Bank was in operation long before May 30th, 1889; here is one:

The Oklahoma Pioneer, Oklahoma City, Saturday, May 11, 1889, p. 4, col. 4:

"Oklahoma City already has two solid banking institutions, The Citizens Bank and The Oklahoma Bank, both open for business. Both houses have abundant working capital and all are managed by safe and competent financiers."

—E. H. Kelley

A HISTORY OF INGERSOLL, OKLAHOMA.

The following history of Ingersoll, now only a "ghost town" in Alfalfa County, is an interesting contribution from Mary Blue Coppock (Mrs. M. L.), of Cherokee, Oklahoma:

Ingersoll, Oklahoma, is located in what was formerly known as the Cherokee Outlet. This region was opened to settlement by the United States Government on September 16, 1893. This opening, recorded as "The Famous Race for Homesteads," was made by men of great stamina, vigor and courage.

For almost a decade the pioneers who had made the race into the Outlet and secured homes for themselves and families, were without a railroad or town nearer than sixteen miles distant. They were served by a general store in the exact location where Ingersoll was located many years later. This general store handled groceries, hardware, piece goods by the bolt, besides a few standard drugs and patent medicines. The post office was located in this same store. All the goods that supplied this store had to be hauled by wagon and team from the railroad towns of either Alva, Oklahoma, or Kiowa, Kansas. Alva was the county seat of the county, then known as County M, which later became known as Woods. Both of these towns were located on the Santa Fe railroad, the only one serving northwestern Oklahoma. The mail was brought from Alva by horse-drawn hacks. All crops raised by the farmers had to be hauled to these railroad towns, and these long drives were extremely hard and grueling. It would take a full day to make the trip and return with badly needed supplies. All building equipment had to be brought in this way. Often the weather was extremely hot, but more often extremely cold, as the crops were most generally taken to market after the fall crops were planted.

When it was rumored that a railroad was to be built through out community, it created a great deal of excitement and rejoicing. Surveyors and company officials began arriving in 1900. Since there were no hotels or other accommodations for keeping them, it behooved some one in the community to open their home to these strangers. My parents, Mr. and Mrs. B. F. Blue, always interested in anything that would bring improvement, opened their home and provided rooms and meals. While this created a great deal of extra work for my mother, she never complained, for it brought into our home association with many interesting people, who were not only well educated, but refined and cultured. In return for my mother's many kindnesses, they did many lovely things for her. I well remember one incident that was quite amusing to us. One of the young officials of the road was from Kansas City, Missouri, which was a large, noisy city with its clanging street cars and busy traffic. After one night in our home he remarked he was ready to return to the City for it was so quiet in our country home he couldn't sleep.

While the railroad road bed was being surveyed, townsites were laid out all along the right-of-way, and lots sold in anticipation of the day when these towns would actually have railroad service. The committee in charge of the Ingersoll Townsite set a day for a grand opening when they hoped to really put Ingersoll on the map. Evidently this company did a masterly job of advertising, for they had interested people as far away as the eastern seaboard states. I can personally testify to this, for in the summer of 1903, I was on a train enroute from Washington, D. C., to Newport News, Virginia. On the crowded train a strange young lady sat down beside me, and as fellow travelers will do, we began chatting. She inquired where I was from. When I told her from Ingersoll, Oklahoma, she became very much interested, as she said her father a year or two before had purchased lots in Ingersoll as an investment. This was

indeed a most unusual coincidence, as my father had been both chairman and secretary of the townsite company that had sold the lots to her father. By the time the above incident took place, Ingersoll had developed into a thriving little village and I was proud to tell her all about its amazing growth and of its various activities.

At its peak of prosperity, Ingersoll was a town of over 1,000 inhabitants. It was located on the Choctaw, Oklahoma & Gulf Railroad which ran from Geary, Oklahoma, to Waldron, Kansas, and from there extended to Wichita, Kansas. There was also a spur running from Ingersoll to Alva, Oklahoma. The town is located in one of the greatest wheat growing sections of the state. At its peak, the town had three churches, two banks, a flour mill, two grain elevators, a newspaper, a cultural club that studied Browning, Shakespeare and the Chautauqua courses, a thriving Masonic Lodge, Eastern Star and Odd Fellow Lodge. There were also seven saloons, with their attendant pool halls and "what-have-you," although the better element of the town wasn't at all proud of these. This flourishing little town remained prosperous and active for eight or ten years. Then a rival town five miles distant began to overshadow the activities of Ingersoll.

In the year of 1901, shortly after the Choctaw Railroad began construction, another company began building a rival road paralleling the Choctaw for almost its entire length. This was known as the Orient Road which ran parallel one-half to one or two miles from the Choctaw for many miles. On this Orient railroad, five miles distant from Ingersoll, a company had organized and was planning to establish a town to be known as Cherokee. The people of Ingersoll realized a town that close to theirs would be very detrimental to their prosperity. They also realized it would be to the advantage of both towns if a plan could be worked out whereby the two towns could merge and be established on both the Choctaw and the Orient roads. After much arguing and bickering, Ingersoll offered to move their buildings two miles to the south where the two roads were only about one half mile apart, if Cherokee would agree to build their town in that location. Ingersoll also agreed to take the name of Cherokee for the combined towns. However, selfish interests prevailed and the town of Cherokee was laid out five miles from Ingersoll.

At the time Oklahoma became a state in the year 1907, the Constitutional Convention divided the County of Woods into three counties, naming Alva the County Seat of Woods, Fairview, the County Seat of Major, and Cherokee, County Seat of Alfalfa. This was accounted for by the fact that two members of the Constitutional Convention were from Cherokee. In 1908 a petition was circulated by Ingersoll, Carmen and Jet asking that an election be held giving the people a choice in determining what town should be their County Seat. The election was held in 1908 with Cherokee, Ingersoll, Carmen and Jet candidates for the honor. Cherokee won tidily, receiving 54 per cent of all votes cast when 40 per cent was all that was necessary for a decision. Carmen contested the election on the grounds that the voters were not required to raise their right hand when they subscribed to the affidavit. This contest dragged along for two years when the Supreme Court handed down its decision in March of 1912, making Cherokee the County Seat.

Thus, we find several factors contributing to the undoing of Ingersoll: the locating of Cherokee five miles away; permitting saloons to locate in Ingersoll while Cherokee denied them this privilege; a fire in 1912 that destroyed the main business block; then another later that burned the hotel and hardware store; a bank robbery that did irreparable damage to the building from two blasts of T.N.T.; and the decision that made Cherokee the County Seat. With regard to the saloons in Ingersoll, it should be remembered this was the day of local option in Oklahoma, and

the age-old question as to saloons contributing to the prosperity of a town was shuttled back and forth just as it is today in many places. It appears from all the foregoing, that this one situation is fairly good proof of the fallacy of this claim.

An interesting event occurred in Ingersoll when Carrie Nation with her famous hatchet visited the town. While she didn't use the hatchet on any of the bars, she did use her viriolic tongue to good advantage. As she stood haranguing the group that had assembled to hear her speak, she spied a gentleman placidly chewing his tobacco. Pointing her finger at him, she scornfully said, "You remind me of a billy goat chewing his cud." The man so honored was Eli McLaughlin, who had made the race into Oklahoma, homesteaded a farm, and at that time was president of one of the banks in Ingersoll.

Today, February 1952, Ingersoll is almost a phantom town. A few of its first citizens are still living and look back with a nostalgic longing to those days when Ingersoll was a thriving hamlet with all the business establishments, the churches, schools, fraternal organizations, clubs and societies that went to make up a metropolitan city of that day. Today, one church and the two story Masonic building of brick are all that remain of such organizations which contributed to the culture and refinement of the people of Ingersoll. For one of its size, it had as honorable and distinguished a citizenry as ever graced any town anywhere.

The town received its name from a Mr. Ingersoll who was president of the Choctaw, Oklahoma & Gulf Railroad. The town of Amorita, fourteen miles to the northeast and located on the same railroad, was named for the wife of Mr. Ingersoll.

The first postmaster of Ingersoll was Clifford McDaniel who received his appointment September 13, 1901. Mr. McDaniel was the first teacher in the first rural school in what is now Alfalfa County. This school was located two miles east of Ingersoll.

The length of the Choctaw, Oklahoma & Gulf Railroad was 106.3 miles from Geary, where it started, to Waldron, Kansas, and was completed in 1902. This line was abandoned for passenger service September 15, 1936. The spur from Ingersoll to Alva was 15.6 miles, and was also built in 1902. This spur is still in use for freight service, as is the line from Geary to Ingersoll. No passenger service on any of the lines.

—Mary Blue Coppock

INTRODUCTION OF OKLAHOMA FOLKLORE TO NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

The Editorial Department of *The Chronicles* presents the following contribution on "Oklahoma Folklore" from Mr. Bob Duncan, Curator of Local History and Folklore Collection in Oklahoma City Libraries, in which he outlines some future contributions on this subject that will be planned for publication in "Notes and Documents":

OKLAHOMA FOLKLORE

For many years now, since the departure of Dr. B. A. Botkin to the Library of Congress, and the disappearance of the Oklahoma Folklore Society of the 'twenties, collection of Oklahoma folklore has lagged behind the preservation of materials in any other area of Oklahoma history.

With this number of *The Chronicles*, a certain portion of each will present a contribution designed to discuss the various aspects of Oklahoma folklore, as well as to publicize what is currently being done to preserve Oklahoma's rich folk heritage.

The Local History and Folklore Collection of the Oklahoma City Libraries was established in the spring of 1949 to collect and classify Oklahoma folklore, and at the same time to serve as an information center where the public would be able to find a listing of Oklahoma folklore collectors over the state, together with a description of their collections as to type of material and amount.

As of this date, the plan has been successful. The Oklahoma City Libraries Collection includes a vast amount of material, ranging from folk songs to witchcraft and superstitions. In addition, it has served over a hundred scholars, historians and writers all over the country interested in Oklahoma folklore.

One disturbing thing has been discovered in the Oklahoma City Libraries' project, however, and that is that there appears to be more interest in Oklahoma folklore outside the state than there is within the state. Perhaps it is because most Oklahomans live too close to their folklore to be able to recognize its true value. Nevertheless, until more Oklahomans become active in the field of folklore collection, the coverage of all the different areas of folklore within the state can never be adequate.

Oklahoma's value as a folklore center lies in the fact that few places in the United States can offer so many varied traditions and cultures existing in such close proximity to one another. After all, Oklahoma's history as a settled territory, excluding the history of the Indians, is less than sixty-five years old. Yet in this half century, Oklahoma has passed through many phases of development, from the cattle camp to the city, and folklore from each area of progress is still to be found in the state.

In the first place, Oklahoma is one of the few regions where the folklorist can observe the influences of Anglo-American culture on the cultures of so many Indian tribes. For instance, folklorists are already at work on English ballads found among the Cherokees in which Indian heroes have been substituted for English ones. In the same manner, the Indians have contributed much to the beliefs of present day Oklahomans, especially in the eastern part of the state. As an example, much of the folk medicine persisting in eastern Oklahoma is a blend of the old Indian methods and the white man's innovations.

Aside from the Indian influence, the first Anglo-American folklore to lend any impact on our modern way of life was that of the cowboys who threaded across the state on a number of different trails for two decades following the Civil War. Not only did these trail drives develop into the Oklahoma cattle industry, but many beliefs and traditions brought here by the early cattlemen still persist in force in Western Oklahoma.

After the land openings, when the cattle ranges were cut down and Oklahoma's economy became primarily agricultural, much of the cowboy's folklore became adapted to a more stable way of life. The square dance of the cowboy joined with the dance formations of the settlers brought from their homelaces in other states and "Hell Among the Yearlings" was played side by side with "Old Dan Tucker."

It was only natural when the oil industry moved into Oklahoma and many young men went into the industry, that the folklore of oil should be an adaptation of the old and familiar folklore with a new industrial society. Thus, a common dance tune like "Turkey in the Straw" was combined with new lyrics beginning, "Said the driller to the tooler. . . ."

Older folk stories of buried treasure were adapted to lost oil wells, and the traditional water witcher became an oil doodlebug.

Even urban folklore in Oklahoma reflects a union of the various phases that Oklahoma has passed through. Weather signs developed by the cattlemen on the high plains in Oklahoma are still very much in evidence in Oklahoma City. Where hill folklore in the eastern part of the state declares that to see a redbird means you will soon see your lover, a red car means the same thing to many young people in the city. Where seeing a white horse once allowed a country swain to kiss his girl, the city courter can assume the same privilege when he sees a car with one headlight burning.

But in addition to the influence that industrial progress and urbanization have had on Oklahoma folklore, there is another element equally as important. That is the regional folklore developed by settlers from other states who rebuilt their old traditions to conform with a new physical environment. This is illustrated by the fact that Southern Oklahoma, "Little Dixie," has a closer cultural alliance to Texas and Louisiana than it does to the Oklahoma Panhandle. The language and beliefs of the eastern part of the state are much closer to those in Arkansas than they are to those in the wheat country of Western Oklahoma.

Divided by three basic regions, the high plains on the west, the rolling plains in the center of the state and the Ozark foothills on the east, Oklahoma has a great variety of basically different regional folklores existing within her borders. When the pattern of progress from cowboy to agricultural to industrial to urban is superimposed over this picture of regionalism in Oklahoma, the resultant mixture of the various elements in Oklahoma folklore presents a vastly exciting and complex cultural mosaic.

It is hoped that in subsequent issues of *The Chronicles*, contributions of folklore can be printed from people in different parts of the state who know a region from first hand experience. For under the stress of modern living, much of the old folklore is rapidly disappearing with the passing of the old timers who lived through the early periods of Oklahoma's growth. It is up to today's Oklahomans to preserve the traditions and beliefs of yesterday for the generations of tomorrow.

—Bob Duncan