

PAYNE COUNTY

Historical Review



VOLUME VII

NUMBERS 1 & 2

AUTUMN & WINTER 1987

Cover Photo

In 1943 the History Class of Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College prepared papers after interviewing settlers who came in the Run of 1889 and the immediate years that followed. A copy of the "Book of Memories" was placed with the Payne County Historical Society. In this and the next issue of the *Payne County Historical Review*, several of the papers will be published.

Members of Oklahoma History Class 162 are pictured on the cover of this issue, along with their professor Dr. B. B. Chapman: *Left to right, front row:* Elizabeth Stewart, Janice Jessee, Dan Brannin, Louise Burrow, Margaret Learn, Julie DeArmond, Flora Mae Thomas; *Second row:* John William Weaver, Anna Mae Lund, Ann Orr, Mary Bickel, Margie Tallman, Edna Mae Baker, Tena Franklin, Betty Tourtellotte, Grace Gow, Martha Swinehart; *Third row:* Eugene Wedin, Uly Panos, Charlotte Whitford, Merilee Barber, Mary McKee Lawson, Eugene Moseley; *Back row:* John Whittemore, Jerome M. Muhlberg, Bill Rogers, Dr. B. B. Chapman and Stephen H. Ray.

Photo Courtesy Payne County Historical Society

Return to Mrs. Miller

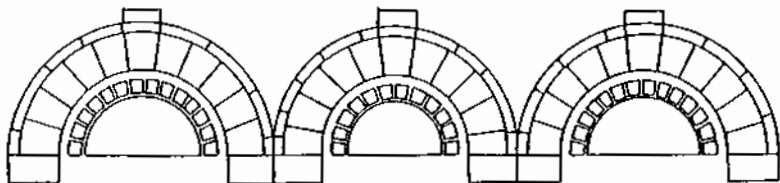
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PAYNE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Ann Carlson, *Editor*
Helen Matoy, *Assistant Editor*
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Publications Committee

Editorial Policy

The *PAYNE COUNTY HISTORICAL REVIEW* is published quarterly by the Payne County Historical Society. It is distributed without additional charge to members of the Payne County Historical Society. Single issues, when available, may be purchased at \$2.50 each.

The *PAYNE COUNTY HISTORICAL REVIEW* welcomes reader's comments, news, or requests for information from readers. Family histories, memories, diaries, letters, histories or groups or institutions, articles, photographs, or maps are also welcome. No payment is made for articles published in the *REVIEW*.

Correspondence should be addressed to the Editor. The Society assumes no responsibility for statements made by contributors.

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President's Annual Report for 1985-86

The 1985-86 Board of Directors:

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Our September Quarterly Meeting program was a delight. It was presented by Ms. Linda Rosser of Oklahoma City, a long time friend of Peggy McCormick. Ms. Rosser's program was a history of apple peelers. She has written several books including APPLE COOKERY and CHRISTMAS IN OKLAHOMA.

The December Quarterly Meeting was held at the Roxie Weber Plaza and presented by Marjorie Schweitzer, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, OSU. Her subject was "Voices From the Prairie." It was a discussion of life histories of first generation descendents of the pioneers who homesteaded in the land runs of 1889, 1891 and 1893. They express the cultural values of hard

work, self-reliance and independence which sustains them in their growing old in our time.

We traveled to Perkins for our March Quarterly Meeting. Mr. and Mrs. Bob Evans hosted us at the office of the PERKINS JOURNAL, the oldest newspaper in existence in Payne County. Mr. Evans gave us an interesting history of the the PERKINS JOURNAL and explained their present publishing procedures. He also told us of his book publishing company Evans Publications which publishes and markets over thirty-five titles of histories of Oklahoma, Payne County, Perkins, Cushing and Stillwater. After the program the Evans entertained us at their home, one of the oldest homes in Perkins, having been built for Doctor Holbrook, an early day Perkins physician.

Our Annual Meeting, June 1986, was held at Horse Thief Canyon with Dr. Leroy Fischer of the OSU History Department bringing us a geographical, geological, historical and cultural discussion of Horse Thief Canyon.

Projects for the Year Included:

A \$500.00 grant to Carol Bormann for laboratory and photographic supplies to get her started on a pictorial book on pre-statehood homes in Stillwater, of which there are over 300 in existence. This book will be one of our 1889-1989 Centennial projects.

We also granted \$100.00 to help defray the expenses of seven State History Day winners from Payne County to go to the National History Day Contest in Washington, D. C. Dr. David Baird, for several years, has had a lead role in this project.

The Board of Directors also voted a token grant of \$100.00 per issue of the Payne County Historical Review to Ann Carlson. This in no way will re-pay Ann for her long time service as editor of the Review, but perhaps

It will cover some of the incidental expenses of editing.

In memorium of Ward Hays the Library Committee, chaired by King Cacy, presented copies of Ward Hays' latest book DRIFTING DOWN MEMORY LANE (Evans Publications) to the Stillwater Public Library and the libraries at the Stillwater Junior High School and Stillwater High School. Ward Hays was an Honorary Life Member of the Payne County Historical Society who passed away this year.

Perhaps the biggest project of the year was the Society's co-sponsorship with the Stillwater Arts and Humanities Council of a community meeting to explore the preservation and adaptive re-use of the Old Middle School and South High buildings. This meeting was a town hall type meeting held on the 15th of May at the Middle School Auditorium. Participating in the program were Dr. David Baird, professor of history OSU, Ms. Susan Guthrie, Executive Secretary of the Logan County Historical Society, Mr. Ralph McCalmont, Past President of the Logan County Historical Society and President of the First National Bank, Guthrie, and Mr. Joe Coleman, a well known architect from Tulsa who has been involved in restoration projects in Oklahoma and Texas. A sum of \$250.00 was granted by the Board of Directors to help defray advertising and other expenses for this project.

Our Historian of the Year Award was presented to Ann Carlson. This recognition was long overdue. Ann has served as Editor of the Payne County Historical Review for over six years and has almost singlehandedly published this periodical. This has been done at the same time of being the mother of four children, a homemaker, working on an advanced degree and this year the over-all Editor of the Oklahoma State University Centennial Histories Series. We truly owe Ann a tremendous debt of gratitude - THANK YOU ANN, from the bottom of our hearts.



August 13, 1986

To: The Payne County Historical Society

The Board of Directors of the Payne County Historical Society recognizes the bequeath of \$1,000.00 from the estate of Robert H. Donaldson. Bob Donaldson was a life member of the Payne County Historical Society and gave it his full support as he did so many worthy causes of our fair community. He is missed and will always be so, not only by our Society, our community but especially his family.

We express our sincere gratitude to his dear wife Jean Orr Donaldson and to his daughter Judi D. Baker and his son Robert H. Donaldson, Jr. and their families for this consideration. The check of \$1,000.00 will be deposited in the Society's savings account until a suitable project that would honor Bob Donaldson can be determined.

Thank you Donaldson Family,

Lawrence Erwin, D.V.M
President

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Nominations Committee: Leroy Fischer, Chairman

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Jan Fitch, Chairman

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Leroy Fisher, Chairman

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(89 Centennial-OSU Centennial)

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David L. Payne Park Committee:

Elvis Howell, Chairman

Arrangements Committee

(meeting place - food)

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1986-87 Members

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Dr. Pauline Kopecky	Oklahoma University Library
Gloria V. Lawson	Oklahoma Historical Society
Northwest O.S.U.	Oklahoma State University
East Central O.S.U.	James & Martha Farcher
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Howard Straughn	
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Glenn & Mariana Ward	
Jerry Ward	
Bill & Mary Jane Warde	
Helen Weaver	

Preface to 1943 History Class "Memories of Oklahoma"

Under extremely adverse war-time conditions, the Oklahoma History Class has compiled a book entitled, "Memories of Early Oklahoma." The class was begun in Life Sciences, Room 217. Within a few weeks the Air Corps moved in and we moved out. We arrived on a dark Tuesday morning in the Dairy Building, groping our way in the darkness in an attempt to find a light-switch so we might eventually find the auditorium. We finally found our way about, but someone complained about odor; moreover, other complications arose, so back to Life Sciences we moved. This time to Room 214 and spent exactly one day. In moved another group of the Air Corps and out we moved. At last, we found a room which apparently no one else wanted--a biology laboratory. In Room 212 we have spent the remainder of the semester with bugs and stuffed animals to keep us company.

We began this volume of essays on the suggestion of Mrs. Sada L. Hill, Chairman of the Awards Committee of the '89ers Association in Oklahoma City. A certificate of award was offered to the student who wrote the best essay about the opening of the Unassigned Lands in 1889. Essays the class wrote were compiled into this book. We made three copies, one to be deposited in the A. and M. College Library, one in the Oklahoma

Historical Society, and one in the Payne County Historical Society.

Since there are only a few '89ers living, we decided to interview some of them and see what we could find in the way of unpublished material pertaining to the famous Run of '89, which opened the lands where we now reside. Little do we of this younger generation realize the hardship these people underwent in establishing the basis of our present economic system. It was only after talking to these '89ers that many of us began to realize how easy life has been for us. Yet, perhaps we have missed a great deal of excitement that these pioneer men and women would not trade for any of the modern ways of life.

However, we were unable to find a '89er for everyone, so others wrote on "The Run of '93," "History of my Home Town," and many other subjects of importance to Oklahoma history.

On April 18, 1943, we presented, before the Payne County Historical Society, a program, over which I presided. "Recollections of an '89er," was read by Stephen Ray of Tulsa. This paper was judged as the best essay by Mr. James W. Moffitt, editor of Chronicles of Oklahoma, and Dr. T. H. Reynolds, head of the History Department in the Oklahoma A. and M. College. Another top-ranking paper, "Reminiscences of an '89er," was read by Janice Jessee of Durant.

To make the class a better organized group, we elected officers, who presided over the business meetings of the class. Dan Brannin of Ramona was elected President and Louise Burrow of Oklahoma City was elected Secretary. The class is indebted to two friends, Miss Clara Irene Hotchkiss for assistance in the final arrangement of this book, and to Miss Mary Helen Deming for preparation of the title page.

Reminiscences of An '89er John Barnes of Oklahoma

Because he "had nothing, only his two hands to work with", John H. Barnes decided to make the run into Oklahoma when the "Unassigned Lands" were opened. Then he was a young man of 27, alert, and eager for adventure. After fifty-four years, I found him a man with that same eager spirit. He is a man of the past in that he has memories that span the years when the west was new; he is a man of the present because of his interest in today's affairs and his participation in the activities of Stillwater—the town he helped to build.

Born in Maryland in 1861, John Barnes came to Angus, Iowa in 1882. Another citizen of Angus at this time was Robert A. Lowry, a newspaper editor and mayor of the town. Bob Lowry came to John one day and suggested that, while they "could live there until they were old and gray-headed and make nothing", they could go to Oklahoma and, while living a life of adventure there, make a little money. To the young Barnes, who had nothing to lose, this sounded reasonable. Bob Lowry made this proposition on March 31, 1889; two days later they were in Arkansas City, where they set up their tent in the Boomer camp on the east side of the Walnut River. The two men arranged their camp equipment, and only then did John break the news

that as a cook he was a complete failure.

"That makes no difference at all", Mr. Lowry said, "as I am a good cook and if you will agree to do all of the other camp work, I will do all of the cooking". This I readily agreed to do, thinking I was getting the best of the deal, but I soon learned that I was being handed the hot end of a poker.

"Well", Bob said, "you being general factotum of the camp, it is your job to sprint up town and get meat for dinner." So off I went. It was about a mile and one-half from the camp, making a jaunt of about three miles. As the day was warm, and we were wearing our winter clothes, I was thoroughly steamed up by the time I reached camp with the meat. Bob had been busy while I was gone, preparing the rest of the meal. We soon had a very satisfying meal on the table, and being very hungry, we did it ample justice, which was some compensation for my long walk.

"As soon as we had finished eating, Bob arose from the table with the remark, 'Now, J. H. it is up to you to clean up'. And off he strolled to get acquainted with our neighbor campers. So I pitched in and washed the dishes, and as our camp had just been set up, this proved to be a small chore, compared to what it proved to be later. I commenced a day or two later figuring some way to lighten my labor. So I skipped the morning dishwashing. This seemed to go over all right with Bob, at least he said nothing. I think he was afraid I would throw up the job entirely if he made a kick. Next day I skipped dishwashing for all three meals and this brought forth a vigorous kick from Bob. So I was obliged to come across with real service after that.

"One day while Bob and I were lounging in front of our tent, two men drove up and inquired if there were any members of the legal profession present. Bob told them that he was a member of the Iowa state bar. The men told him that the bar

association of Arkansas City was giving a banquet for the men of their profession that night.

"Bob had brought along his dress suit and some boiled shirts, so about six thirty he started for the banquet. It was well past midnight when he returned. Several other banquets were held, and finally all of his shirts were dirty. The next morning Bob gave me a significant look and told me that he was going to another banquet and that all of his shirts were dirty.

"I told him that I had not agreed to do the laundry. He seemed to realize the truth of this statement, for he decided to draw straws with me to see who would do the laundry. I got stung again.

"Across the road from our tent a family from Kansas was camping. In front of their tent stood a washboard and tub. I went over and inquired if I might borrow it. The young lady said that I could.

"I carried the equipment over to our tent, and heated some water in the boiler by placing it over a furnace that I had built of some loose stones. When the water was good and hot, I got Bob's shirts and rammed them into the boiler. I boiled them for about half an hour, and then I happened to remember two suits of red flannel underwear that needed laundering. I got them and put them in the boiler with the shirts. After boiling process had continued for another half hour, I removed the lid. All the garments were the same color, and that color was a brilliant red!

"I wasn't really worried; I thought it would all come out when I rinsed them. I took them down to the river and gave them a vigorous rinsing, but the red dye was there to stay. Finally I stretched my lariat rope between two trees and hung out the washing. By that time I had quite an audience from the other parts of the camp.

"When Bob returned, he gazed long and earnestly at the line, gave his eyes a vigorous

rub, and gazed again. Then he exploded, 'Didn't you know better than that?'

"If I had, I would have done differently," I told him.

"He turned and rode back to town and bought some new shirts. He ordered me never to touch any of his things again. I was glad to obey this order.

"The proclamation setting the day for the opening had made no provision for the people making the run from the north to cross the Cherokee Strip to the border of Oklahoma, so that they would have an equal chance with the others (those making the run from the other three sides). We pointed this out to Captain Jack Hays, who was in command of the cavalry which was to conduct our wagon train to Oklahoma. He told us that he had wired Washington for permission to move us across the Strip. The permission came, and that afternoon an orderly came with an order for everyone who was going to Oklahoma to be in line on Summit street at eight the next morning.

"The crowd gathered there the next morning, and in the rain and cold wind that had come up the night before, started moving south. The roads grew increasingly worse, until, six miles south of Arkansas City, they were almost impassable. That evening we camped fifteen miles south of Arkansas City, at Willow Springs. After eating, we gathered around the fire and sang and played the musical instruments that some had with them.

"The next day we reached the Ponca Agency on the Salt Fork River. Here we camped until we could find some way to cross the river. Some had brought material for boats and started building them. Capt. Hays ordered lumber from Arkansas City to put over the railroad bridge. Down the river some young Indians were operating a ferry, and by bracing their feet against the bottom of the boat, and pulling on the cable with their hands, would pull the boat across. They charged

2.50 a family.

"The next day the railroad bridge was floored and ready for us to use. Every man had to help get the goods across. There were three squads of men, one at each end of the bridge, and one in the middle. Each man drove his team and wagon up to the bridge, where he would unhitch, and then lead his team across. The men then pulled the wagon half way across the bridge, where the squad stationed there took the wagon the rest of the way across the bridge. Here the third squad pulled the wagon off the road and helped the owner to hitch it back up again. This method proved very effective, and we were all across by noon. We traveled all afternoon, and that evening reached the Otoe agency.

"By the next morning, the rain had ceased falling. We enjoyed a day of sunshine after all of the rain, and were able to travel more comfortably. That evening as the sun was going down, we reached the ridge just north of what is now the Stillwater airport. Brilliant sunshine flooded the valley, the leaves shone, and it was the most beautiful sight I have ever seen. It looked like the promised land. That night we camped under a lone cottonwood tree west of the trail. We took turns guarding the horses that night, as there were several men without horses, who were waiting their chance to steal a horse to ride in the run."

Bob Lowry and John Barnes had hired a driver to bring them to Oklahoma. He was Mr. Chayne, one of John L. Payne's original Boomers. The two men had furnished the food and supplies, and given Chayne five dollars for his work. When the three men were nearing the line, Chayne asked the other two where they wanted to go. They told him that they did not know the territory, and he offered to show them some very good land. He brought them to what had been part of the territory that Mr. Payne had claimed. Here Barnes and Lowry staked their

claim. On the northeast corner of Mr. Barnes' claim were the remains of six cabins from the old Booner camp. These cabins had been partially burned by the troops that had come to remove the trespassing Boomers from the territory.

Negro troops had been sent first to remove the Boomers from the land. The Boomers refused to leave, and a courier was sent to bring some more troops. The second detachment arrived, with several cannons, and proceeded to prepare for the battle. In the meantime, the Boomers had dug trenches and were preparing to fight back. A group of cowboys nearby heard of the coming war, and drew lots to see which of them could go to see the excitement. Fred Davis won. As the troops were preparing the cannon, and about fifteen or twenty minutes before the first shell was to be fired, the Boomers sent up a white flag of surrender.

The Barnes homestead extended seventy feet south of what is now Twelfth street, and went south of Thirteenth street to Perkins Road. Mr. Barnes still lives on part of this land. Part of his land he donated to the city of Stillwater, which he and Bob Lowry planned on the twenty-third of April, the day after the run.

"Bob got out the maps and after tracing our location, said, 'J. H., this is a good place for a town, why don't we start one here?'

"I told him that I did not know anything about planning a town, but that if he thought it was a good place, I was with him.

"We sat down there in the shade of the tent and planned the city. A townsite committee was preparing to start a town six miles west of the Stillwater site, but after looking over our location, they decided to drop their project and go in with us. W. W. Duck, David Husband, Sanford Duncan, R. A. Lowry and I each donated 40 acres.

"Engineers started planning the city, and by

the tenth of June, everything was ready for the drawing. Everyone who wished to take part in the drawing of lots paid \$11.00 filing fee. This entitled him or her to draw one business lot and two residence lots.

"Shotgun wads were used for the drawing. Numbers of two blocks were placed on one side of the wad: one lot in the business section block, and the numbers of two lots in the residence block."

Mrs. Barnes came down from Iowa in July. With her came the Barnes first child, Harry, who was at that time about a year old. Being just a baby, Harry did not recognize his father, and cried to his mother to "make that man go away".

Two years later, another son, Clarence, was born. Clarence Barnes and his wife still live in Stillwater, and have a neat white bungalow on the original homestead, not far from the red brick house in which John Barnes now lives alone. Mr. and Mrs. Harry Barnes live in Texarkana, Texas, where Mr. Barnes is employed as a piano tuner and repairman.

Mr. John Barnes is a member of the First Methodist Church, which he attends regularly, and where for many years he taught a Sunday School class.

Mr. Barnes reads all of the time, and keeps up with the events of the day. He has recently set out some fruit trees and planted a Victory garden. Although his memories of the past are still vivid, his thoughts today are on the present. He still had the spirit of the hardy American pioneer.

Source:

Interview with Mr. John Barnes, and with Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Barnes.

Newspaper story written by John H. Barnes and published in the Stillwater Daily News Press on April 15,18,20,22,25,1939.

Reminiscences of An '89er George Davis of Stillwater

Mr. George Davis was born in Kansas, and made his first trip to Oklahoma in 1880. Nine years later, April 21, 1889, when the unassigned lands were opened by run to homesteaders, Mr. Davis was among those settlers camped on the starting line. Another member of the party was Mr. McKinney, who thinking that he would get his claim staked by the time his companions had started, left after dark that day. At noon, on April 22, 1889, Mr. Davis made the run and staked his claim on Council Creek, twelve miles east of Stillwater, Oklahoma. A few days after staking his claim, Mr. Davis met Mr. McKinney and inquired how he had come out. Mr. McKinney said that upon arriving near Stillwater, Oklahoma, he found that all the land had already been taken by other sooners and he was left out.

Mr. Davis began to improve his claim. He built a dugout, and instead of farming as did most of the settlers, he and his brother drove cattle from Texas to Oklahoma. They sold the cattle to ranchers in Oklahoma. Due to the fact that there were no fences, each rancher branded his cattle, and turned them loose to roam all over the country. In the spring the ranchers started at the North Canadian River and gathered up all the cattle which they could find; then

each rancher picked out his own cattle.

Mrs. Davis was born in Northern Missouri, but because of her father's poor health the family decided to change climates, and they moved to Vinita, where they leased a farm from an Indian. The surrounding country was very beautiful, with open prairies, cane breaks, and wild turkeys and deer.

Mrs. Davis attended school by paying tuition and buying her own books. She attended the Worcester Academy which was established about 1880 under auspices of the American Home Mission Society of New York. The curricula offered gave the student a little more than our high schools today. The school had seven teachers from eastern colleges. The late Rev. J. W. Scroggs, father of Dean Scroggs of the A. and M. College, was president of the academy. After finishing at the academy, Mrs. Davis taught for two years at Adair in the Cherokee territory.

When the unassigned lands were opened in 1889, Mrs. Davis's brother made the run and staked a claim for the family about three and one-half miles south of what is now Ingalls, Oklahoma. Mrs. Davis and her mother sold all their belongings except what would go into their covered wagon, and set out for their claim. It took them about three days to reach their claim, and upon reaching their destination, they were disappointed to find their cabin only partially built and the land very desolate looking. Nevertheless, they were pleased to find that every quarter section had been settled, and they were to have neighbors within a half-mile distance.

Early Schools

At first there were only subscription schools in Oklahoma, but in 1891 the government made an appropriation of fifty thousand dollars

to start new schools. Mrs. Davis taught in one of the first schools which was built in Ingalls, Oklahoma. The building was constructed of native lumber, originally intended for a store building. The furnishings were very crude, there being rough benches, but no desks. There were forty-two pupils ranging from the first to the eighth grades, and the students used all kinds of books. Later an enterprising book concern agreed to give new books for the old ones. Mrs. Davis loaded the mail carrier's buckboard with books and came to Stillwater, Oklahoma, to make the exchange. The books used in the school were "McCuffey's Reader", "Ray's Arithmetic", "Barnes' Geography and History", and "Harvey's Grammar". Mrs. Davis boarded with a family for \$2.00 a week while teaching, but she decided that \$2.00 a week out of the \$30.00 a month which she earned, was too much so she started riding horseback to and from school. The next year, in 1892, she married Mr. Davis.

Social Life

For amusement, the people had country dances in their homes. They visited each other on Sundays, and helped one another when there was extra work. Mrs. Davis was asked if the girls had dates at that time, and she replied, "Sure we did. We held hands and did our courting on horseback and had as much fun as the young people of today have."

Early Spirit and Experiences

I will let Mrs. Davis tell you of the early years of the "89ers." "I will never forget our first neighbors, such kind neighborly people. After the run and claim staking, the rest of the year was spent in getting some kind of house or dugout made, a well dug, and the ground plowed.

Nearly everyone brought a cow and some chickens, and a little money with them. Those pioneer women could stretch a dollar to cover more than you could imagine. I think the year 1890 was harder than 1889, because the people had used up the things they had brought with them.

"They had fixed their houses better and had plowed up quite a lot of ground. We planted kaffir corn and cane, hoping to raise some feed, but no rains came until late in August, and the crops burnt up. After it rained everyone planted turnips, and what a crop we had. We cooked them like beets, made sour kraut with them, and fed them to the stock.

"We received our mail once a week. It was brought from Pawnee Agency to a store near us, but a route was fixed out of Stillwater, Oklahoma later.

"There were preachers and doctors here too. We had preaching under a brush arbor, an all-day service and basket dinner. The doctor rode horseback. There were no roads, and although traveling was difficult, he never refused to go to a patient, whether he received pay or not. There were no hospitals, nurses, or undertakers. The neighbors helped care for the sick and bury the dead. I never saw a woman cry or complain of hard times.

"There is something beautiful about waving grain and corn blades that came fast in the wake of the storming land hunters. Homes, business houses, modest churches and school houses soon appeared on the prairies. The law that came to the new land was found in the saddles and wagons of the settlers because for the most part they were law-loving and abiding people."

Pioneering in Oklahoma in '89 George C. Cleveland of Stillwater

Back in Indiana in the '80's, word began to drift around that there was land to be had in Oklahoma and that there would be a "Run" for it sometime in the near future. On a little farm in Indiana, George C. Cleveland and his wife debated whether or not they would take their family and seek some of that land. Finally, in 1887, the Cleveland family, together with sixteen other families from that region, left home and traveled westward to Arkansas City, Kansas. They remained there for two years, Mr. Cleveland doing odd jobs to keep his family, until 1889, when it was announced that the unassigned lands in Oklahoma Territory would be opened to the public on April 22.

The Clevelands left Arkansas City about five days before the Run was to begin. On the appointed day, April 22, 1889, men of all ages -- rich and poor, gathered at the starting line. The U. S. Army stationed soldiers along the line who were to fire guns at 12:00 o'clock noon, signalling that the land was open. As far as the eye could see, there were men on every kind of transportation available -- horse back, wagon, and even oxen teams. Mr. Cleveland started the Run about five miles north of Stillwater. Most of the crowd, however, began the Run near the present sites of

Mulhall and Orlando.

Mr. Cleveland tells some interesting incidents that occurred on that historic day. One man bought a race horse and paid \$150 for it, in order to be the first to reach a certain place where he wishes to stake a claim. When the gun was fired at noon he struck out, confident that he would be the first one there. But, as fate would have it, when he arrived at the site which he had chosen, he found another man there ahead of him who had made the Run with a yoke of oxen, with which he had already plowed an acre of ground. Whether the story is true or not, Mr. Cleveland leaves it to the readers to decide.

Another incident, not quite so humorous, concerns two men who arrived at the same site at the same time. They decided the ownership of the land with guns; and the man who lost, says Mr. Cleveland, was the first person to be buried in the cemetery east of Stillwater.

Mr. Cleveland, himself, staked a claim for a farm, only to find later that it was on section 16 which, together with section 36, had been given to Oklahoma Territory by Congress for common school funds. After the Run, however, he purchased 160 acres, located two miles east and one mile north of Stillwater, for \$130. The deed to this land was the first one issued, and it was signed by Grover Cleveland, who was President at that time. The original deed was lost in a fire which destroyed the wooden Stillwater courthouse, but the deed was replaced in about six months.

When the '89ers were finally settled on their new land, they began to look around at their neighbors and to get acquainted with them. There were six families in proximity to the Cleveland farm. The most usual method of getting acquainted with neighbors was for one family to pass by the homestead of another family and ask them to accompany them to Sunday School. The family would hitch up the wagon and go with the neighbors to

the banks of Brush Creek. There was a large oak tree under which they held their meetings. The wagons had spring seats in them and these were placed on the ground around the tree, so the settlers could listen to the sermon in comfort. Not long after the Run, the settlers joined together and constructed a log building, which was used for school and church.

The settlers had to make wagon trips to Guthrie for whatever mail they should receive and for the few groceries they could afford to buy. The six families, together with Cleveland's family, would alternate in making the trip and bring back supplies for the neighbors. In that way, it was possible to make trips to Guthrie more often.

Times were very hard for the first several years. The settlers lived in caves or sod houses and usually raised what they ate and wore. The second year after the Run is known as the "turnip year." Everyone ate turnips -- even the cows and horses. The cows were satisfied enough and ate the turnips without having to be encouraged, but the horses' turnips had to be salted. At first, they would only lick off the salt, but when they became hungrier, they ate the turnips, also.

Today, Mr. Cleveland is the only living person remaining of the group of men who brought their families from Indiana to Oklahoma Territory in 1889. He will be 81 years of age in July, 1943. He still owns his farm, although he makes his home in Stillwater, where he is employed in a department store. His wife passed away in 1913, but his three children are still living, one residing in Dodge City, Kansas, one in Tulsa, and one in Stillwater.

Mrs. Andrews, An '89er
Mrs. Harry Eben Andrews of Stillwater

"We were very interested in the growth and development of the country." These are the simple but explicit words of an '89er, Mrs. Harry Eben Andrews of 1002 Duncan Street, Stillwater, Oklahoma. These words portray to me the essence of the "run of '89." It is from those pioneers who dared in that year to make the first mass migration of the white man into Oklahoma that we owe the foundation of our separate and distinct breed, the Oklahoman. I think we should be intensely proud of and grateful for the heritage which we have received from those stout individualists who are the progenitors of our state. Certainly our state was not founded without blood, sweat, and tears; in contrast it was just those elements from which it secured its nourishment and made its growth. One has only to hear the story of an '89er to realize the debt which we owe those hardy forerunners of our state.

Mrs. Andrews did not herself participate in the run. John Ash, her father, did run and did establish a claim just two and one-half miles southwest of the present community of Stillwater, Oklahoma. On June 4, 1889, Mrs. Andrews in the hay-filled back of a covered wagon made the journey from Orlando, Oklahoma to her father's claim. Upon arriving Mrs. Andrews was informed by

her father that she was to file upon an adjacent claim which had been recently deserted. There was no other choice than to go immediately to Guthrie and there register the claim. The thirty miles trail across untamed land was blocked by the treacherous quicksand of the Cimarron River. Mrs. Andrews still remembers very vividly the "horrible sensation" she felt as the horses floundered in the clutches of the quicksand while in mid-stream. After a full day's journey they arrived safely, registered the claim, and the next day returned.

On July 4, 1889, at a picnic on Stillwater Creek, Mrs. Andrews became acquainted with her future husband. After a courtship of only a few months, Mr. and Mrs. Andrews were married; the couple settled upon Mrs. Andrews claim. A tent with a floor of hard, cold dirt was their home. Mr. Andrews traded his saddle for a "breaking plow" and a cook stove. With a floorless tent, a kitchen stove, and their mutual love Mr. and Mrs. Andrews began a life together which continued until death separated them. Their early married life was not an easy one in this unconquered country. In the first year of the marriage, their soil yielded nothing but a bountiful crop of cane. This cane, Mrs. Andrews informed me was hand planted in separate hills by the process of making a hole in the ground with a sharpened stick, dropping a seed or two within the hole, and then covering the hole with a stamp of the heel. He who has ever planted any amount of tomato slips will appreciate the difficulty encountered by those performing this task. The "Turnip Year" as 1890 was called, was perhaps the most trying year of the couple's life. It was in that year that a great drouth smothered out of existence all crops planted by the dwellers in this region. In the fall, however, the rains came. The settlers in desperation planted a large crop of turnips. The yield was one of a magnitude never before witnessed by those pioneers. There was also

another flicker of light to further brighten the picture - Stillwater was being born. Mr. Andrews earned enough money to purchase the first cow to be owned by the Andrew family. Prior to this the family had direfully suffered by the need for this important food, milk. Mr. Andrews found employment as the manager of a saw mill. In procuring this job he also discovered one for Mrs. Andrews; hers was the task of supplying with food the six men who worked at the saw mill. At that time there was not available the pure water we have now. Instead their water was supplied from some shallow hole dug near the house. Mrs. Andrews acquired a serious attack of the "chills." In spite of being forced at times to rely upon the table for support during the more severe of these attacks she managed to keep the men supplied with food. She was further burdened with the care of her first child. For their work the couple received twenty dollars a month plus "their keep." After some thirty-six years of struggle on the claim, Mr. and Mrs. Andrews somewhat enfeebled by the stiffening hand of age decided to move to Stillwater. Selling the land to various members of their immediate family, they moved to this community.

Money was not their only objective; indeed as one converses with Mrs. Andrews he feels that pecuniary compensation was only a minor objective in this country. This couple wanted to aid it in its growth. Mr. Andrews helped to construct the first schoolhouse in this portion of Oklahoma. This school for more than ten years served the dual purpose to the surrounding country of providing its residences with both their spiritual and academic education. The selfsame school site was in use until only last year; a Stillwater school bus now gathers the children from that area.

Life of 1889 and the following years, however, was not all work and no play. I was curious as to what kind of amusement one could

find in such a country so barren of improvements. I was immediately informed that there were "Literaries" or lyceums and square dances to attend and that the people of that time went visiting. Mrs. Andrews taught a "Subscription School" which the people of the surrounding country attended in order that they might learn those fundamental subjects Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic. The fact that these pioneer mothers and fathers hungered for knowledge in spite of the hardships they endured indicates an exceptionally admirable characteristic.

Mrs. Andrews after almost four score years of living has given much to Oklahoma. She has brought into this state eight children - six girls and two boys. She has living now thirty-four direct offspring. There are six grandchildren serving in our armed forces now defending that which Mrs. Andrews has helped to bring into being. Instead of becoming embittered by her life of labor and sacrifice Mrs. Andrews has only mellowed. Her personality is a wise and kindly one. Her religion is a simple but sufficient one; she believes wholly and implicitly in God. She represents to me the consummation of that which an "89er" should be. I think no better purpose could have been expressed for the "run of '89" than, "We were very interested in the growth and development of the country."

Interview with Mrs. Catalina Prater Mrs. Catalina Prater of Oklahoma City

A few weeks ago I interviewed Mrs. Catalina Prater, an '89er now living in Oklahoma City. I found her story very interesting and would like to pass it on to you.

Mrs. Prater's ancestors first settled in Maryland after being driven from their home in Holland because of the persecution of the Catholics. The family soon moved west to Kentucky bringing all their possessions in nail kegs to deceive possible robbers. Mrs. Prater still has in her possession many of the smaller things which they brought with them, such as a silver snuff box with an ebony snuff spoon and several silver spoons. While living in Kentucky, her mother's family had in their employ the father of Abraham Lincoln. She and her brothers and sisters were playmates of Abraham. After the Civil War, her father, then a broken man, made a prospecting tour through Texas and soon after he organized a party to settle in Grayson County, Texas.

In the fall of 1837 after ten years of drought and hardships in Texas, the family moved to Pauls Valley, Indian Territory. Her father leased a ranch three miles from town; however, it was so desolate that he built a house in town for his family.

Pauls Valley at this time was a typical

pioneer town with its river bottoms swarming with bandits and horse thieves and in contract its beautiful country estates of wealthy families. Even in those days education was important and the young men were sent back east to school and the young ladies were sent to finishing school in this country and abroad.

Six months before the opening of Oklahoma's first five counties, the border towns swarmed with people getting information and seeing the lay of the land for the prospective new state. On April 21st, Mrs. Prater and her family went to Purcell where they were going to make the run. The next morning the women went to the top of a hill near Purcell where they could get a good view of the run. At twelve noon the shot was fired and people rushed into the newly opened land. Every means of conveyance was used, wagons, buggies, horses, and mules, all plunging into the river at once. A few were probably killed in the quicksand but no one knew the difference.

Immediately after the run, the Pauls Valley Townsite Company settled at Noble, Cleveland County. They chose this spot because of its natural beauty, its nearness to the ranching and agricultural district across the river. The first settlers of Noble were builders and soon had a town built. Mrs. Prater's family were quite active in building the town for they established a general store, a blacksmith shop, an undertaking establishment, and a livery stable. Her brothers were also interested in the education of the children and built a schoolhouse, obtaining a well-known professor and several teachers. This school soon became the largest school in the state and was called the Noble Academy. After the university at Norman was built, it accepted credits from the academy toward the graduation of its students. Many prominent men of Oklahoma have been graduates of the academy.

The wedding of Mrs. Prater was the first

to be performed in the newly opened territory. It was a home wedding with only intimate friends in attendance. That same night with her husband, she moved to her new home in Pauls Valley, where her husband had charge of the clothing store. She soon became milliner in the same store. It was only a week later that Mrs. Prater received a telegram telling her that her marriage was not legal because her license had been obtained in Indian Territory, and the ceremony must be performed again in the presence of five witnesses; and her second wedding was performed that night.

For nine years Mr. and Mrs. Prater lived a very happy married life. At the time of Mr. Prater's death, they were living in Ardmore. There had been a few acres set aside for a cemetery just south of Noble, and his remains were the first to be buried there. It was only five weeks later that their baby was placed at his side.

The life of pioneers was a hard one but a happy one. Their food was raised by the men, who cultivated large tracts in orchards and small fruits, as well as crops adapted to the climate and soil. The women would then can or pickle all they could buy cans for, and gave the rest to all who had none. For amusement in the cold winter evenings everyone would get into straw filled buggies and go to a neighbor's home for an evening of singing and dancing. They also had dances somewhat at we do today with a band, in a beautifully decorated room at the hotel. For these big dances, the girls would send east for their dresses. Mrs. Prater showed one to me that she had worn to one of the dances, and I know that in those days it was beautiful. Their religious services were held in vacant buildings by any available minister of any denomination. Mrs. Prater's life during these first years brought many interesting and exciting experiences to her that she will never forget.

Mrs. Prater is now living in Oklahoma City with her daughter, Jimmie. She also has another daughter who is married and has two lovely children. Mrs. Prater is very active in the '89er Club of Oklahoma City. At the present time the club is compiling a book of experiences of its members. At the time of my interview Mrs. Prater was working on her contribution for the book, and using her work as an example I am sure the finished book should prove interesting to any Oklahoman.

Early Oklahoma Mr. G. W. Bruce of Guthrie

Mr. G. W. Bruce of Guthrie, secretary of the '89ers Association, came to Oklahoma in 1892. He came with a group of mechanics from Topeka, Kansas. The first town he remembers going to was Pawhuska. At that time the Indian agent's house and the council house were the only buildings making up the town of Pawhuska.

When Mr. Bruce came to Oklahoma, the run had been made three years previously. Before this run of white people into the territory of Unassigned Lands, Oklahoma had been set aside as a refuge for the Indians. All land north of the Red River was designated as Indian territory. Different tribes had lived in eastern United States, but white people were not able to live peacefully with them. Therefore the Indians were forced to move farther west; Oklahoma was chosen as their prairie home. Incidentally the name Oklahoma means Red Man's Land which is an appropriate title because tribes of all kinds were put here.

The main tribes were the five civilized tribes which included: Choctaws with their capital at Tuskahoma, Chickasaws with their capital at Tishimingo, Cherokees with their capital at Tahlequah, Creeks with their capital at Okmulgee, and the Seminoles with their capital at Wewoka.

There were also some smaller tribes not quite as civilized or as important as the five tribes mentioned.

The center of Indian life was the Indian agent's house. Here a trading post was built where the government sent supplies to be distributed by the Indian agent in charge. Sometimes these agents were honest and sometimes they were not. Those inclined to be dishonest used every method to cheat the Indians and give them less for their money, thereby keeping the profit for themselves.

Of all the Indians, Geronimo gave the white people the most trouble. An amusing incident was related about him showing what a politician he was. At the time when the government was making it illegal for Indians to have more than one wife, Geronimo had about five. The Indian agent came to him and said, "Geronimo, you will have to get rid of all but one of your wives. I don't care how, but the next time I come back I only want to see you with one wife." At this Geronimo brought all his wives out and lined them up and said to the agent, "You pick one." Evidently Geronimo wanted to fulfill the agent's demands completely and take the wife the agent chose for him.

A characteristic of all Indians is their peculiar name. They are named after animals and almost any other thing. A white man named Hitchcock was going through the Indian territory trying to get the Indians to change their awkward names to something more easily pronounced. Mr. Hitchcock came to one Indian who was reluctant to change his name for his remark was, "I'm glad my name isn't Hitchcock anyway."

Twenty days after the territory was established George W. Steele of Indiana was appointed governor of the territory by President Harrison. Guthrie had been named as the seat of the first legislative assembly, with power in the

governor and the legislature to make any other such location as they should decide upon. Seven counties were established by the act without naming them. The first county was Logan with Guthrie as the county seat, the second was Oklahoma with Oklahoma City as county seat, the third was Cleveland with Norman as county seat, the fourth was Canadian with El Reno as the county seat, the fifth was Kingfisher with Kingfisher City as county seat, and the sixth was Payne with Stillwater as county seat. For the seventh county, the Cimarron-Beaver territory was designated.

An interesting point brought out by Mr. Bruce was the kinds of land openings. The run is well known to everybody and I doubt that there is anyone who has not heard of it. This run was organized by withholding prospective settlers behind a designated line until the signal was given. They dashed across the line in a helter-skelter fashion and selected good land to settle upon. They staked their claim and then went to the nearest land office, which was often a day's journey away, to file it. Many times people staked the same claim and then the first to file his was the owner of the land. Some people who were a little more anxious to get first choice of land moved inside the starting line and it took them less time to run in and stake their claim. In a class report the point was brought out that in the run of 1893 some people were in Perry eleven minutes after the gun had been fired. Perry is eight miles from where the run began.

The other kind of land opening is the lottery. In this method the person had an opportunity to register for a number and when his number was drawn he stepped up to a map and picked out a quarter section (160 acres) of land wherever he pleased. The Kiowa-Comanche Apache country was opened by lotter.

When Oklahoma was first settled, it had

very few railroads. The story of their growth and how they helped Oklahoma grow is an interesting one.

The people who lived in the east were eager to come west to get new land or try to get work. Whenever they asked for a ticket for Oklahoma, they seldom knew any special place in Oklahoma that they wanted to go so the station master routed them to Oklahoma City. Oklahoma City grew larger from people coming in this way and from the numerous advertisements, people soon began to flock to it.

There were only two railroads in Oklahoma at that early time. The Santa Fe was built to Purcell and later on finished by another line, and the Rock Island extended only into Indian Territory. To travel on the train from Oklahoma City to El Reno, one had to go to Fort Worth or Wichita to make connections. By horse and buggy, it was a long day's ride between Oklahoma City and El Reno. Some business men conceived the idea of building the Choctaw, Oklahoma, and Gulf line to El Reno. This line was built and it paid so well that they extended it west to Weatherford. Mr. Bruce remembers riding to El Reno on the first train carrying paying passengers. This was in 1895 and the day was pay day for the men working on the railroad. They stopped every so often to pay the workers. Even with the extra delay better time was made than when the trip was made by buggy or by detouring to Wichita or Fort Worth.

The railroad was extended from Weatherford to Sayre and from Sayre to Amarillo. On the other side it was built to Shawnee and then to Little Rock and finally to Memphis. The Rock Island finally bought out this railroad.

The Frisco started at Springfield, Missouri, and went to Vinita, Sapulpa, and Denison, Texas. The Frisco was paid \$50,000 in cash to build a line to Oklahoma City and

neighboring towns began to advertise their advantages and people flocked to Oklahoma City.

When traveling on trains in those early days, there were no dining cars and conveniences such as we have today. To get a meal, it was necessary to dine at the depot agent's house where you paid certain prices for the meal.

Oklahoma City was built on the banks of the Canadian River. The Santa Fe track was the east boundary of the city and the Rock Island the north boundary. There were no sidewalks and since Oklahoma City was on the river bed, it was always muddy. Mr. Bruck tells of going out to see a friend's new house. According to him, it was almost out in the sticks, but it is now a block west of the Presbyterian Church on Robinson, not far from downtown. Saint Anthony's Hospital was erected on the outskirts of the town in a cornfield, Mr. Bruce stated.

Like Topsy, Oklahoma grew and grew. If we are able to carry on as these men who gave Oklahoma her start, we should feel justly proud of ourselves.

An interview from Mr. G. W. Bruce,
Guthrie, Oklahoma.

store. Among them was a young brave known as Fa Fa. He came into Stillwater with an air of timidity. As he approached Hand's Hardware Store, usually to buy a knife, he peeked through the window to see if any young squaws were present. Approaching Mrs. McGeorge with a faint smile, he would grunt and point to the knife which he wanted and walk out.

Oklahoma was a land of nomads in the nineteenth century. Many people were living in tents. Few people realized the need for education. Hence there were few educational institutions available until the last years of the nineteenth century. When people began to realize that it was necessary to establish institutions of learning, many towns competed for the honor of having one of the two land grant colleges on their soil. In January 1891, the public schools of Oklahoma were officially opened. Out of a total of 21,337 potential pupils of school age only 9,893 were enrolled and the average daily attendance amounted to a mere 5,593 pupils. It wouldn't seem logical that a state with so few of its people eager to reap the benefits of an education should acquire two colleges and a normal school. Yet in 1890, Governor Steele signed bills that made the University of Oklahoma at Norman, the Edmond Normal School at Edmond, and the Agricultural and Mechanical College at Stillwater, not a remote possibility but a practical reality.

On December 14, 1891, the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Oklahoma opened its doors to sixty students for ordinary scholastic work. Until September 1894 when Old Central was ready for occupation, classes were held in various Stillwater churches.

Mrs. McGeorge remembers two of the original professors because one of them, Professor Magruder roomed with the Hand family. Together with Professor Holter, he staked out the college

tract of land on what is now the south-east section of the campus. Citizens of Stillwater as well as the citizens of nearby communities were in doubt very much as to the practicability of handing the college situation on the Duck Tract.

In 1894 there was only one durable building on the campus—Old Central. By 1924, the Animal Husbandry Building, Morrill Hall, the Press Building, Gundersen Hall, the Old Engineering Building (since known as the Commerce and Reserve Library Building), the Chemistry Building, the college steam plant, the Home Economics Building, Williams Hall (formerly the Library and Biology Building), the College Cafeteria and the president's house were to be seen standing beside Old Central. Between 1924 and 1931, the Dairy Building, Whitehurst Hall, the Shop Building, the Old Gym, and the College Infirmary were constructed. Between 1931 and 1940, the Engineering, Student Activity, Firemanship Training, Life Sciences, and the Mechanical Engineering Buildings were constructed. There were also many other buildings constructed on both the campus and the college farm.

When Oklahoma became a state in 1907, its constitution prohibited the sale of intoxicating beverages in the Osage Nation and Indian Territory. Few people have realized the importance of this provision. However, if an old and experienced Oklahoman such as Mrs. McGeorge is questioned about the whys and what-fors of the prohibition clause, it is to be found and established as a fact that the "Blanket Indians" ran wild with liquor. Coming into towns like Stillwater on a peaceful evening, Indians would be bribed by white men to give up their horses and other valuables in exchange for unwholesome liquor.

For over two decades lawlessness prevailed in Oklahoma. In the 1870s and 1880s, lawlessness was marked by the appearance of Dutch

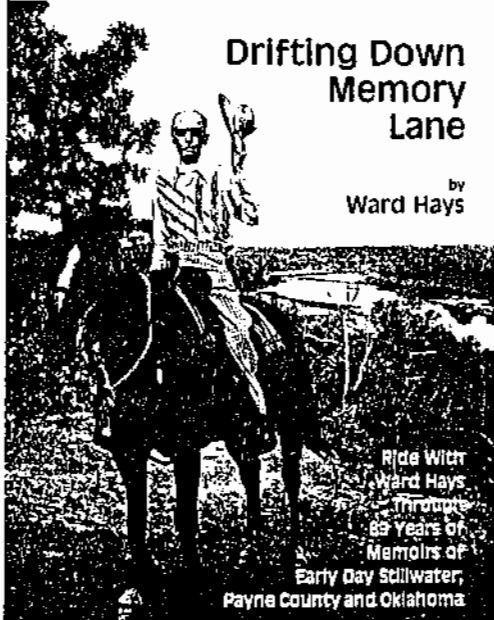
Henry's band of cattle rustlers and the "Tulsa Race Riots." In the 1890s the Buck, Doolin, and Jennings gangs were making Oklahoma look very bad to the rest of the country. Mrs. McGeorge remembers the wiping out of the Dalton Gang at Ingalls during the 1890s well; for she knew many of the men who went from Stillwater to Ingalls to fight the gang. Many men were wounded and there were a few casualties including a United States Marshal who, after being severely wounded and brought back to Stillwater, later died; and several other United States Marshals who were less severely wounded.

Most of the people Mrs. McGeorge was acquainted with in Stillwater during the 1900s and 1890s came from Winfield, Kansas, about eighty miles north of Stillwater. A few came from Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas, and Texas. Since the turn of the century in 1901, people from all over the United States have flocked to all parts of Oklahoma. Stillwater attracted more settlers than the average town of its size because of the Agricultural and Mechanical College therein located. As has been stated, the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Oklahoma has grown steadily since its establishment in 1891.

As the years pass the class of people in Oklahoma has changed from cheap hoodlums to polished gentlemen such as Bill Murray and Patrick Hurley. As the class of population has changed so has living conditions. Indian trails have become great highways and railways. Farms have grown from hand-to-mouth establishments into spacious cattle ranches. Industry has increased from a small grain mill here or there to large plants manufacturing flour, cotton textiles, petroleum products, glassware, and ammunition. The mining of coal, zinc, and lead has made Oklahoma famous for its mining industry throughout the United States.

For thirteen years Mrs. McGeorge lived

in Denver, Colorado. She moved to Claremore early in the 1920s. Mr. McGeorge was Clem Rogers' partner in an established banking business in Claremore. She remembers Will Rogers as a freckled faced kid with mild manners and a gentle temperament. After a trip to Continental Europe and the British Isles, after living for several years in Alberta and Oregon, Mrs. McGeorge finally came back to Stillwater where she has since lived for many years. She is generally satisfied with Oklahoma and is regarded as one of Stillwater's most prominent citizens.



Drifting Down Memory Lane

by
Ward Hays

Ride With
Ward Hays
Through
89 Years of
Memoirs of
Early Day Stillwater,
Payne County and Oklahoma

Ward Hays, honorary life member of the Payne County Historical Society, compiled a book of 89 years of memoirs about early day Stillwater, Payne County, and Oklahoma. Shortly before his death, Evan Publications published DRIFTING DOWN MEMORY LANE.

Available for \$14.95 from Evans Publications, Perkins, Oklahoma 74059, the book is a treasure house of information and a delightful journey into the past.



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Payne County Historical Society is organized in order to bring together people interested in history and especially the history of Payne County, Oklahoma. The Society's major function is to discover and collect any materials that may help to establish or illustrate the history of the area.

Membership in the Payne County Historical Society is open to anyone interested in the collection and preservation of Payne County history. Membership dues are: annual individual, \$10.00; annual family, \$15.00; annual contributing, \$25.00; institutional, \$20.00; sustaining, \$50.00; life, \$100.00 paid in one year. Membership applications and dues should be sent to the treasurer.

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