

# Chronicles of Oklahoma

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## EDITORIAL

### OKLAHOMA IS DEBTOR TO THE FOURTH ESTATE

The people of the State of Oklahoma owe a debt of gratitude to the pioneer men and women of the Press for founding the State Historical Society. It was through the foresight of these early newspaper people that Oklahoma has collected and preserved so much of the history and tradition of our great state and its people.

The construction of a magnificent Historical building and moving of the priceless collection now in possession of the Society into its permanent home marks the beginning of a new epoch in the annals of the Oklahoma Historical Society. It is well at this time to again give the story of the beginning of this great institution.

There was published in most all the newspapers of the Territory in May and June, 1893, the following letter:

Oklahoma Historical Society.  
Office of Historical Custodian  
Oklahoma Press Association,  
Kingfisher, O. T., May 29, 1893.

At their annual meeting in this city on May 17th, the editors of Oklahoma created a department in connection with the association to be called the Oklahoma Historical Society, of which the undersigned was selected secretary and custodian, to serve for the ensuing year.

The object in establishing this department is the collection of news, books, periodicals, productions of art, science, and literature, matters of historic interest, etc. It is especially desired that publishers send regularly two copies of their publications, to be filed and bound at the end of each year.

While this is designed as an Oklahoma institution, anything of the nature suggested will be thankfully received from any source, and will be given a proper place among the exhibits.

For the present headquarters will be at Kingfisher, where a suitable building has been secured for storage, safe care, and proper exhibition of contributions.

Those feeling an interest in laying the permanent foundation of one of the most important institutions in Oklahoma, are requested to forward as early as possible and as often as they secure them, any articles that may seem of historic interest, beautiful, instructive or curious. Address, prepaid.

W. P. CAMPBELL,  
Historical Custodian,  
Kingfisher, O. T.

(No one man can claim the credit of initiating the plan to establish the Historical Society, but the part that Mr. W. P. Campbell had in starting this institution will not be forgotten as long as the walls of our building shall stand, or, as long as the people of Oklahoma keep their Chronicles.)

The newspaper editors of the Territory gladly accepted the invitation and at once commenced sending copies of their papers to the appointed Historical Custodian, and files were kept of all the territorial papers with but few exceptions. From that day until this the newspaper editors of the then Territory, but now, the greater State of Oklahoma, have sent both their daily and weekly papers to be kept in the historical files. The Society now receives 210 weekly and 48 daily papers, and many other publications which are indexed and bound. Not only has the Society kept the newspaper files since its organization but its officers and directors have procured the files of most of the papers published both in the Territory of Oklahoma and the Indian Territory, now the State of Oklahoma, before the organization of the Historical Society. The Society has papers in its files more than 100 years old. The Cherokee Phoenix, published at New Es Chota, Ga., beginning in 1828 and including the years 1829, 1830, 1831 and 1832; the Cherokee Advocate, published at Talequah, Chickasaw Nation beginning in 1840. These papers were printed partly in English and partly in the Cherokee language, using the Sequoyah alphabet of 86 characters. These old papers contain real history. The files of these papers are used every day by those seeking knowledge of past events and past records.

Students in our State Schools find things of historical

interest, lawyers hunt up old legal publications, often where land titles are involved and the politicians look up the records of their political opponents. There is more than 10,000 volumes of the newspaper now in the basement of the Capitol building that will soon occupy space in the new building.

The Society also has a library of history and while not so extensive as that of several of the older states, yet it contains much of the written history of the West and Southwest. It is a most comprehensive reference library for the students of history.

Our Museum has not been neglected. We have to-day one of the most complete collections of Indian relics, pictures and historical documents in the United States. We have not space in this issue to tell of the Library and Museum, but only to mention them.

To the Editors of Oklahoma, the present Secretary, in behalf of the Society, wishes to give thanks, not only for the establishment of this splendid institution, but, also for their continual support and co-operation.

DAN W. PEERY

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### TO SUPERINTENDENTS OF SCHOOLS

As the public schools were not in session through the summer months the former management thought it would be better not to mail the June number of the "Chronicles," to these schools but to keep the magazine until school opened in the fall. Many schools will receive both the June and September numbers at the same time. The students in the High School will find much valuable historical data in these two copies.

We are endeavoring to make the magazine a reliable reference book for the student of Oklahoma history. While we cannot bear witness to the absolute truthfulness of every supposed historical statement published in the *Chronicles*, yet we endeavor to verify the historical data before we publish them and reserve the right to make such corrections as the facts of history seem to justify.

We hope that all the High Schools receiving the "*Chronicles*" will make use of them and will preserve their

copies as reference books. The four copies published annually should be bound into a book and in a few years your school will have a most valuable reference library.

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SECRETARY OF WAR PATRICK J. HURLEY PRESENTS  
THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY WITH SET OF ORIGINAL  
PLANS OF OLD MILITARY POSTS IN OKLAHOMA

A special word of appreciation is due Secretary of War Patrick J. Hurley for his recent presentation of the plans of Fort Gibson and other early military posts in Oklahoma to the Historical Society. This collection was sent to the research department through the personal request of Miss Wright and will be of particular value to those interested in the history and the original plans of the old Army posts in this section of the Southwest. Secretary Hurley's letter which accompanied the collection is as follows:

WAR DEPARTMENT

Washington  
August 12, 1930.

Miss Muriel H. Wright  
Oklahoma Historical Society,  
Oklahoma City, Okla.

My Dear Miss Wright:

As requested in your letter of July 3, 1930, it affords me great pleasure to forward the following plans of Fort Gibson and other old forts in Oklahoma.

1. Sketch and description of Fort Gibson furnished by Benjamin L. E. Bonneville, shown in the Army Register to have been captain of the 7th Infantry in 1825.
2. Map of Arkansas River made by Lt. T. S. Brown in 1833, showing location of Fort Gibson.
3. Map of Fort Gibson made by Lt. A. Harris, 7th Infantry. Army Register shows Arnold Harris was commissioned 2nd Lt., July 1, 1834. Resigned March 4, 1837.
4. Survey of Fort Gibson dated November, 1842.
5. Plan of Fort Blunt (formerly Fort Gibson) dated May 14, 1863.
6. Map of Fort Smith, Arkansas. 1865.
7. Plan of Forts 2 & 3 at Fort Smith.

8. Plan of Fort Arbuckle (not dated).
9. Plan of Fort Sill, 1872.
10. Plan of Camp Supply, 1876.

Plans of Fort Towson and Fort Washita are not available.

Sincerely yours,



Secretary of War.

(Note: The survey of Fort Gibson dated November, 1842, was made by Captain Nathan Boone, 1st Dragoons, who was the youngest son of Daniel Boone).

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#### IMPORTANT MATERIAL ADDED TO THE ARCHIVES OF THE OKLAHOMA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A compilation of typewritten copies from the original manuscripts, of letters and reports dealing with the removal of the Indians to the Indian Territory has been placed in the archives of the Oklahoma Historical Society, through the efforts of Mr. Grant Foreman, who was selected as director of research for this work. Mrs. Foreman should also be mentioned in connection with this important acquisition, as having had much interest and ably assisting in the work. The material is contained in five manuscript volumes, on the covers of which appear the following captions:

Copies of Manuscripts in the office of the commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, D. C.—Choctaw, Creek, Chickasaw, miscellaneous. Compiled by Grant Foreman, May, 1930.

Copies of manuscripts in the adjutant general's office, old records division "War department files" and "headquarters of the army file." Compiled by Grant Foreman, May, 1930.

Copies of manuscripts in the office of the commissioner of Indian affairs, Washington, D. C.—Osage, Seminole, Schools Western Superintendency. Compiled by Grant Foreman, May, 1930.

Copies of manuscripts and newspapers in the state department of archives & History of Montgomery, Alabama. Compiled by Grant Foreman, April, 1930.

Copies of Manuscripts in the office of the commissioner of Indian affairs, Washington, D. C.—Cherokee. Compiled by Grant Foreman, May, 1930.

A sixth manuscript, also sent to the Historical Society by Mr. Foreman, contains 54 letter size pages, the following information appearing on the fly leaf:

Papers of Geo. S. Gaines, copies from the original now on file in the Mississippi State Department of Archives and History in a collection of historical documents and letters once owned by J. F. H. Claiborne. These papers may be found in book E. of the collection.

#### OKLAHOMA COLLEGE LIFE DURING THE NINETIES

Hon. Dan W. Peery, Secretary of the Society has asked me to write some reminiscences of University life in the early days of the territory, and I made that as the excuse for this article.

When the settlers came to the territory during the various openings in the nineties, many of them brought their families with them. Children in every grade of school were taken from pleasant surroundings and were placed where they had no school at all. In setting up the government in these new places in many instances it was several years before adequate school advantages were provided. Children grew from their teens into young manhood and womanhood sometimes losing as much as five years of school life.

In the fall of 1890 the first Territorial Legislature established the University at Norman, the A. & M. College at Stillwater, and the Normal School at Edmond. The school at the University at Norman was started in the fall of 1892. There were few students of advanced training and it was necessary to prepare students for advanced work. Preparatory departments were established for High School and even some Grammer School work. Many whose high school chances had been lost and who were anxious and ambitious for more training took advantage of this chance. They would have been embarrassed at their age in a High School but could take the same work in the colleges and be at ease.

Times were hard in those days and for many this education came at a great sacrifice. The type of student in each school was mature, earnest, hard-working and economical. The faculty was farsighted and with the student body laid deep and strong the foundations upon which these schools still rest. The student of this generation can look back with pride to their predecessors who are to-day the civic leaders and substantial citizenry of the state.

College traditions which now are so dear did not exist, and it was the privilege of that generation to establish them. Many students now in college in the state are the sons and daughters of those pioneers.

The University with which I am most familiar boasts its ten-thousandth degree granted last spring, and more than 8000 enrollment, and still during my five and a half years it never exceeded 400 enrollment, and in the first five classes less than fifty were graduated from all departments. The first building was destroyed by fire in 1903, and as I look now at the stately group of buildings and the large student body and faculty, I can scarcely believe that this has all happened within a generation. The dream of the nineties has become the realization of the thirties.

Candidates for governor, and many minor officers came from its halls and civic leaders through the state and nation today are the same people who have toiled so earnestly and faithfully to prepare themselves for the work ahead of them. College life in those days was trying, and equipment and library facilities not of the best, but wherever I meet the men and women who were pioneers in Oklahoma College life, I find men and women who are the leaders in their communities to-day.

C. ROSS HUME

Anadarko Okla.

#### THE LOCATION OF CANTONMENT TOWSON-A CORRECTION.

In an article in June "Chronicles" entitled "Fort Towson," I located the first fort, erected in May, 1824, on the banks of the Red River near the mouth of the Kiamichi, and indicated that when orders came for the re-building of the post in 1830, the site was changed to the location on Gates Creek, where

its ruins may be seen today. Documentary information available to me as well as statements from well informed people of the region seemed to point to the correctness of my conclusions. However, Mr. Grant Foreman, who has had exceptional opportunities for examination original data in the archives of the War Department at Washington, has proved to my satisfaction that both forts were built on the same site. His authority is nothing less than a quotation from a letter written by Lieutenant-Colonel J. H. Vose, who was in command of the new post in 1833. Colonel Vose stated in this letter: "The fort, as you undoubtedly know, is built upon the site of old Fort Towson."

It is true that the boat landing for Fort Towson was at the mouth of the Kiamichi River, and that some buildings were erected there in early days. And, too, most of the early writers spoke of "Fort Towson on the Red River." These facts tended to mislead me as well as my informants. Personally I feel under obligation to Mr. Foreman for calling my attention to this inaccuracy. It is to be hoped that at some time in the near future he will prepare for "Chronicles" an article on Fort Towson, which because of his thorough scholarship and opportunities for research will be of great value and interest to students of Oklahoma history.

W. B. MORRISON,  
Southeastern Teachers College,  
Durant, Okla.

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Under the caption "Necrology" in this number of the "Chronicles" there is published the obituary of several men who were prominent in the history of our state. We feel that a page should be given to their memory and that their life and works among us should not be forgotten. In gathering the data for these biographical sketches of prominent Oklahomans who have passed away, due credit should be given to Judge R. L. Williams. He not only has been a tireless worker for the welfare of the Society but has watched the passing of those pioneers who have contributed to the making of our State. Judge Williams is interested to see that, altho these men have passed from earthly scenes, that their life and good deeds shall be known to future generations.