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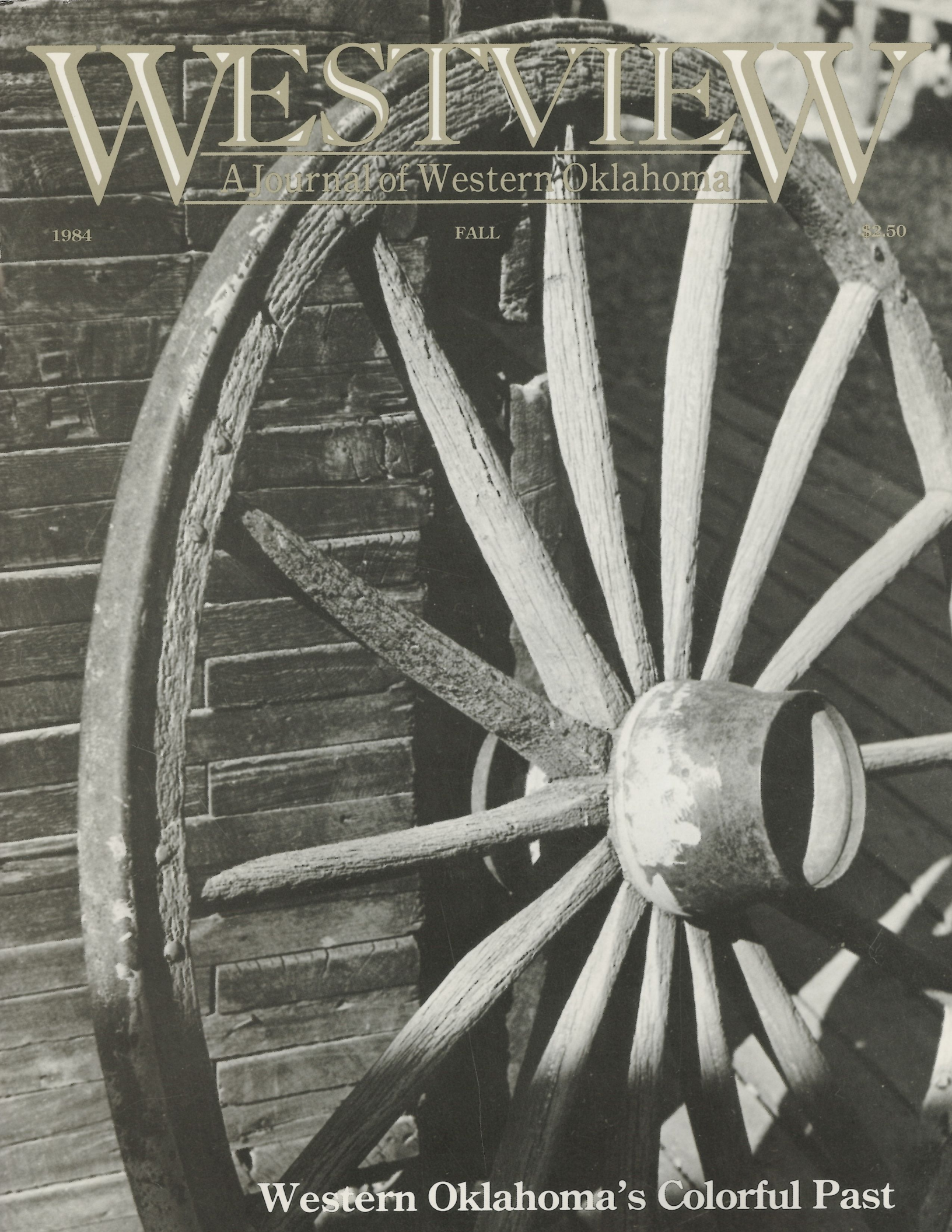
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WESTVIEW

A Journal of Western Oklahoma

1984

FALL

\$2.50

Western Oklahoma's Colorful Past

FOREWORD

Being editor of WESTVIEW these past three years has been one of my most satisfying experiences--almost as enjoyable and fulfilling as teaching. Almost daily, I have contact with people who express themselves through original, creative avenues. There have been some really satisfying associations as we have unearthed talents in our new contributors.

For too long, our readers have found our submission requirements to be too enigmatic. In a spirit of helpfulness, we have placed an article on submissions on page 47 in this issue.

As we begin our fourth year, we have lofty dreams for the future. Among these dreams is our desire to involve more student contributors of all ages. A Creative Writing Workshop for Junior-High Students conducted on campus on July 24, 1984 may provide needed impetus.

In our strivings for a better journal, we're still in need of your help--your submissions, your good wishes, your suggestions, your gift subscriptions, your donations.

Notice on our Future Issues page that we have cancelled our Summer, 1985 issue as one for which we need freelance submissions. That issue has been re-designated as "Western Oklahoma's Historic Resources," and it will be prepared by the Oklahoma Historical Society. We're grateful to Marshall Gettys, Historic Archeologist of the State Historic Preservation Office, who is directing the project. If we have already accepted one of your submissions for the Summer, 1985 issue, we will be re-scheduling it and informing you within the next eight weeks.

Remember our needs. In short, WESTVIEW is spelled YOU.

Leroy Thomas

— Leroy Thomas
Editor

Fall

WESTVIEW

Weatherford, Oklahoma

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IRON BEDS AND LILACS

by Joanna Thurston Roper

The Dust Bowl Days--the Depression Days of the Thirties --the Stock Market Crash and the Recession--all of them have been written about, even immortalized, in millions and millions of words. Writers from political analysis to comedians, from poets to novelists have made those days a major period in American history. And, indeed, they were. Everyone is familiar with the award-winning photographs from Oklahoma that first appeared in LIFE, and everyone has read Steinbeck's THE GRAPES OF WRATH. That novel is so powerful that every reader identifies with the Joads and their trek from Oklahoma to the Promised Land. We are so conditioned to the misery of the time that everyone has a mental picture of children who were deprived, skinny, abused little waifs.

Sure, there were waifs around--just as there are now. But some of us weren't waifs. I was born in 1926 and did my growing up during the notorious Thirties, and I adamantly defend the life style that Foster and Louise Thurston provided during the hard-time days between 1926 to 1944. What I took for granted on the farm my parents owned is so different from the popular view of the Thirties. It might almost rank as fantasy compared to children of the Joads. But I have good memories of my childhood in the Thirties, and I'm sure I'm not alone.

My parents, like other adults living then, felt and suffered from the sharp edge of the depression. Dad worried--the pressure was fierce. And Mother has told me how she "managed." From the sale of thirty dozen eggs a week (\$3.30, 11¢ a dozen), she bought the week's groceries,

and with the change, she bought material for clothes--or maybe something pretty for the house. I have a beautiful pitcher that she saw and coveted for months--and finally bought after the price was reduced from a dollar to seventy-five cents. These and other hard-time stories they told me later, but with an air of an adventure survived--not defeated.

Foster Thurston moved to Oklahoma from Texas after World War I--an ambitious, energetic man with a strong reserve of knowledge in areas as diverse as human relations and crop rotation. He met, courted, and married Louise Wartz, a local girl who had been away to A&M College in Stillwater and had come back to teach in the grade school.

They married in April of 1924 and lived on a rented farm south of town. There they made plans to move to the farm that Louise's mother had bought in 1904. They were still living there when I was born in the summer of 1926. In later life I was often teased by my brother, "You weren't born at home--you were born down south of town." True, pictures of that unpainted house south of town aren't too attractive! Eventually, though, I did go home to the new house that had been in the planning and building stages for two years. We spent my second Christmas there--not fully furnished and unlandscaped--but home! And before long, sidewalks of native white stone surrounded the house, trees grew in the yard, lilacs began to bloom, and a fence separated the yard from the pasture and its curling trail to the county road.

Of course, by that time the stock market had probably crashed in New York City, but the resulting shock waves

didn't reach Oklahoma for another two or three years. The black, hard depth of the Depression didn't reach Oklahoma until 1934-1935.

So life was good--from my point of view, it stayed good.

Time at home was probably what is referred to now as "quality" time. There was time to play in the huge grassy pasture--playing there might change with the season or the need of the moment. Running with the wind, sliding down the hill, "acting" on a stage-like ledge of limestone, or maybe just hiding to think. Night time in the winter meant each one of us reading--or their reading to me before I could read my own books. Magazines came regularly and stacked up behind the glass doors of the bookcase until they slid into jumbled profusion. One of my earliest household duties was straightening the magazine stacks. (My copies of CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES I stored in my own desk.) WOMAN'S HOME COMPANION, AMERICAN, DELINEATOR, SATURDAY EVENING POST, COLLIERS, McCALLS, and LADIES' HOME JOURNAL came every month along with Dad's FT. WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM, KANSAS CITY STAR, CAPPER'S WEEKLY, and the DAILY OKLAHOMAN. A trip to the mailbox always netted a good haul.

Nights were time for sitting on the front porch in the summer or around the big round stove in the winter and hearing stories from the past. My grandmother's stories always began, "When I was a child--" At the time I secretly doubted that anyone so old could have ever been a child--why the woman must have been forty years old! And sometimes--not often

--Dad could be persuaded to talk of France and World War I.

Summers were a wild carnival of events--summers were neverending. They were long days of playing and chores--of reading and running--of becoming nut brown in the sun from riding on the cultivator with Dad (when I could bargain with him for "just one more

I was born in 1926 and did my growing up during the notorious Thirties, and I adamantly defend the life style that Foster and Louise Thurston provided during the hard-time days between 1926 to 1944.

round") or running to turn the windmill off and on or bringing the cows in. Mother and I never did any field work. I never heard Dad say where he thought women "belonged" since the issue was non-existent then, but he made his opinion very clear about women in *his* field. He didn't want them there except to take cold water to the thirsty men. Sometimes the hired hands' families had children my age, and I had someone to play with. But if not--no matter. I could always rustle up enough to do.

Two summer events were the arrival of my cousin from Houston and our trip in later summer to Dad's family south of Ft. Worth. (I remember our constant planning to go somewhere else "next summer" after we went to Texas "this summer." It seems that "next summer" never came!)

Two things Mother did not cancel just because it was summer were weekly piano and speech lessons. Those meant two trips to Mangum each week. And it also meant practicing--daily. No excuses. My Houston cousin wasn't left out, either. Part of the agreement that brought her to Oklahoma was that she must continue her music with my teacher.

Part of the charm of summer time was getting to sleep outside on an iron bed under the chinaberry tree. At first sleep was almost impossible--the soft wind, the rustling sounds, the moon over the moun-

tain. And when my cousin was there, the urge to talk and giggle went on and on--until we attracted Dad's attention! And sudden thunderstorms at night meant piling all covers and mattresses into the living room to finish the night in jumbled disarray.

Winters were quieter--looking back now, my impression is that they were

more intense. Snow and ice slowed--or stopped--much outside activity. There were more chores to be done--the kindling, kerosene, and extra water had to be brought in, of course. And for some reason everything seemed to take longer. That was probably true because the sun went down so early. (Daylight Savings was unheard of then--at least on our farm in

Nights were time for sitting on the front porch in the summer or around the big round stove in the winter and hearing stories from the past.

Greer County.) Over late suppers by kerosene lamp, there was talk, talk, talk--current world events, family events, community events, personal events. And maybe an especially intriguing story was carried over past the supper dishes to the living room circle around the big black stove. Cozy. Safe. Stable. Unthreatened.

Christmas had a special excitement that wasn't produced by commercial hysteria. No radio. Electricity didn't reach our farm until the late forties. My memories of Christmases center around native fir trees piled high with dolls

(Shirley Temple) and little sets of dishes and doll blankets--who could ever remember all the loot that accumulated under those trees. A few years were outstanding like the one when they gave me my desk, a bathrobe, and house shoes. For the duration of that day I sat at my desk dressed in robe and shoes and cut out paper dolls. Busy day!

One Christmas season our not-so-trusty Model A was out of running order--almost permanently--with a cracked block. Our Christmas shopping trip was thrilling to me--though I imagine Mother and Dad's Christmas spirit was low. The three of us walked down to Highway 9 and flagged the OTC bus to Mangum. On the way home I was fascinated by the big oblong package Mother carried--but hands off. And Mother could hide things with absolute finality, so that package disappeared until Christmas. It was a miniature cedar chest. It held many a secret treasure over the years, and it sits to this day on my roll top desk, still smelling strongly of cedar.

My first encounter with Santa Claus is not one of my favorite childhood episodes. But the huge net bags Santa provided must have held a half gallon of Christmas goodies!

Winters and their snow storms and heavy coats and long stockings finally disappeared, and not far into spring was

the most hectic, turbulent, upsetting time of the year--wheat harvest. (If, indeed, there was any wheat to harvest!) Dad, usually a cool, suave man, one in control of almost any kind of predicament, lost any semblance of his "cool." Every minute was a crisis. Every word was an ultimatum. Nothing was ever done promptly enough. No hired hand existed who could be everywhere Dad expected him to be. Nobody *ever* measured up! The place for me, I soon learned, was out of the way. No rider could be bargained for then. That situation lasted until I was old enough to

drive a grain truck, but that was well out of the Thirties and outside the scope of my Depression recollections.

However, when the last gray Gleaner combine lumbered off the farm, Dad's "cool" was restored and back in operation. All the high-pitched panic turned to standard operations again, and any emergency the rest of the year was dealt with calmly and efficiently. (I do know now, of

customer read her list to the clerk and waited while the clerk gathered up the grocery items. A visit to the dry goods store meant getting to twirl the wooden stools where the women sat to examine bolts of material taken from shelves behind the counter and choose patterns from the "big books." Those stools were notoriously noisy, so one good energetic twirl was about all a little girl could risk.

finished a new Sunday dress for me--finished, that is, except for the hem, maybe, or sewing on buttons. So amid the scramble of breakfast, milking, separating, feeding livestock, my dress had to be finished. I don't remember ever getting to Sunday School on time. Then once we were ready, likely as not, there was a flat on the car--or it wouldn't start and had to be pulled off. Then Dad (in Sunday suit and white starched shirt) would go harness up a horse and tow the Model A down the hill!

Part of the charm of summer time was getting to sleep outside on an iron bed under the china-berry tree.

course, that wheat-harvest panic isn't an affliction peculiar only to my father. Wheat harvest will always induce a violent case of jitters. Much as we teased Dad, the same phenomenon was being suffered on every farm around us.)

Saturdays were days looked forward to more eagerly than any other. It wasn't even too hard to get up the first time I was called, knowing that today we would go to Granite or Mangum--or maybe both.

If I spent Saturday with Dad, our route usually covered the feed stores, maybe the gin or elevator in season, and best of all, the hardware stores. One in particular was a never-ending delight of dark, gloomy, mysterious nooks and corners to explore. Or maybe it was a day to perch on a burlap-covered nail keg and listen to Mr. Gooch tell stories about the old days. A Saturday in town with Dad always included a stop at the City Cafe where I had a hamburger and Dad ate a bowl of Mr. Christy's red-hot chili. Dad nearly always treated me to a little brown sack of bulk candy, too. (Mother didn't approve of bulk candy!)

When I spent the Saturday trip with Mother, we began at Flossie's beauty shop with its white wicker furniture and chintz cushions where she had her hair "finger-waved"--shampooed, set, and dried under the big monster dryer: twenty-five cents. There was time for me to "read the pictures" in Flossie's magazines or admire the beautiful models on the wall. They always puzzled me--were they from Granite? I sure didn't know them. After that, shopping and buying the groceries. This was before shopping carts, so the

But the noisy, lopsided spin was worth it.

With Mother the afternoon treat was a dish of ice cream at the drug store. Haagen Dazs doesn't stand a chance in comparison to the Stephens ice cream of my childhood. Sitting at a black, wrought iron table, my black Roman sandal shoes dangling over the white tile floor and eating ice cream in a little cone-shaped bowl lined with lacy paper--that was real Saturday afternoon elegance.

The rest of Saturday, unless there was some urgent reason to return home early, was spent visiting and people watching.

As all of childhood seems to do, time moved slowly--so slowly that there was always some incredible adventure waiting somewhere out beyond the fringe of time.

Maybe we strolled the sidewalk and stopped to talk to people sitting in their cars. Or maybe we sat in our parked car and visited with those who stopped alongside. But Saturdays always ended with a return down Highway 9--either five miles home from Granite or seven miles from Mangum. There were chores to do, and there was Sunday to get ready for.

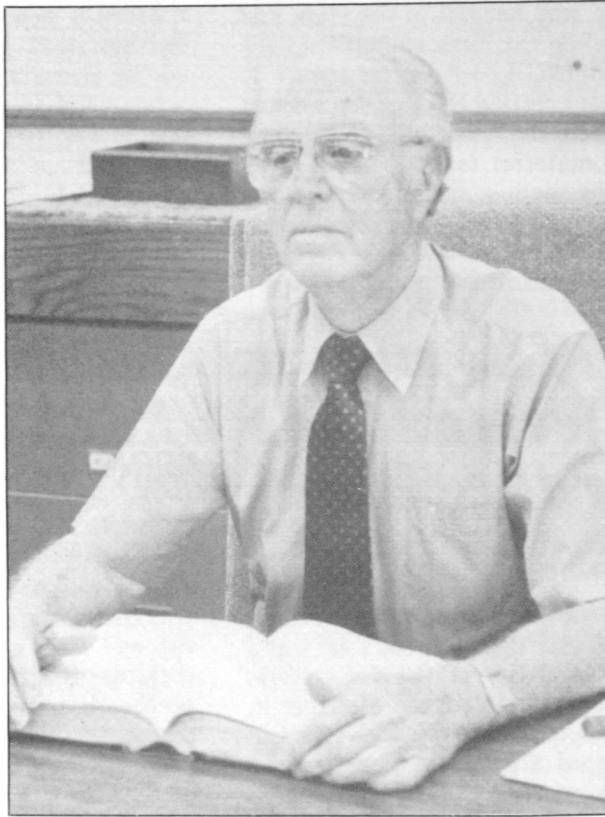
Sundays--they were a chapter in themselves! Mornings started out in a hectic rush. Inevitably, Mother had almost

Gospel meetings in the summer lasted two full weeks then--twice a day--at the open-air tabernacle. It was then that my town friends and I exchanged visits, to be delivered back to our parents at the evening service. On the way home from church was the stop at the ice house for a fifty-pound block of ice. That assured iced tea and jello with the fried chicken, potatoes, gravy, beans, squash, pickled peaches and apple cobbler we had for dinner.

Winter Sundays were much the same except that few little friends exchanged visits. It seems that the grown folks did their visiting on cold Sunday afternoons. And how often I remember riding home after the evening snuggled on Mother's lap nuzzling my face against her fur collar and breathing her Evening in Paris perfume and Coty makeup. I would

recognize those two odors today--even in Paris!

There were times, of course, when bad things happened, though I wasn't old enough to realize the severity. The year there was smut in the wheat--just how smut from the coal stove got to the wheat I couldn't figure out, but the whole situation, I knew, was grave. I remember walking through the remains of a hailed-out cotton crop. Splintered stalks stood in the ragged rows, brown and bare. I watched Mother stoop to scratch a tweed



L. L. "Red" Males — "A business or bank can only prosper in proportion to the prosperity of the people who patronize them. I knew that for the people to do well in Roger Mills County, the land had to be saved and conservation was the means to use." In service to others, Red has found himself and his strength as a person. Because of him and other soil savers, the land is being conserved, but "the effort must not stop. It must go on and on, because each generation has to be convinced again." (Photo by Dee Ann Ray)



Lorena G. Savage Males at her beloved piano. "I owe a great debt to my parents. My father could have used all us children in the store as a work force, but when it came time to go to school, he saw to it that we got to go. My mother and other ladies of Hammon worked to see that we children had cultural opportunities and training in music and the arts. They allowed us to be ourselves and develop as individuals." (Photo by Dee Ann Ray)

— by Dee Ann Ray

Males Appreciation Day honors couple for service

On Saturday, July 7, 1984, Roger Mills County observed Males Appreciation Day in honor of the contributions of L. L. and Lorena Males not only to that county but to Western Oklahoma. Married more than fifty years, the Maleses are an integral part of Roger Mills County's history.

L. L. "Red" Males was born at Rankin, which later became Reydon, Oklahoma. He is

the son of G. W. and Bertie Males, who farmed all their lives in the Reydon area. Even as a boy, Red had a feel for the land and he could see the constant abuse of it, although conservation was an unknown term in those days.

As a 4-H member, Red participated in the projects of the club, but recalls nothing being mentioned about the need to save the land for

future generations.

School days for the first eight grades were spent at "Skip-Out School," which was located across from present-day "Skip-Out Lake." In many ways it is ironic that a boy attending Skip-Out School grew up to help build a conservation program that developed Skip-Out Lake.

With no high school available in Reydon, L.



Lowell Lawrence (L. L.) Males is the little boy second from the right on the front row. The photo was made when he attended Skip-Out School, which was located across from what is now Skip Out Lake, near Rankin-Reydon. His parents were G. W. and Bertie Males. There was no High School in the area, so he went to Strong City on an Athletic Scholarship to complete his schooling.

L. accepted an athletic scholarship at Strong City High School, one of three such scholarships given to Reydon boys. In 1924, Red went to work for the First State Bank of Strong City, headed by D. N. Hunt. His first job was as janitor and then bookkeeper while he attended school during most of the day. Between his athletic commitments with the relays, basketball, baseball and the mile which he ran in a little over five minutes, and his job at the bank, Red was busy all the time.

When he graduated from Strong City High in 1925, Red wouldn't accept the position of Valedictorian for his class because it meant he would have to make a speech. "I was shy and I didn't think I could do that, so I threw away the chance to be Valedictorian." There is another irony in that, because Red has since made thousands of speeches in favor of conservation efforts and in explaining the Sandstone Creek project. The difference is in Red's own words, "I believed I had something important to say about conservation and



Red and Lorena in 1953

something to contribute. I overcame my shyness to do so. I had lots of help from Bob Wright and other Soil Conservation workers, but I knew I had to speak up."

In the late 20's, a new music teacher moved to Strong City. Her name was Lorena Savage. One of eight children born to E. B. and Mary Savage of Hammon, Lorena was a new graduate of Southwestern State College. As she tells the story, she questioned a friend about eligible men at Strong City after she knew she was going to teach there. She was told there were only two, one at the lumber yard and one at the bank. Before she moved to Strong City, Lee Wells at the lumber yard was spoken for by Nig Polk and that left Red Males at the bank. When she got settled at Strong City, Lorena met him and "things turned out good."

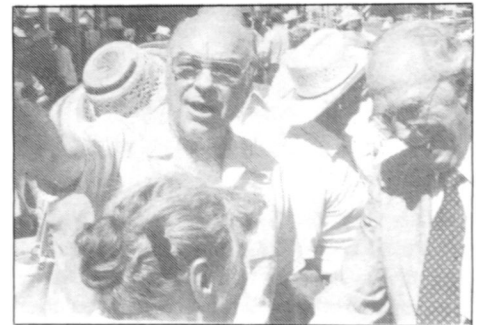
Lorena's mother held the distinction of being the first coed to enroll at Southwestern State College. When Mary Mabry married E. B. Savage, and began to raise a family which eventually consisted of eight boys and girls, the family push was always for education for the children. Lorena expresses a debt of gratitude to Hammon, and the environment it provided for children who had talent in the arts. "The ladies at Hammon then did everything possible to promote music and speech and all of the arts. They saw to it that we had good teachers and opportunities to compete. They told us to try to be ourselves. We were so fortunate. Do you know that Hammon once placed first in one act plays in

the state? Josephine Smithey was the speech teacher then. We also had four talented girls from the Indian Missionary family. They were all named Kliewer and they were educated in Kansas and came back to teach music. Later, Grace Crump Boal taught music.

"Hammon is still promoting the growth of culture and the arts. They even have a wonderful new auditorium at their school for programs. I was just born at the right time to the right family in the very community where I should have been to give me every opportunity to develop my musical talents. It is only a little talent, but a lot of work has gone into developing it."

Lorena also found just the right husband too. "He has always wanted me to be myself, develop and grow, and that has made a difference, because we complement each other's lives but we also have our own fields of interest. We do share our common heritage of growing up in Roger Mills County. Often when we are talking, we discuss the three or four generations of families we have known through the bank and through my work in the schools," says Lorena. "We've covered the waterfront, since we represent Reydon, Strong City, Hammon, and Cheyenne in our background."

Red's first decision to do something about



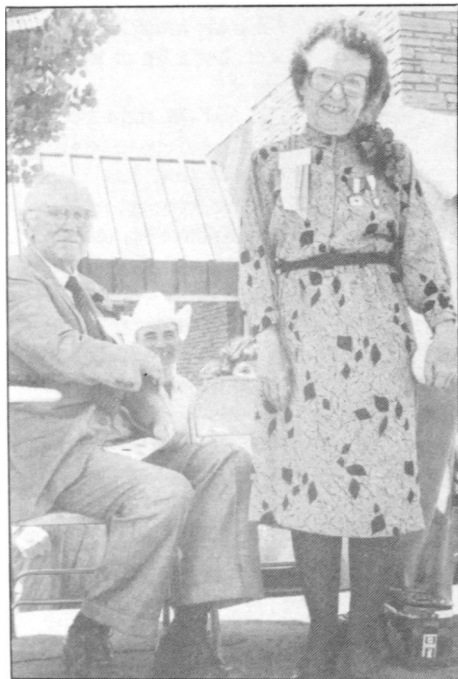
A candid shot on Appreciation Day

conservation occurred the day he along with everyone else in Roger Mills County was frightened by the wall of dirt which swept in from the north in the first dust storm to hit in the "dirty thirties." "We didn't know what it was. It was like a wall and it kept coming toward us. It was only the first, but we knew we had to stop it."

By that time, the Extension folks were talking conservation, and Red knew about equipment which was available to help in terracing, ditching, etc. The bank purchased several pieces of equipment to loan to area farms in 1934-35. But the equipment was heavy for horses, and most farmers didn't

have tractors in those days. However, a start was made with a Corsicana grader, some farm levels, and so forth.

E. B. Savage, Lorena's father, was also conscious of the need for conservation. He grew up in railroad camps where his father operated road-building equipment. E. B. saw what happened to the soil when it was not taken care of by the farmers. Later when his father opened the E. F. Savage & Son store in Hammon, E. B. continued his efforts, es-



The honorees on Appreciation Day

pecially after the real conservation move was made in Roger Mills County, E. B. and Red were always friends and worked together on the early efforts, which Red continued after Mr. Savage died.

Red became the head of the bank at Strong City in 1929. In 1935, the 1st State Bank of Cheyenne failed. Red moved the bank from Strong City to Cheyenne and named it the Security State. His staff then consisted of two plus himself.

Throughout his banking career, Red's philosophy has been that the bank could do well only if the people it served did well. The farmers of Roger Mills County depend on the land; therefore, the land must be protected. "That is why I have worked so hard on conservation. I believe it is the only hope we have for the future of the land and the people of Roger Mills County," says Red.

In the 30's, not only was Roger Mills County ravaged by the dust storms, and the

loss of population, but the big flood of 1934 and subsequent infrequent hard rains did even more damage to the soil. "In 1934, Dr. Winters and other Washington officials came down to survey the damage on the Washita from the big flood. I went with them on the surveys and we talked. I became more and more convinced that we must promote conservation," related Red.

In 1942, Congress authorized the Upper Watershed Conservation programs, but the war prevented any work being done. In 1949, the Sandstone Creek Project started. In 1953, Sandstone was the first Flood Control Watershed program completed in the whole world. "It was all new. We pioneered and developed as we went along. There was little red tape—at least not like now and we just did what seemed to work. The Soil Conservation boys today have lots more training, but they don't have the zeal, the evangelistic attitudes of the first Soil Conservation men we had," muses Red.

Following the completion of Sandstone, Red and Bob Wright of the soil service, hit the road with a slide show explaining what they had done. "We would leave our work at 2 or 3 p.m. in the afternoon, and give programs in Tucumcari or places in Kansas or Texas. Bob would drive back while I slept after doing the program. We always went to work the next day. I'm not sure what we were worth, but we did lots of programs that way. I made my first speech at the State Convention, and then I went to Boston to the National Convention. Even the Ph.D's listened to me because we had done something new and inventive. I didn't have time to worry about being shy," laughs Red.

Thousands of visitors from countries all around the world came to Roger Mills County and Western Oklahoma to view the conservation efforts being completed. Tours and speeches explaining the project were held all the time by Red and the Soil Conservation people.

Red and Bob Wright went all over the United States working on conservation. For Red it was a labor of love, which still goes on. He was a volunteer and he worked hard because he believed in saving the land. He speaks with reverence of the early area soil conservationist such as Bob Wright, who literally gave his life to the program.

While Red was promoting conservation with Lorena's support, she was raising their two boys — Jim, who is now a physician in Oklahoma City, and Bill, who is an innkeeper in Sweden. "I did all the things that mothers are supposed to do—Cub Scout, band mothers,

school programs, etc."

Lorena was also studying the piano and the organ. She still takes lessons on both instruments. "I go once a month to Oklahoma City to OCU for lessons with Dr. Burg on the organ. I go once a week to SWOSU for lessons on the piano with Mr. Breckinridge. I keep learning all the time. I also learn from my students, who after all are my best teachers. I never believed they could be when my good friend Lura Chalfant, who also taught piano, told me that. However, through the years, I find that I get so much from my students in the form of stimulation and elation at their progress."

Through her efforts, the Cheyenne School developed a program of choral music and students have placed well in state, county, and area meets. Piano students earn awards through the continuing efforts of Lorena Males, who believes in them and their talents. "I try to work with each student to develop his or her individual talents. I believe everyone has some talents born in them. Some have talents in being plumbers, and some in music, and some in other fields, but I try to encourage each child to be the best they can in whatever they choose to do in life," states Lorena.

A rather quiet, unassuming man, Red is accessible to his bank customers. He can be found at his desk in the front of the bank. Strangers to Roger Mills County are probably surprised to learn about the accomplishments of this tall, gentle-spoken man. But folks in Western Oklahoma know of the



Bank meeting in the presence of Augusta Metcalf's "Prairie Fire"

many honors given to Red. He was president of the Oklahoma Banker's Association in 1951; has served on all kinds of executive committees, National Agriculture Committee; the National Banker's Association Board; An Advisory Board to the Secretary of Agriculture on soil and water; the Food and Fiber Commission Board; and is senior member of

the Oklahoma Water Resources Board, with 27 years of continuous service. He is also a distinguished honoree of the Western Oklahoma Hall of Fame. The honors are many, but Red has not been changed by them. He still works hard and believes that Conservation efforts are just as important now as they were when begun.

Lorena too has won many honors, not only as a teacher, but as a performer. She long ago lost count of the programs she has given and the number of students she has taught. She currently performs with a group composed of Mr. and Mrs. Rollin Reimer and their son David. Quality is the main driving force behind her efforts. Both of the Maleses use excellence of performance as their measure in life.

Both Red and Lorena seem to have been born into the right time for their talents. Saving the soil is needed, and Red was the man to do it because he believed in the work. Development of cultural activities is needed, and Lorena was born into the right climate to work with developing talent because she believes in people. Both of the Maleses are people-oriented and share a common delight in working to help people develop themselves. Their shared joy is in seeing people be all they

can be, whether it is financially or as a person.

Red's concern for the future of conser-



Lorena as a young woman with her grandmother, Mother Conley

vation is profound. "Saving the soil is a job that will never be completed. We have learned that some of our early efforts were fruitless while others have worked well. We just can't stop, although we have come a long way."

Lorena's concern for the young people of today is that they "are being robbed of their heritage of songs and poetry. The books just don't have the richness of songs and stories as they once did. Children don't sing songs like 'Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean' and 'I Dream of Jeannie With the Light Brown Hair' and 'Skip to My Lou.' The only place they hear such songs is in lessons because the piano books still have them," says Lorena.

The efforts of Lorena and L. L. Males can be summed up by saying their work is for the joy of it. They found themselves in doing for others and because of their efforts, the lives of many people have been and are still being enriched.

— originally published in the WESTERN OKLAHOMA GREEN SHEET for June 28, 1984 —

WESTVIEW

PATRONS

Hydro Dry Goods,

Northside Drug, Hydro

Somewhere Else, Hydro

Kelley Jewelers, Weatherford

Driscoll Ford, Inc., Thomas

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— a woman who is still among us —

The Woman Who Faces The Wind

by Betty Jo Jenkins Denton

Her voice may be a little louder,
Her tonal quality somewhat raspy,
Sentences connected with a liberal helping of *and ahs*,
This combination Arkie-Okie-Texan twang.
Her heavily sprayed coiffure knows a scarf--
For weekdays a kerchief is fine;
Silk or chiffon is a must when she goes to town.
This woman knows how to face the wind:
She typifies the Western Oklahoma spirit woman.

I have seen her chop the firewood and
Make lye soap for rub-board laundry,
Harness a team of mules, while the "scratch" angel food cake
Baked in the oven.

She can set and regulate a cultivator, planter, or plow.
She knows the sweat and toil of any man.
Yet she possesses the essence of femininity as she coaxes a
Bloom from a battered plant.

She is intimate with floods, tornadoes, drought, and hail.
Yet, through it all, I have seen her face the wind.
She contends with a "crop failure" of her own too.
But this survivor is an expert at "making do."

From her, a setting hen cannot hide her eggs.
Likewise, her children know her tenaciousness to search,
Seek, and find.

I have seen her open-arms welcome to unexpected company,
Saying and meaning that there's always room for one more,
Putting on a fresh, white, starched apron,
Wiping the flour from her nose.

I watched with admiration as she faced the wind.

She has strong convictions on education, family, church, and country.

I saw her emerge as an individual long before ERA.
I have seen her welcome, with quiet resignation, both birth and death.

I have seen her stare resolutely at hopelessness with HOPE.
Yet today I saw her trembling with grief and sorrow,
Saw the look of bewilderment on her face:
Her child had died before her----
Dear God, help her as she faces the wind.

city girl

— by *Lu Spurlock*

those Western Oklahoma folks
stare

spit tobacco
or smile and speak

treated like a real person
her reawakening begins

in the distance
she sees Wichita peaks

blues
greens and purples
tranquilize

she floats
in memories
of slower paced life

drops protection
of cardboard city wrapping
becomes an Okie for the day
and dreads the trip home

DUST BOWL

— *changing life* —

WATER CARRIER

The sun is a ball of fire
It glares at the edges
As it rips through the cloudless sky
Dust hangs in the air
Flies gnats and hornets swarm
Around the cotton choppers
Men women and older children
Sweat and bend their backs
As they fight to save the crops

Weeds and grass multiply
Crawl and stretch their greedy roots
For space light and water as they
Choke the tender young cotton stalks

A cool breeze is nowhere to be found
Except for now and then when
A spiral teases the cotton patch
With its whirlwind as it dances by

Bobby Joe and I carry fresh water
To the workers in the field
In a galvanized bucket
Covered with a damp cloth
On a pole with the pail of water
Hanging between us
We trudge off from the house
Toward the south treeless forty
At two o'clock in the hot afternoon

I wear my poke bonnet
Bobby Joe his floppy straw hat
We do not know thirst
We go through the cow pasture
We play with the calves
We throw sticks for Old Red to fetch
We turn field turtles on their backs
We stop to watch a doodlebug
We throw rocks into the pond
We touch leaves on bushes
To watch them close and open again
We pick wild berries and turn cart wheels

Bobby Joe lies down
To watch an ant hill
Then he kicks it to pieces

I pick lupines black-eyed Susans
Chase butterflies

Suddenly we remember the water bucket
We each grab an end of the pole
And hurry on to the field
Sloshing all the way

As we reach the workers I complain
Daddy this is a hard job
It's boiling out here
It's a long way to walk
From the house to the field
Bobby Joe and I get tired
Carrying this old bucket

Then Daddy straightens his back
Looks me over and says
God willing Becky Sue
Come next year
I'm making a hoe
Just your size
Your water-carrying days will be over then

POETRY

— by Dorothy Rose

— *Beckoning California* —

THE POT OF GOLD

I am about twelve
The middle of summer
Hot and dusty in Oklahoma
Thunder lightning dark clouds rush on

A rainbow laughs

In less than three minutes
Hail big as golf balls
Has machine-gunned large ripe melons
Melons that would have gone to market tomorrow

A rainbow vanishes

I look up into my father's eyes
I see a man
An extension of the barren earth
Ripped open like the wasted crops
Too many years of blizzards
Floods tornadoes cyclones droughts

California beckons

— *a change of environment* —

DEAR MARY LOU

You wouldn't believe
The things they have in Tulsa
We visited Aunt Stella there
Last week

They have a toilet in the house
Before we knew what it was
Pretty Boy sailed his boat in it
Ruby Nell washed her doll clothes in it
and I gave the cat a drink from it

When Aunt Stella explained
What it was for
Pretty Boy was afraid to sit on it
So we just let him
Pull the chain
When we used it

Aunt Stella made ice tea
We ran for bowls and spoons
But found that ice tea

Is very different
From ice cream
You drink it from a glass
It tastes like medicine

We ran to the railroad
To watch the train go by
Ruby Nell counted 87 hobos
I counted 105 box-cars.
Pretty Boy threw rocks at it

We heard an airplane in the sky
Everyone ran outside to watch.
Uncle Zeke said
If God meant us to fly
He'd of give us wings
Daddy said
Zeke That's dumb
If he'd meant us to wear clothes
He'd of give us fur or feathers

Mamma got real embarrassed
You know
The thought of anybody
Being naked

So then Grandpa changed the subject
to that awful
President Hoover

The thing we liked best
Was the electric lights
One beautiful bulb
Hangs from the ceiling
Suspended in mid-air
Like your own special star

Well I've gotta close now Mary Lou
I want to go play with Zelda Prichett
She told me all about
That Santa Claus stuff yesterday
She promised to tell me
About that God stuff today

And she says there's something
Fishy about
That stork bringing baby stuff too

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— a National Poetry Contest winner —

Crying From The Gound

by
Oklahoma's Poet Laureate
Maggie Culver Fry

That soundless cry again!
from somewhere on the ground,
under the rubble that the wind
has tossed. I hear the voice
of **BLOOD**. Squeamish, I read
its earth-red message, as it
pricks the horny scarf-skin
of my consciousness; a burn
I know is there, yet scarce
can feel. . . this vague
uneasiness, half-memory of
forgotten things. . . this faint
yet noisy ricochet of sound,
burning into the spiraled conch-shell
of my knowing. Dim shapes
with voices limp, and yet
stirring, half-animated souls
rising in the Valley of
Dry Bones. I stand
above the trash-covered ruin
of you, my brother!
It is your blood that cries,
vanquished and puddled
in the dust; your blood
and therefore, mine.
Crying from the ground. . .
Crying!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Keeper of Brothers
take the hand
of one born blind!
Here in the dark I find
no bomb-shelter
to save me from
the destruction of
my **PEACE!**

It Was Ossie Done It

by Juanita Noah

*We went to see 'em one Sunday after dinner, in Oklahoma.
The men folks gathered at the barn,
The women 'round the fireplace, dipping snuff.
Was a quilt stack over near the window,
Quilts was aswaying, reaching near to the ceiling.
He was laying on top, quiet, listening in,
Wicked grin, Mother said, "You do beat all,
How did you climb way up there?"
It was Ossie done it.*

*Sister going to graduate from high school.
Got her a real pretty class ring,
Held out her hand, "Like my new ring?"
"Naw, ain't got any diamonds in it."
Sister's fella gave her an engagement ring.
"How do you like this ring?"
It's got a diamond in it."
"Don't look like no damn diamond to me."
"Who hurt your feelings, Sister?"
It was Ossie done it.*

*Mr. Goldsby raised the best watermelons,
Great big ones, just about to get ripe.
Went out one morning to gather the first one.
Found 'em stomped to mush, vines tore up.
Everybody went to church, come Sunday.
Songleader couldn't find the songbooks,
Piano player tried to chord some,
Couldn't even remember all of Amazing Grace,
Finally found the books up under the church house.
It was Ossie done it.*

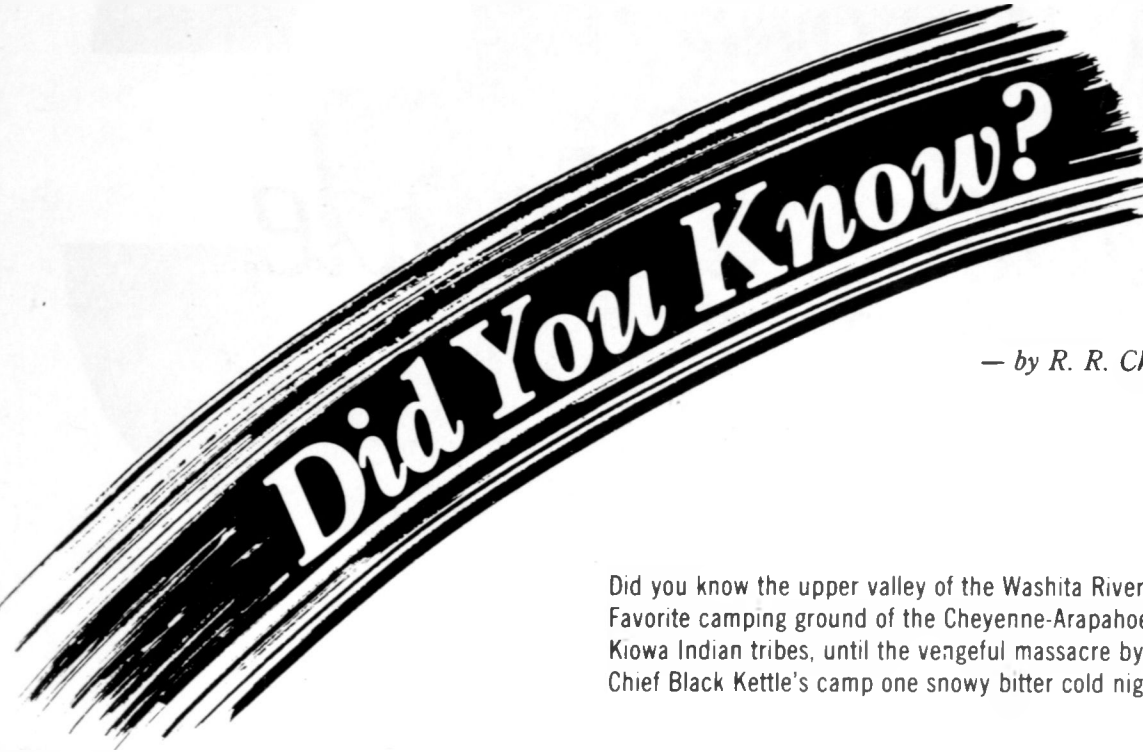
*Little Truman started to school.
Only boy with sisters out of school.
Everybody walked home together.
"I'm gonna cut your ears plum off, Truman."
Threw Truman's pencil back down the road,
Come to the bridge, took Truman by the heels,
Hung him over the edge. "Gonna drop you, Boy."
No one dared help Truman, pale with fright.
"Gonna throw this dinner bucket to kingdom come."
It was Ossie done it.*

*Schoolhouse was full of smoke, flue wouldn't draw.
Stove pipes clogged, let's cleam 'em. Wasn't clogged.
Big boys climbed on top the schoolhouse,
Two boards laid across the chimney, half a day wasted.
Old gray mule roamed everywhere, no one claimed it.
Stiff with age, so old could scarcely move.
Seen that mule running like a white streak,
Someone hanging to his ragged tail,
Hitting the ground 'bout every twenty feet.
It was Ossie done it.*

*Them good laying hens stopped laying, sudden like.
Two big baskets of eggs hid in the hay loft.
Took 'em to town a horse back, didn't break any.
Stopped by just as school was letting out,
Had a candy bar for every single kid, even Truman.
Charlie and Annie moved down to the next community,
So much house plunder, couldn't take the chickens.
Be back to get 'em in a day or two.
Be all right-but not a chicken was there,
It was Ossie done it.*

*Walking down the road, a car came puttering past,
Jump on the back bumper and ride a ways,
Turn loose and fall off, never did get hurt.
Young girl had her appendix out, didn't wake up,
Buried her down there in the cemetery,
That night, boys playing mumble peg by the creek,
Somebody, wearing the coffin wrappings
Came, singing low, When the Saints Go Marching In.
Skeered 'em nigh to death, one boy had a nervous rigor.
It was Ossie done it.*

*Beginning to grow up, eyeing the girls,
Going into town to the picture show.
Got in a fight, whipped one old boy,
Whipped the lawman, too, for interfering.
Land in the pen, shore as twice two is four.
Old friend from California said, "Read in a paper
About Hubert Sipes, honored by the town of Palo Alto,
Meritous service, setting up Missions and shelters, preaching,
Say, wasn't that the real name of _____"
"Yep, it shore was, and who'd ever a thought it?"
It was Ossie done it.*



Did You Know?

— by R. R. Chapman

Did you know the upper valley of the Washita River was a favorite camping ground of the Cheyenne-Arapahoe and sometimes Kiowa Indian tribes, until the vengeful massacre by Custer, of Chief Black Kettle's camp one snowy bitter cold night of November 1868?

Did you know that bootleg buyers of quail and prairie chickens moved West with the first railroads and bought quail at 75¢ per dozen and hauled or shipped them east by the thousands?

Did you know that a longhorned steer with a broken horn was savage as a bear, and would fight anything and every thing in sight, and even a longhorned bull gave him plenty of room?

Did you know that in the summer of 1907 a young red headed fellow who later became Governor of Oklahoma and a younger brother on a hot summer day, led and pushed, and drove a two year old bull ten miles to pasture and they did it on their own two feet "No Horse?"

Did you know that in the years of settlement around 1900 the Cheyenne-Arapahoe country such a thing as petty thieving or malicious property damage was unknown, locked doors were a rarity, many doors had no locks and in warm weather people slept indoors or outdoors unconcerned, although some might have a six gun laying real handy?

Did you know that in the summer of 1896 that in a squabble between a settler and a cattleman over some alledged damage done to a corn crop by cattle, a cowboy by the name of Bert Atchison with two shots from a Winchester Rifle killed a Mr. Cootz and seriously wounded Cootz's son Gus, and they were not standing still either, Bert was never convicted but he soon left the country?

Cousin Maude

— by Lu Spurlock

I was four years old that summer day
We visited Mamma's cousin
her hair was skinned back into a gray knot
and all she wore that I could see
was a blue cotton slip
go play while I talk to your mother
she said
on the back porch I found
new squares of soft lye soap
spread out to dry
squatting on my heels
I poked my middle finger
into the center of each piece
spiderleg cracks wrinkled squares
visiting Cousin Maude was fun
until she yanked me up by the neck
said I was so rotten
salt wouldn't save me
I oughta be whipped
whimpering
I hid behind Mamma's skirt
afraid to look at Cousin Maude
didn't know 'til later
that big person
chopped the heads off
baby kittens

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— a prize-winning poem on a traumatic experience

Leaving The Old Home

by
Ernestine Gravley

The day my dad unhooked the plow
and sold the cow
with spotted hide. . .
his joy and pride,
he lingered dreaming at the gate.
The hour was late,
the sun was low;
we had to go.
I saw him touch the lilac tree
then turn to me. . .
no time to pack,
no looking back.

— the passing of years —

NOW

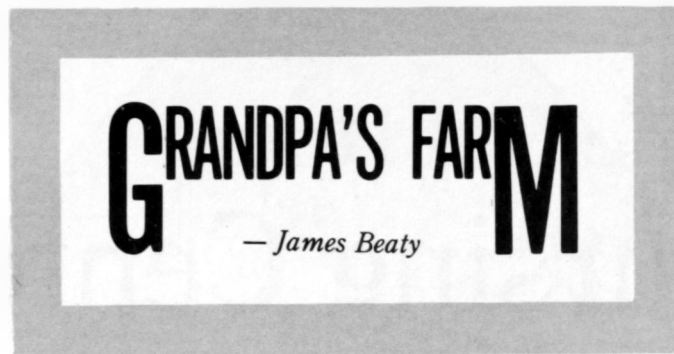
— by Olive Dewitt

Now buttercups grow
where buffalo wallowed
one hundred years ago

GRANDFATHER

— by Evelyn Bachmann

I remember sitting stiffly in silence on Sunday,
Itching under my starchy ruffles,
Afraid to scratch or giggle,
Under the dark, dour gaze of my grandfather.
He had sired ten children,
Reared them all by rising before dawn to milk and plow.
“We never lit a lamp in summertime,” he used to brag.
I never heard him raise his voice,
Or saw him strike a child.
I know now he was a kindly man
Only set in his ways,
On how children should behave,
And when to rise and shine,
Even when he visited us in town.
Once I set the clock back on a dare.
He didn't rise 'til seven
And swore he must be sick,
And I was scared, but glad
That little girls were supposed to be silent.



Grandpa's farm is home now
 To only sparrows
 Singing in the eaves.
 Willows bend,
 Bowing to years
 He spent working cotton rows.

In later years
 He took to wearing
 Red flannel shirts
 In the summer,
 Eating enchilladas for breakfast,
 A shot of whiskey for supper.

He'd talk to the
 Split-tongued crow who
 Perched on the twisted branch in the
 Tallest oak.

They'd say, "Good morning,"
 Then have cuss fights.

When the cotton picking was over,
 The crow said,
 "Goodnight."

Ah, Grandpa'd rosin
 Up the bow,

Play a song about
 Liza Jane,
 Clog up and down the
 Kitchen floor
 Until Grandma'd say
 "This old house won't
 Take much more.
 Slow down Pa
 We can't take much more."
 But Grandpa'd play
 Sally Goodin again until a
 String'd break and
 He'd finally quit.

I don't hear
 Grandpa's fiddle now.
 It rests on a wall in my
 Brother's town.
 No one's here to
 Rosin up the bow.
 No one here to
 Hoe the cotton rows.
 No one near to
 Cuss a split-tongued crow,
 Play a song about
 Liza Jane.

Nursing Center

— by Lu Spurlock

Maggie watched “All My Children”
waits for hers
and greets each visitor
with a wistful smile

Fat-boy Bob
sneaks up behind “pretty girls”
blows hot breath in their ears
and giggles

sheet-wrapped
oblivious to her wrinkled bottom
sagging through the bathchair seat
Phyllis sings her way to the shower

tugging at his oxygen mask
Ted begs an attendant
for a cigarette

Mary Elizabeth carries her walker
while pushing Agnes’ wheelchair
to the card room

latched behind a half-door
Edward clutches at passers-by
asks them to let him out
so he can roam the halls
in his pajama top

listening to 90-year-old Ida
tell about yesterday’s visit
from Mamma and Papa
Ella and Aunt Lucy crochet dreams
into a pink and purple afghan

Nurse Nedra
pops Gelusil
hoping to ease the ulcer
that burns
because she cares too much



The Old Home Place

— by Idena McFadin Clark

An old-time house stands here alone
Upon its last remaining bit
Of homestead farm. The barns
That once stood here are gone.
The henhouse, too. And where
The garden grew, long cattle trucks
Speed with their loads of fatted calves
Along a four-lane super highway.

This house was built--like others of its time--
To give protection from southwestern wind
And rain and storm. No fancy embellishments
Were added then. No magic coat of paint,
Today, could give it "charm."
No ancient blooming vine
Can now be seen around this front door.
No circling path of fieldstones
Is laid across the weed-filled yard.

Yet trees have grown tall around this house.
There are porches, too, to rest on.
These closed windows, if opened wide, again
Could let in the fragrant nighttime air.
And when December days grow dark and cold
A flickering fire in the old stone fireplace
Could warm a stanger's frozen heart.

Oh, if only we could open
This closed door today,
So that love and laughter
Might enter in once more,
This lonesome, long-neglected farm house here
Could soon again become a home.

SALOON IN THE

To almost any Oklahoma resident over 50, just the mention of Statehood Day sets off a string of memories of the state's colorful past. To some, of course these memories came from listening to the reminiscing of their parents or grandparents.

Stay around awhile, and you'll hear the story of the Sand Bar, a saloon built shortly after the land opening of 1889. It was located just east of the middle of the South Canadian River separating Lexington and Purcell.

The Lissauer brothers, Charley and Sam, new arrivals in Purcell, were responsible for building the crate like structure which stood on

wooden pegs driven deep into the sand. It looked like a ramshackle houseboat, so it was nicknamed the "Ark."

A wooden boardwalk was built on sills laid on the sand, bridging the gap between Oklahoma and Indian territories. The walk extended to the Santa Fe depot, thereby accommodating Purcell residents and serving as a lure to passengers arriving on any of the eight daily passenger trains.

A motley group made its daily trek to the Ark. It consisted of the thugs, panhandlers, peddlers, and some "plain people." Poor and rich alike left their money at the saloon.

Going over was likely easy, but

the return trip must have been eventful since bottles were forbidden on the west side of the river. Each drinker would either drain his bottle or lose money on his purchase. One can imagine the whopping, stumbling, and falls (into the sometimes chilly river water) that must have occurred.

The Lissauer brothers had hoped to become rich in this newly opened territory, so they devised another plan to make their wealth come faster. They built Little Sam's saloon on Lexington's main street. It was a fine brick building equipped with all the "fineries."

Sam and Charley were headed for "pay dirt." While the Ark's novelty

ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID OLDHAM



RIVER

— by Kate Jackson Lewis

attracted crowds of both the spenders and the curious, Little Sam's caught the more affluent citizens.

Both brothers were happy now that it seemed they were well on their way to success and wealth. Then the gunfighters, robbers, and toughs began to give them trouble at the Ark. Charley hired a retired Texas ranger to guard his place. This stopped some of the robbers, but some of the more determined took advantage of the ranger's occasional absences to raid the bar.

Mrs. Savada Todd, a Lexington native, said her father, Harve Booker, once worked at the Ark. She remembers hearing her father say,
continued on p. 48



Red Solomon

— a view of Sayre's town character —

— by Dr. Grady J. Walker

They called his dusty town
 "Queen of the West" and
 Sometimes "Gateway to the West."
 Under his greasy-gold bushel
 of hair and under his
 sweat-stained, aged, once-white
 Stetson, banded with velvet
 Brown dust, he walked--
 Rather swung, like the
 King of his namesake.
 He "owned" the town, and he
 Held captive the notice of
 everyone on the Saturday afternoon
 Street.
 He never said much; but when
 He did, the more superstitious
 of us half suspected divine
 wisdom flashed through those

blue-stained soul-windows.
 He was an enigma, a clown,
 a soothsayer, but never a problem--
 That is, until one day when he
 Decided he really *did* own the
 Town and with his plastic 45
 Demanded all the cash and valuables
 from the Beckham County National
 Bank.
 "Don't be silly," said Miss Simmons.
 "I don't have time to play games, Red."
 "Neither do I," he screamed and roared.
 And he didn't (have time to
 play games, that is)--and with that
 he blew a hole through the ceiling
 and into Dr. Gum's desk upstairs,
 a hole in the desk of a thousand memories
 and ten trillion particles of Beckham
 County red dirt.
 Everybody said it was some kind
 of a miracle, but they put Red in
 the county jail anyway and
 took away his fantasy.
 The last time I saw him, he
 was sitting on a bench in front
 of the American Hotel, whittling
 a six-shooter out of shinnery wood.

that spring — by Lu Spurlock

when Western Oklahoma wind
 blew fierce
 lightning jagged across night skies
 and thunder roared close enough
 for us to go to the dirt-floored cellar
 it was scary fun

we sat on a canvas cot
 near shelves of fruit filled jars
 and hangings of spider lace

Dad played his French harp
 or spun stories of other days
 while lantern, light glowed
 on the axe he'd use
 to chop out
 if we had a real tornado

wriggling with excitement
 I wished it would happen

until it did



Where The Buffalo Roam

— by *D. Morris Blaylock*

A small herd of plains buffalo has been at home on part of its ancestors' range for over sixty years—the Davison Ranch on the edge of the rolling red plains of Western Oklahoma east of Arnett. Several buffalo wallows on the ranch are known to have been made over a hundred years ago when buffalo herds roamed the country freely.

At one time, three sub-species of buffalo (Bison, bison) roamed the ranges of about a third of North America, from the Blue Mountains of Oregon east to New York and Pennsylvania. Their southwestern range started in Northeastern Mexico and went north to the Great Slave Lake in Northwest Territories, Canada, north of Albert Province. Their southeastern range started in Central Georgia, north to

Albert Province. Their southeastern range started in Central Georgia, north to the Tidewater section of Virginia and on to the Great Lakes.

The plains or prairie bison made up the tremendous herds that roamed the Great Plains. It has been estimated that once there were sixty to seventy-five million head of buffalo on the Great Plains. In 1871, Colonel Richard Irving Dodge rode for three days through a buffalo herd estimated to be 25 miles wide and 50 miles long. There were 15 to 20 animals grazing on an acre, and the total herd was estimated to be 5 million head.

It's generally accepted that the American buffalo came from Europe or Asia, arriving in North America in the middle Pleistocene Period. The plains buffalo and the prairie grasses on the Great Plains of North America probably developed simultaneously.

The plains buffalo like open range. They are primarily grazers, thus preferring fine, short, and mid-high grasses such as the grammas, wheatgrass, and buffalo grass. However, they will take sagebrush and little bluestem for variety and eat willow twigs and forbs during the winter.

Buffalo are somewhat different from other wildlife in temperament, preference for food, and protection of the young but are similar in some habits. Their large herd size, speed, herd instinct, body characteristics, and defensive attitudes have allowed them to compete very well with other wildlife in the temperate open spaces and timbered areas of North America.

Like caribou, the buffalo would travel two hundred to four hundred miles between their middle range to their summer range.

Like the wild horses, they water once a day and will travel 20 to 30 miles to water. Also like the horse, they seek windy hilltops to keep cool and escape the insect pests. Buffalo like to paw the ground and wallow in dust to obtain a soil covering to protect themselves from flies and mosquitoes—the results are a buffalo wallow and more hungry flies and mosquitoes.

Like sheep, buffalo string out in single file, moving from one place to another. An old mother buffalo cow is usually the leader of the family herd with the older bulls appearing to act as sentinels. Like musk-ox, the aged or disabled bulls are stragglers and may separate completely from the herd.

Buffalo calves are born in April and May. The mother will not leave the place of birth until the newborn calf can travel with her. Young buffalo are tan in color with brownish noses and brown around the eyes. The young calf grows a new coat of brown hair and sheds the tan coat. As the calf grows older, the hair becomes darker up to the age of about two years.

Woolly, long hair develops on the hump, shoulders, and front legs. On the head, the woolly hair may grow to about a foot in length. Both bulls and cows grow beards. Some bulls may grow beards that are eight to ten inches long. The beard and the increased size of the hump make the buffalo appear massive in the fore part of the body.

Both the male and the female have horns. Bull calves grow to weigh from 1,800 to 2,000 pounds. One record-weight bull in Kansas weighed 3,000 pounds. Cows are smaller, weighing 800 to 900 pounds.

The land of the buffalo was also the land of many tribes of native North Americans. The Plains Indians depended on the buffalo for food, shelter, bedding, and clothing. They abhorred waste and consequently killed the buffalo judiciously.

Many years ago, according to legend, Indians would burn off ranges in the winter to make fresh, lush grass available in the spring to attract buffalo to the area.

After the coming of the white man and horses, the Indians learned quickly of the advantages of horses and obtained them, thus becoming superb horsemen. The Indian horsemen would force the buffalo to mill and then surround the herd. The horseback hunters would then come in and select their targets and sink their arrows to the feathers. The horse was a great asset to the Indian buffalo hunter.

The coming of the white man brought something in addition to the horse—the greed to kill for small returns. Thousands of buffalo were killed for their tongues alone. Thousands were also killed for their hides to make robes and also for leather. White hunters were followed by skinners and horse-drawn wagons. Acres of carcasses were left on the prairies to rot.

In the 1860's, William F. (Buffalo Bill) Cody shot several thousand buffalo to feed Kansas railroad workers. Later hunters killed thousands just for their hides, bringing the buffalo near to extinction. Buffalo Bill later became a preserver and

by 1890 had a show herd of eighteen head. His herd was the third largest in captivity at that time.

The Union Pacific Railroad, completed in 1869, divided the Great Plains herd into a Southern and Northern herd. By 1895, wanton waste had brought the number of the Northern herd to about 800 head.

In 1888, Colonel C. J. (Buffalo) Jones rescued a few buffalo calves from the Southern herd and kept some at his Texas Panhandle ranch and gave some to his neighbors. By 1903, only 969 buffalo remained in the United States.

In the history of the buffalo, it's significant that George Elbert Davison established a small herd on his ranch in 1921. He obtained the magnificent beasts from the Wichita National Wildlife Refuge in Southwestern Oklahoma. He had a strong belief that there should be a proper balance between range animal life and range plant life. He was very much interested in preserving wildlife.

The Davison Ranch cowboys drove the first eleven buffalo from the Medicine Park area of the Wichita National Wildlife Refuge to the ranch. Later Davison obtained a few more that were shipped in by truck.

Forty adult buffalo are now maintained on about seven hundred acres on the ranch. During the winter months, they are fed about two pounds of protein supplement per head each day. On an animal-unit basis, cows are counted as one animal unit; large, mature bulls are rated at two animal units each.

Buffalo ranching is different from cattle ranching in that the ranchers who keep buffalo must build and maintain better and taller fences. Marketing surplus animals is also not a problem. Buffalo are sold on a dressed-weight basis. Buffalo meat, when properly prepared and cooked, is delicious. Some patients have been recommended to use buffalo meat in their diet to maintain health and to prolong life.

Today, Francis Davison, present manager of the ranch, cares for the buffalo herd the same as he cares for domestic animals on the ranch. As long as we have concerned ranchers like the Davisons, buffalo will have a place to roam.

—adapted from the October, 1982 issue of RANGELANDS, a Society for Range Management publication—

ONE STORY AMONG MANY

— by Carol Rothhammer Lackey

Do you want to hear a story? A beginning?
A middle? A climax? An end?
Do you want to hear a storytale?

There is a partial story, a theme,
I understood one time: a standard plot,
Common experience, a predictable ending.

A writer found the way, common folk-ways.
The myth followed its way--suspense--
Set in nature's green meadows, heroes, she-roses.

The plot grew long, the dancers laughed,
Catching sunlight in the sandy, meadowed land.
A spirit of the natural supernatural burst the light.

The sacred seabirds filled the all-encompassing space
(White visitors, following the tractors, out of place),
Above the people, seeking synthesis--and what is a human?

Tradition danced across the dancers' minds.
Change coursed through their veins, surging, surging.
In 1934, it was against the law to be an Indian,

Even on Rainy Mountain, even on a scathing hot
Indian August afternoon, when the red, rich soil turned
To powder, dry so dry, like a warrior's warpaint powder.

My brain can't tell the difference: dream? . . . reality?
I sweat, cringe, cry out, but cannot move; adrenalin flows
As the rattler slides closer, curves, coils, strikes.

Reality is all of this: past-perfect, present, then.
Do you want to hear a story? Do you?
Patience, silence, humility . . . sisters of sorrow.

Do you want to hear a story? Hear the wind?
Count the heartbeats? Feel the sand between your toes?
Count the pounding waves--one moment's span?

I sat and watched the dancers dance.
Their anxious, nervous eyes, moving, darting.
God's laughter caught them naked, unaware.

The sea breeze blew my hair and cleansed my soul.
Sandy dampness filled my senses, spirit.
I lay, silently, listening as the tide came in upon me.

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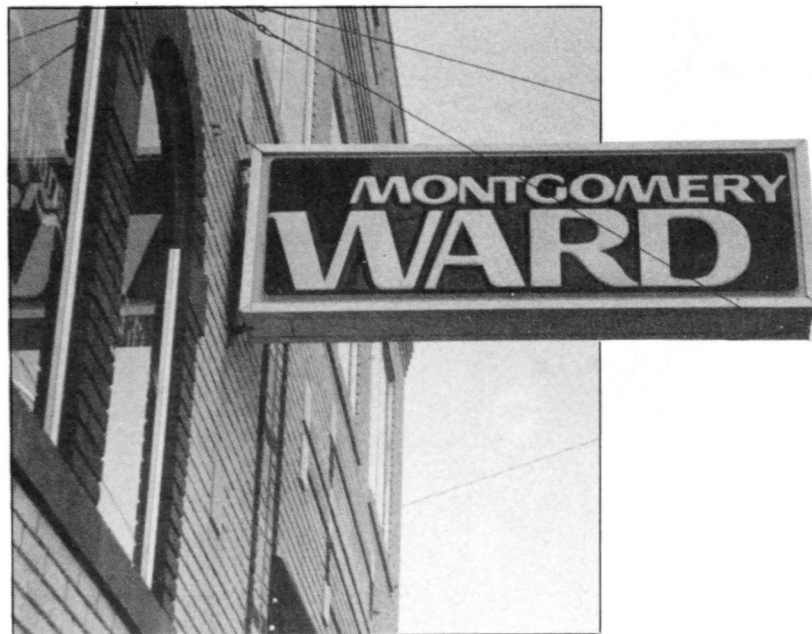
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Aaron Montgomery Ward

— by Inez Schneider Whitney

The company of Montgomery Ward played an important part in the life of the community when I was a child. Everyone affectionately called it “Monkey Ward.”

When Aaron Montgomery Ward started his mail-order business in 1872, he had no idea he would be a prototype of a Horatio Alger hero rising “from rags to riches.” He began in a livery-stable loft with a capital of \$2,400. A single sheet which constituted his first catalog listed a few dry goods items. At the time of his death, forty-one years later, sales had risen to forty million a year. He originated the mail-order method of merchandising and was the first to put it into practice.

The arrival of the catalog was an important event. Mama and Papa would study it carefully and decide

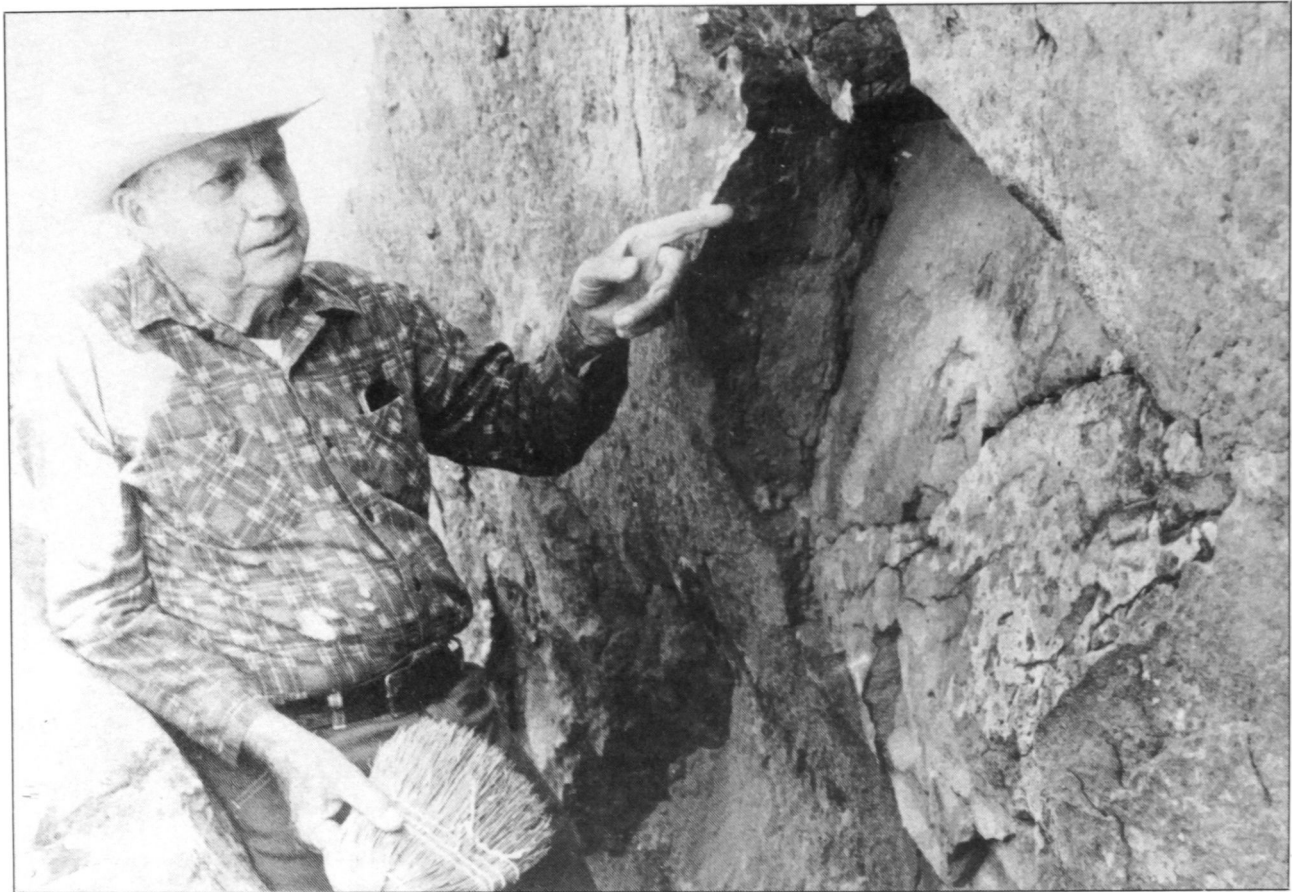
what they could afford. A large order was made up every spring and fall. It would arrive by freight at the small Oklahoma town of Custer three miles from our farm. When Papa received his notice of the arrival of his order, he would hitch up the horses to the wagon and off he’d go. He would come back with groceries, dry goods, clothing, and sometimes even farm machinery.

When a new catalog came, Mama would say, “Inez, here is the old catalog. Take out any pages you want.” I couldn’t wait to cut out all the people. Pasted on cardboard they made wonderful paper doll families. I could entertain myself for hours, and if friends came what fun we had! The rest of the catalog was relegated to a small building not far from the rear door of our house. There it served a

very useful purpose.

Then there were the sales catalogs. I remember an order Mama sent after one arrived. It was 1915, and I was looking forward to my ninth birthday. Mama was thumbing through the catalog. All at once she stopped and said to Papa, “Look here. This would make a nice birthday gift for Inez. It’s a real bargain too, and she needs dresses for school anyway.”

“Request the proper size but no choice of style or color,” the catalog stated. The price? Three dresses for a dollar. How happy I was to have that many new dresses all at once and ready made too. I especially treasure the school picture taken that year because I was wearing one. This was only one instance of the happiness Aaron Montgomery Ward brought to countless homes.



Truman Tucker of Kenton, Oklahoma pointing to dinosaur track in split rock.

SEPTUAGENARIAN TRUMAN TUCKER TRACKS DINOSAURS

— by *Opal Hartsell Brown*

A most unusual hobby for a septuagenarian is tracking dinosaurs, but Truman Tucker of Kenton, Oklahoma does just that. For more than seventy years, he has roamed the Dakota sandstone hills in the Panhandle, tracing the movements of prehistoric animals and other creatures, which once lived there in a swamp.

These monsters are not the figment of somebody's imagination. Their skeletons have been found in separate quarries in the area. While WPA workers were excavating a road in the 1930s, they unearthed a dinosaur graveyard of significance and notified the University of Oklahoma.

The late Dr. J. W. Stovall, paleontologist, brought a crew from Stovall Museum on the campus and set to work. Through the years, archaeologists have removed more than 18 tons of fossilized bones from Cimarron County quarries. They reassembled a brontosaurus

skeleton 65 feet long. It is now on display in Stovall Museum.

A concrete replica of a brontosaurus' femur marks the quarry from which the real one came. It is six feet long, 24 inches at the bottom, and 21 inches at the top. The genuine bone weighs 425 pounds and is said to be the prize fossilized bone of Southwestern United States.

Dinosaur bones of five species were found in the same quarry. Other nearby pits yielded parts of giant mammoths: tusks, skulls, etc.

Tucker has found hundreds of tracks. Pocking dry creek beds and layers of stone which have split, they resemble those of birds, lizards, and elephants and range in size from one inch to more than a square foot. One shoeprint in stone is filled with lava. Tucker believes the man was fleeing from lava, flowing from a nearby volcano.

Scientists estimate the tracks were made from 60 to 130 million years ago. Tucker believes they were made in more recent times. He has become so knowledgeable, he is recognized widely as a local historian and host to researchers.

In 1982, he received the Oklahoma Heritage Association's Stanley Draper Award for distinguished service. He is working on a book about the area with Professor Jim Rogers of Central State University. It will be published by the University of Oklahoma Press.

Tucker went to the Panhandle when he was four months old. His father bought a relinquished homestead in the hill country in the early part of this century and moved his family from Osceola, Missouri. The young Truman never attended a "real school," but studied in old abandoned houses with children from the small ranches in the area.

— from the Oklahoma Panhandle —

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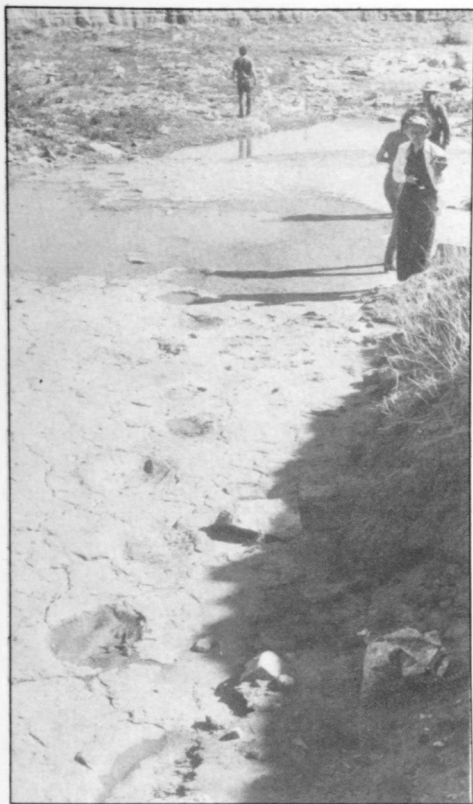
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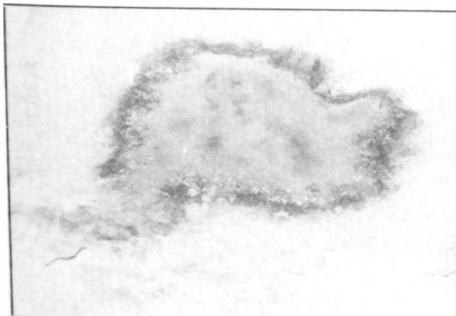


Truman Tucker, wearing hat, as he guides visitors on hunt for dinosaur tracks in Oklahoma panhandle.

In 1941, he married one of the workers from Stovall Museum, and the couple tracked dinosaurs together until her death four years ago.

Meanwhile, he bought small ranches which could not support families and leased school land for grazing. At one time, he controlled about 5,000 acres, including 1,400 in adjoining Colorado. Today, he owns only 20 acres on which he built a house in 1948. He sold a large portion to a millionaire in Lubbock, Texas.

Retired from farming and ranching, he continues tracking pre-historic creatures and hosting visitors. People come from as far away as Isle of Palms, South Carolina.



Close-up of dinosaur track near Kenton



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Saddle Sores

— by R. R. Chapman

Up while the stars are twinkling, the sun scarcely tumbled to rest
the cook rattling pans and plates, more noise than a runaway herd
or a hailstorm in the spring ever makes.

Where would you say that it happened?

Where on earth could it be saddle sores under the saddle, sores
under the cinch, saddle sores under my britches rubbing and
grinding away.

Get up and eat, you dumb puncher, it's time you were miles on your
way. The sun will soon be shining. Get up and pay for your bed.
If the scab comes off with your britches, better your bottom than
your head.

Over the hills and arroyos, cattle must be ever on your mind but
nothing — no nothing can erase the saddle sore on your behind.



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Bandits and Liquor:



Original six Highway Patrolmen served under State Tax Commission. Left to right — Larry Malone, Abe Block, Lawson Gilliam,

“**L**ady, get inside under the counter and lie low. We’re expecting Pretty Boy Floyd to come through any minute,” ordered a uniformed law officer. Hastily I entered the Dan Binns’ store at Parker, 20 miles north of Coalgate and pushed my way into a space among gunny sacks, lard stands, and local people seeking safety from the well-known robber and highway killer.

I had meant to buy some candy for a community candy-breaking at the two-room school where I taught. Now that I was “sardined” into a space near a window, I found myself stealing glances toward the road for a

glimpse of the handsome bandit, but all in vain. The Robin Hood highwayman failed to appear.

Pretty Boy was one of many bandits making Oklahoma’s highways, roads, and streets unsafe during the early thirties.

Until recently, I thought the cars parked outside the community store were manned by highway patrolmen. Now, 47 years later, Thea Bonner, retired Coalgate sheriff, has set me straight.

Asked if he remembered the event, the colorful law-man instantly replied, “Sure I remember that; I was there. I also remember the man that

ordered you to get under the counter. It was D. Arthur Wilson from the State Crime Bureau. The Bureau called me to meet officers Wilson and Maxey at Parker. Hughes County’s sheriff Harve Ball was there too. The caller told me that they received a tip that Pretty Boy Floyd was expected to pass through there to meet Joe Harris, a bankrobbing friend of his, at Legal, over east of Parker. Evidently, some one tipped off Floyd that we were waiting for him.”

The keen-minded sheriff recalled many later events leading up to the demise of both Floyd and Harris. For brevity’s sake, these must be omitted.

(Western Oklahoma and the rest of the state were in need of a deterrent to bandits like Pretty Boy Floyd)

First Highway Patrol

— by *Kate Jackson Lewis*

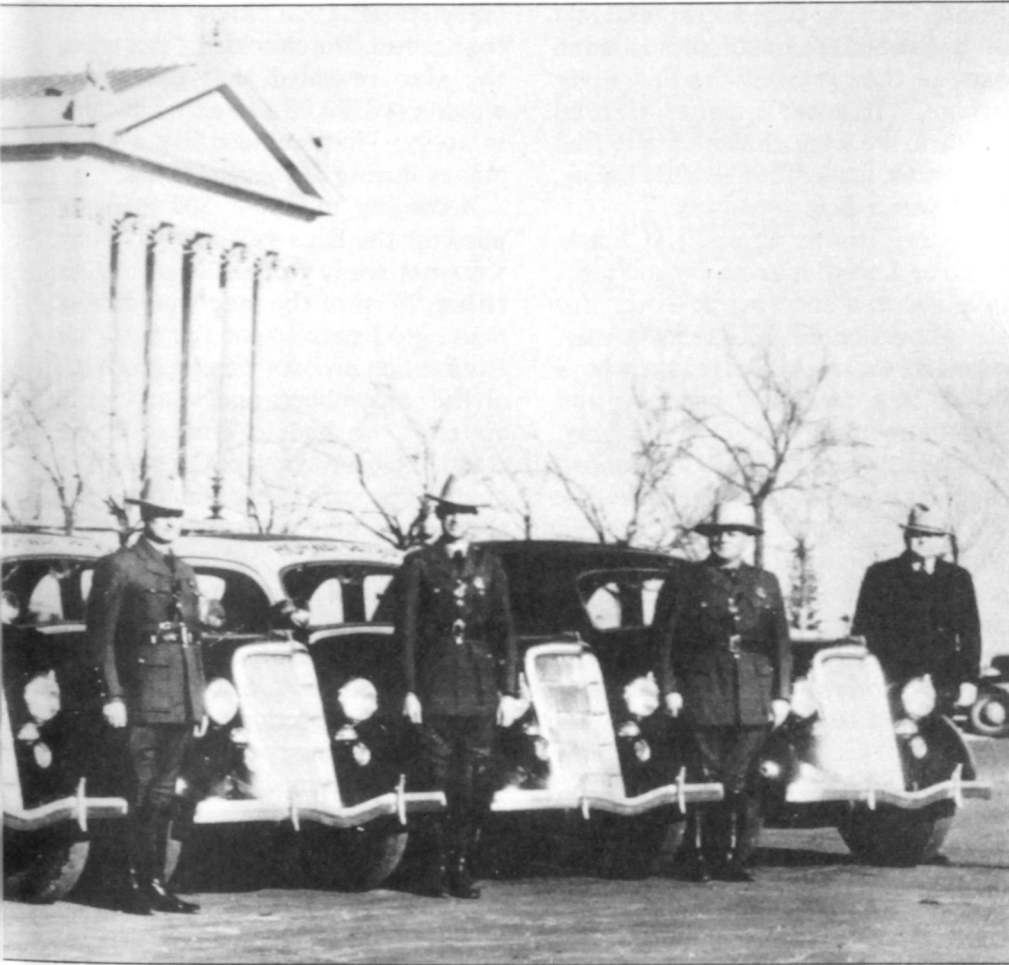
illegal liquor transportation across state lines prompted Mr. Marland to persuade his leaders and supporters in the House and Senate to pass a bill creating the patrol."

In 1935 the legislature authorized the State Tax Commission to set up a six-car emergency patrol to act until men could be schooled and equipment facilitated for a much larger group. Since records were not kept on the original squad, accounts vary as to the number of patrolmen it included.

Tom Hunter, Purcell, son of Leedee Hunter, who drove one of the first yellow and black '36 model Fords used by the preliminary patrol, came up with a picture of a six-car squad with one man standing by each. Pictured were Larry Malone, Abe Block, Lawson Gilliam, Leedee Hunter, Raymond Shoemaker, and Fat Mullins. Hunter, a lad of six at the time, recalled that his father wore a brown wool coat and tan pants with brown stripes down the sides, along with high-topped boots and a stiff-billed cap. His gun was kept in a scabbard on his left hip. "I can remember Daddy putting his handcuffs around both my ankles."

A recent publication, "The First 40 Years of Highway Patrol" recorded that a six-car 12-man squad was fielded. Carl Tyler verified the account. Though he was unable to name the entire group, he said, "I know Dub (Morris) Wheeler was one of them. Dub was an OU All-American football tackle. He's still living down at Atoka."

Tishomingo's June 28, 1963 JOHNSTON COUNTY DEMOCRAT carried an account of another member of the earliest patrol squad. Reporter Bob Peterson wrote, "Cliff Kiersey, salty former Bryan county sheriff, was saluted Friday by state peace officers for his career in law enforcement. Kiersey also holds the distinction of being one of Oklahoma's first six highway patrolmen, and that was before there was even a Highway Patrol as Sooners know it today."



Leedee Hunter, Raymond Shoemaker, Fat Mullins (substitute for R. Q. Nelson).

"We needed better communication among officers back then. By the time we got word that we were needed at a certain place, the bandits were miles away. If we'd had the highway patrol, the bandits couldn't have roamed the highways so long," Bonner added.

Oklahoma City Veteran Patrolman Carl Tyler said the advent of the auto on state roads and highways brought on the need of a state patrol. The vehicle became a weapon in the hands of machine-gun toting, fast-driving bandits of the thirties. As safety conditions grew worse, citizens began pressuring governors and legislators to come to the rescue of the state's

existing law officers, mostly county sheriffs. The lawmen were hampered in covering the state's many miles of roads and highways by jurisdictional boundaries, slow communication, and small numbers.

Various Oklahoma governors proposed establishment of a statewide patrol but were unable to sell members of the legislature on such an organization.

Jim Nance, well-known Purcell publisher and former political leader said, "As we celebrate the state patrol's 46th birthday, we must remember Governor E. W. Marland as the father of the Highway Patrol. The

Although six patrol cars manned by six (or 12) men tried to enforce state traffic laws, Oklahoma had more than 70,000 square miles to patrol — an impossible task. Safety conditions grew worse.

Relief soon came. J. M. Gentry, newly appointed Public Safety Commissioner, set up the first patrol training school at OU in June 1937. Eighty-five men completed the school and were installed on July 15th. In the second school one month later, 40 men completed training and were ready for duty.

By September, 125 patrolmen, equipped with black and white '37 Fords and a "Flying Squadron" of 16 Indian motorcycles, traveled Oklahoma's roads and highways. Jack Hitch was appointed captain over the 135 patrolmen.

Gentry's position as Safety Commissioner was short-lived. He lost his life in a traffic accident soon after he set the safety system in motion.

According to James Hall, Purcell member of the first patrol, "Safety conditions did improve, for in 1941, Oklahoma's highway patrol won the Grand prize for national traffic safety. This was the highest tribute paid in highway safety."

Tyler said that 24 men of the first 125 member squad are still living. They are Joe Boyce, Eugene S. Clark, Tyrus R. Cobb, Hugh W. Enos, Floyd C. Hays, Norman C. Hold, Robert R. Lester, Fern D. Petty, Jack T. Smith, Cecil L. Snapp, Ormus Soucek, Carl H. Tyler, Walter Abbott, Owen K. Bivins, Eugene L. Bumpass, Dave Faulkner, Howard Flanagan, Harold

J. Harmon, Emerson C. McIntosh, Forrest A. Mussen, Oliver L. Nicker-son, William F. Norton, Ed Vandagriff, and Harold W. Watson.

Many and varied were the experiences of the early patrolmen. Leedee Hunter's brittle-paged scrapbook told of his interception of liquor-laden cars as they crossed the Red River bridge. "If a car's lights slanted upward, we were almost sure to find the trunk loaded down with liquor. That was a dead give-away."

"Once," Hunter wrote, "J. H. Blackard and I were looking for suspects involved in a shooting at Binger for the abduction of a Gotebo farmer, when we found two Arizona cowboys asleep in a car. They heard us and started speeding down the highway. We chased them, but they abandoned their car and escaped into the woods. We missed the men, but I fell heir to a white Stetson hat to go with the black one I had got from his cohort the night before." Mrs. Hunter, his widow, proudly showed the hats, her husband's brown and tan uniform, and high-topped boots.

Another account told of Hunter's stopping a newlywed couple, asking to see the driver's license. The youth brought out his marriage license. But that was not the sort which would placate the patrolman; so the red-faced groom was arraigned before the judge who charged him a ten-dollar fine and released him to continue his honeymoon trip.

O. K. Bivins, now deceased, said, "Oh, we all confiscated liquor and chased after killers, but that's all over now, and I'm enjoying my rocking

chair. It's softer than park benches."

Hall told of listening to the 16th legislature's discussion which led up to the passage of the patrol bill. "I was the doorkeeper of the House where it was my job to keep legislators in and lobbyists out. I don't know which was the hardest," he chuckled. "But when the plan revealed that patrolmen would get \$150.00 a month, I decided to apply. That sounded like a lot of money during depression times."

According to Tyler, 500 men applied for the Highway Patrol. "They were not seedy run-of-the-mill types either. Most of the men would have made good patrolmen. I'm sure the elimination process was tough. With all the bank robbers and liquor traffic violators we had to deal with, we could have used most of the men who applied. I'm sure they could have used the money. Jobs were so few and far between."

As the patrol grew in number, more duties were assigned to them. On July 22, 1937, they were asked to issue driver's licenses. A few years later, school bus inspection was added to the list. The ramshackle, crackerbox buses were banned from the roads and were replaced by safe and comfortable buses for transporting the state's children.

Sheriff Bonner, close associate of early patrolmen, commented, "Give 'em all the praise you can — and that goes for today's patrolmen. I think they oughta' get the bullet-proof vests they asked for but were turned down."

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*Grandma's medicine**— by Sheryl L. Nelms*

springtime always meant
 that we went
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 to pick
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 fuzzy flowers
 then Grandma
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 in the ten gallon
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 and fermented
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 golden
 dandelion wine
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 she swore by

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Westview Receives Boost

WESTVIEW received a much-appreciated boost on Sunday, July 15, 1984 from a columnist whose word is good in Oklahoma. Kent Ruth of Geary devoted his entire column in the SUNDAY OKLAHOMAN to saluting WESTVIEW, A JOURNAL OF WESTERN OKLAHOMA. The column follows.

Western State Magazine Tries to Remember Past

By Kent Ruth

A salute today to a competitor! To a western Oklahoma magazine that is trying to do in a formal magazine format what this column attempts in the hurried — and hurried — confines of a daily newspaper. To promote a better understanding and appreciation of the past so as to enrich the present and, maybe, to shape a better future. "Westview" is such a magazine. "A Journal of Western Oklahoma." It drew its first breath in 1981 on the campus of Southwestern Oklahoma State University with Dr. Leroy Thomas serving as godfather.

It is published quarterly. Individual issues cost \$2.50. The annual subscription rate has just been lowered — repeat, lowered — to \$8. Send check (or request for more information) to "Westview," SWOSU, 100 Campus Drive, Weatherford, 73096.

The spring 1984 book is a good example of what "Westview" is trying to do. Its theme is "Western Oklahoma Educators." In it, a score of writers pay personal tribute to individual teachers they have known, teachers who have influenced their lives.

Not surprisingly, several of the

Window On the Past

teachers honored were long-time SWOSU faculty members, such as Dora Ann Stewart, Elsie Shoemaker, J. R. Pratt, Gladys Belamy, Ivan Dean Cates, Edna Muldrow. Thousands of Oklahomans have known and been touched by one or more of those veteran teachers.

But Louise E. Latimer is honored, too, for 30 years of teaching in a procession of one- and two-room schools in western Oklahoma. As are "The Twins," Ima and Ura Foster, who between them spent 89 years helping to shape the lives of Greer County grade school youngsters.

Another article is a first-person effort by a "Depression Teacher," a sensitive recall of public school experiences in the '30s ... when sharing was a way of life and a teacher who gave a pair of 33-cent Sears Roebuck sneakers to a shoeless student felt amply repaid with a baked sweet potato from a syrup bucket lunch pail.

But "Westview" is a variety

package. It includes fiction as well as fact, poetry and art work as well as eulogies and autobiographies.

The spring 1984 issue simply had education as its theme. Other aspects of life in western Oklahoma, yesterday and today, will serve as themes of future issues. The current summer book, for example, features "Western Oklahoma Religion."

Western Oklahoma's "Colorful Past" will be featured this fall. Western Oklahoma politics, its frontier years and its successful artists and writers will serve as themes for subsequent issues.

Congratulations to Thomas and his staff. "Westview" isn't likely to depress sales of the New Yorker or National Geographic, or, for that matter, the Great Plains Journal, published by Steve Wilson and his fine staff at Lawton's institute of the Great Plains.

But "Westview" is a noble first effort (at least it's first to our knowledge) at giving Western Oklahoma its own literary voice. Its own cultural voice, if you will. It's an organ for searching out and preserving what is significant about the western half of Oklahoma, yesterday and today.

We wish it well.

THE SUNDAY OKLAHOMAN Section A July 15, 1984



Speck Lester shares his covered wagon with elementary students at Clinton's Pioneer Festival held last May.

Four Hundred Children Become **Pioneers at Old Town Museum**

by
Donita Shields

A caravan of automobiles and seven buses filled with students from Clinton's Southwest Elementary School recognized Oklahoma's Museum Week, May 13 through 18, at Old Town Museum Complex in Elk City. More than 400

students from first through sixth grades participated in Pioneer Festival activities organized by the Mothers' Committee of the Cultural Arts Program of Clinton.

Wearing festive pioneer dresses and cowboy regalia, class groups

toured Elk City's Old Town Museum during carefully scheduled periods and then spent the remainder of the day experiencing various pioneer activities held on the Museum Complex grounds. Old-fashioned games such as leap frog, red rover, shoe

shuffle, and gunny sack races took place on the playground adjacent to the museum's Rock Bluff School.

On the front porch of the one-room school, Denna Damron, Chairman of the Cultural Arts Program, conducted spelling bees for all grade levels. Finalists in the First Grade Spelling Bee were Natalie Duncan, Stacy Hupfer, Bret Brittain, and Kendy Cruson. Kendy was blue-ribbon speller of the Grade One contest.

Betty Cabaniss of Clinton set up her personal spinning wheel in the Pioneer Chapel. Students observed as she carded freshly shorn wool and then spun it into thread. Mrs. Cabaniss also displayed and modeled an attractive shawl that she had woven from the wool of white, black, and brown sheep. Betty apologized for the fact that her fleece was clipped from Blackwell, Oklahoma sheep even though the Cabanisses have their own flock of 700 sheep on their ranch north of Clinton.

Students filled the museum's livery barn to watch eight Elk City pioneer ladies quilt a colorful "Glorified Nine Patch" design of patchwork that was stretched across old-fashioned quilting frames. Throughout the action-packed day these quilters, some of them eighty-plus years young, chatted among themselves and the youngsters while their nimble fingers and needles sped around the tiny squares.

Ladies participating in the Pioneer Festival Quilting Bee included Lea Wiseman, Letha Pennick, Hazel Maxfield, Helen Clark, Wanzell Davis, Anna Wilson, Dortha Nesser, and Eutha Simmons. They have long been famous for their quilting. Since October, 1983, they have completed 23 patchwork quilts which they donated to the Battered Women's Shelter at Clinton, Westview Boys' Home at Hollis, and to various families that lost their home furnishings to fires.

With her bread-making process, Sharon Flick of Clinton provided another interesting pioneer activity at the livery barn. She explained to

each class group how the grain originated in the wheat fields of Western Oklahoma and ended in a delicious loaf of bread fresh from the oven.

Sharon, who has made her family's whole wheat bread for the past eight years, allowed each little pioneer to assist with the milling (grinding) of the grain and observe the procedure of punching down the dough during its rising process. She also provided each child with a sample of buttered

er, students became 'Henry,' 'George,' or 'James' while reading the McGuffey lesson to the class.

During lunch hour, all school children, mothers, and teachers enjoyed old-fashioned brown bag lunches and cold drinks beneath the cottonwood trees on the museum's camping grounds. At the same time, the Mothers' Cultural Arts Committee treated the quilting ladies and other assistants to a fried chicken picnic in the



The Pioneer Festival activities were organized by the Mothers Committee of the Cultural Arts Program of Clinton.

bread and stressed nutrition values of whole wheat products.

Speck Lester of Cheyenne displayed one of his authentic covered wagons hitched to two colorfully harnessed gray mules named Kit and Jen. Every student petted the gently animals before climbing aboard for an imaginary ride on the prairie schooner's roomy spring seat. While waiting their turns, many students enjoyed sitting on the metal seats of horse-drawn plows displayed in the pioneer implement yard behind the livery barn.

Clinton's Southwest Elementary students also boarded Old Town's caboose and viewed the depot and its surroundings from observation windows high above the railroad tracks. After a pretend train trip, each class then strolled to the museum's shady gazebo for study time. Standing beside Pat Downs, their reading teach-

gazebo.

Escorting the elementary school's Pioneer Festival group were Principal Darrell Trissell, 16 teachers, and 26 mothers of the students. Coordinating the day's well-planned events were Denna Damron, Lynn Thompson, Marian Tisdall, Linda Meachum, Lucia Sewell, Kay Brown, Kaye Green, and Pat Downs of Clinton. Wanda Queenan, receptionist, and Lucy Stansberry, curator of Old Town Museum, assisted.

Clinton's Southwest Elementary School Cultural Arts Program was organized five years ago by Emily Stratton. The organization schedules two field trips annually. The Pioneer Festival at Old Town Museum Complex was rated as a tremendous success, and the group hopes to return for another festival next year.



Keep The Horses Up Tonight

a book review by Dr. Christopher Gould

That is the summer we discovered that fried grasshopper legs were pretty good. . . There was a small plant which we called *sheep shire*--how come I don't know. Maybe it was sour-dock. Anyhow, it had a sour taste. We would crush it in a glass of water and put in a little sugar for sweetening--presto, lemonade. We rarely had boughten sody pop. . . .

Passages like this abound in this anecdotal account of youth in Western Oklahoma during the 1920's and 30's. M. F. ("Bo") Guest, a retired mail carrier from Hollis, has written an engagingly candid, yet relentlessly cheerful, memoir that should appeal to almost any reader.

A particular virtue of the book is Guest's keen eye for detail, especially the singular mannerisms of

speech and appearance that make individuals come alive for the reader. Similarly, the author's unconventional style--self-consciously, yet adroitly, colloquial--is suited ideally to the author's aims and adds to the reader's pleasure. Guest's reminiscences are fairly random--the book has no apparent organizational plan, nor is there much thematic continuity in its chapters. But this, too, seems in keeping with the writer's appealing persona.

As a historical document, *KEEP THE HORSES UP TONIGHT* chronicles the changing face of a particular community, but it has a much broader appeal as just plain good reading. The book is available (\$7.25 paper, \$10.40 cloth, tax and mailing included) from either the author, Box 507, Hollis, OK 73550; or Dakama Publishers, 1209 Magnolia, Norman, OK 73069.

From The High Plains

a book review by Opal Hartsell Brown

FROM THE HIGH PLAINS by John Fischer, Harper and Row Publishers, New York, 1978, 181 pages. Although this book was published a few years ago, it is as poignant today as it was at birth.

Biographical in essence, it has many arms, bringing into focus the whole spectrum of life in Western Oklahoma and the Texas Panhandle. It begins with the flint workers along the Canadian River and takes the reader through the eras of nomadic Indians, following the buffalo with their dogs and horses.

Next come the white hunters, who denuded the plains of some five million shaggy beasts in a decade. They are followed by the cattlemen, wire fences, and windmills, the "only establishment" of the Great Plains to that time; the oil boom and bust, wheat farmers, dust bowl and depression, and back to ranching and grain with deep wells.

Fischer predicts the next problem is developing from the "mining" of water.

Born in Texhoma, which straddles the border of Texas and Oklahoma, Fischer is not sure in which state his birth house stood. He tells of visiting his paternal grandparents between Ft. Sill and Apache when he was small and being introduced to the art of barbed wire building. Another time he was stationed with the army at Ft. Sill.

A graduate of the University of Oklahoma, he worked as a reporter on the *DAILY OKLAHOMAN* in 1933 and was a Rhodes Scholar in England. He served as European correspondent for the United Press, as a correspondent in Washington, and authored at least four other books.

His father, John S. Fischer, led the way to writing. Leaving the job as a \$10 a week reporter for the *KANSAS CITY STAR* in 1903, he homesteaded 160 acres between Ft. Sill and Apache. After building a house and fulfilling requirements for ownership, he sent for his parents in Ohio. They took over the homestead, leaving John S. Fischer to pursue his career.

He established newspapers at Carnegie and Beaver City. He went to Texhoma as land commissioner for the government and established a local weekly. He married Georgia Caperton, a teacher from the Texas Panhandle. They became the parents of John II.

FROM THE HIGH PLAINS was illustrated by another Oklahoman, the late Paul Laune, who grew up in Woodward. He did six murals on the history of Oklahoma and the Great Plains for the Woodward Museum.

This book would be a wonderful asset to any library for a cost of \$10.00.

CONTRIBUTORS

AUTHORS WHOSE WORKS APPEAR IN THIS ISSUE

Evelyn Bachmann lives in Tulsa and is a member of Tulsa Tuesday Writers, the National League of American Pen Women, Inc., and the Oklahoma Writers' Federation, Inc. She is author of two juvenile novels--*TRESSA* and *BLACK-EYED SUSAN*--both published by Viking Press. She has also written and sold non-fiction articles.

James Beaty is a senior English major at East Central Oklahoma State University. He is also editor of ECOSU literary magazine, *ORIGINALS*. In addition to freelance writing, he enjoys playing a guitar.

D. Morris Blaylock, a Weatherford resident, grew up on a farm-ranch in Western Oklahoma and received his formal education in Oklahoma and in the U.S. Navy. He has worked livestock, range, and wildlife programs from Texas to Alaska. He also taught Agriculture for three years and worked in management of livestock slaughter operations. He retired from the Bureau of Indian Affairs in May, 1980 as a Range Conservationist and now ranches fulltime.

Opal Hartsell Brown is a WESTVIEW fixture, although her contributions are never taken for granted. Opal's most recently published book is *NIGHTSHADES OF HARAN*.

R. R. Chapman of Arapaho has lived 97 years; his submissions to WESTVIEW are always identifiable pieces that create memories.

Idena McFadin Clark lives in Norman. She is a member of the Norman Galaxy and the OWFI; she has published twice before in WESTVIEW.

Betty Jo Jenkins Denton debuted as a prose writer in our Spring 1984 issue and has now turned poet in this one.

Olive Dewitt is an alumna of the University of Northern Arizona at Flagstaff. She was reared near the Apaches, taught for the BIA on the Navajo Reservation and in 1956 migrated to Oklahoma, which she calls "God's Country." She is now retired and enjoys freelance writing.

Maggie Culver Fry, Poet Laureate of Oklahoma, lives in Claremore. Her list of honors and awards is overwhelming, including a 1970 Pulitzer Prize nomination for her book *THE UMBILICAL CORD*.

Dr. Christopher Gould, an English professor at SOSU, has been a vital, moving force for WESTVIEW since its beginning. He is one of only two original Editorial Board members.

Ernestine Gravley, co-founder of the Oklahoma Writers' Federation, Inc., is an honored freelance writer. "Leaving the Old Home" is her second work in WESTVIEW.

Carol Rothhammer Lackey is a freelance writer of poetry and short stories. She regularly travels in seven Western Oklahoma counties, serving the blind and visually handicapped as Visual Services Counselor. She is a part-time graduate student at OSU, working toward a doctorate in English Education. Carol is also assistant editor of the *OKLAHOMA ENGLISH JOURNAL*.

Kate Jackson Lewis is an honored WESTVIEW contributor. Her forty years as a classroom teacher in Western Oklahoma and other parts of the state provided her with materials for numerous articles and stories as well as a book.

Sheryl L. Nelms is currently vice-president of the OWFI. A native of South Dakota and presently a resident of Hurst, Texas, she has contributed a great deal of poetry to WESTVIEW.

Juanita Noah is an LPN who works in the Community Health Representative Program for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. She is mother to four and grandmother to eleven. She and her husband live in a rural area north of Red Rock, OK.

Dee Ann Ray is not only director of the Western Plains Library System but also a prolific freelance writer.

Joanna Thurston Roper recently retired from SOSU after thirteen years in the Language Arts Department. She now keeps busy with freelance writing and housewifery.

Dorothy Rose now lives in Northridge, CA. Much of her poetry reflects her early life in the dustbowls of Arkansas and Oklahoma and in the "golden paradise" of California. Her book *DUSTBOWL THORNS AND ROSES* also reflects her upbringing.

Lu Spurlock lives and writes in Bedford, Texas. She's an active member of the DFW Writers' Workshop and the OWFI.

Dr. Grady J. Walker, a native of Sayre, taught at SOSU for two years during the 1960's. He has taught German and English at Oral Roberts University the past seventeen years. His Ph.D. in English is from Tulsa University; prior to receiving the Ph.D. at TU, he earned thirty graduate hours at OU.

Inez Schneider Whitney and WESTVIEW have been friends from the first. From her writing nook in Arlington, Virginia, Mrs. Whitney--formerly of Custer City--sends us many interesting manuscripts and article ideas.

Southwestern Oklahoma State University-Weatherford, OK



Winter 1984

"Western Oklahoma Politics." This theme could breed some controversial issues, but good taste will be insisted upon. Articles on political theories as well as Western Oklahoma politicians may be submitted. Deadline: October 1, 1984.

SPRING, 1985. "Western Oklahoma's Promise." This issue is a promising possibility for contributors. Theme interpretation allows much creative flexibility. Deadline: January 1, 1985.

FALL, 1985. "Western Oklahoma Artists, Musicians, and Writers." Feature articles, poems, stories, and graphics are needed on people or activities related to the theme. Deadline: April 1, 1985.

SUMMER, 1985. "Western Oklahoma's Historic Resources." To be prepared by the Oklahoma Historical Society. No other submissions being solicited.

WINTER, 1985. "Famous Western Oklahomans." Oklahomans in all fields. Nominate your favorite famous person in a short story, poem, article, etc. Deadline: October 1, 1985.



Projected future themes are "Western Oklahoma Firsts" (Spring, 1986), "Western Oklahoma Phenomena" (Summer, 1986), and "Western Oklahoma Schools" (Fall, 1986).

Mellowing the Hearts of Westview Editorial Board Members

by Leroy Thomas

Being published in WESTVIEW isn't really an elusive dream. All a person must do is follow a few simple guidelines:

1. Always mail a manuscript or other submission flat in a manila envelope, not forgetting the SASE for a possible rejection.
2. Use a coversheet that contains name, address, telephone number, suggested issue ("Western Oklahoma Firsts," e.g.) and suggested section (Memories, Relics, Perspectives, e.g.).
3. Remember to leave your name and address off the submission itself. We want each contributor to enjoy anonymity during the assessing process.
4. Remember the importance of a clean typewritten manuscript (double-spacing for prose and single-spacing for poetry); neat, attractive graphics; or clear, sharp photos. For manuscripts, use a good grade of 8½ x 11 white paper (no onionskin, please). Submit pen-and-ink graphics of at least 8½ x 11 inches. Submit 5 x 7 b & w photos. Please send copies of your photos that we can keep on file and not return.
5. The material submitted must relate to Western Oklahoma. Loosely, the geographical

boundary is the area lying west of Interstate 35. However, we don't require that our contributors be current residents of Western Oklahoma.

6. Always specifically follow editorial guidelines.
7. Leave the editors alone to do their work if they do it within a month.
8. Don't cheapen your submission by making incriminating statements such as "Now I don't spell very well, so you'll need to clean up my work." OR "I probably should have redone this, but I didn't have time." OR "Now some of the things I've said here can't be documented, but I had no time for research." OR "This would look better done on a different grade of paper, but I couldn't afford it."
9. Abide by our policy of not ordinarily using reprints unless we solicit them, as we sometimes do.
10. Remember to use American--and not British--style when submitting works to a Western journal.
11. Strive for naturalness.
12. Accentuate originality and creativity.
13. After making your submission, sit back and expect the best.

The First National Bank

MEMBER F.D.I.C.

of
Custer City



Custer City, Okla. 73639

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P.O. Box 100

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"Sometimes things get pretty wild out there."

According to a History of Lexington School, Sand Bar Town, made up of buildings, tents, shacks, and saloons, sprang up on the east bank of the river. One of these saloons was named First Chance and Last Chance, a name which may have been prophetic for some men who later lost their lives in the river.

Business was still booming at the Ark; then came a setback. According to one oldtimer, a "head rise" came, flooding the river and washing the Ark about half a mile down the river. After the water went down, Charley hired a house mover to bring what was left back.

It was patched up and business went on again as if nothing had happened.

In October of 1890, the PURCELL REGISTER stated, "Sand Bar town is growing--but what if a great rise comes?"

It did for in February of 1891, the REGISTER had this comment, "just one house and the Ark left."

This flood was the worst that the settlers had ever seen. Chouteau

Creek, coming from the north, pushed through Lexington with a roar and met the river flood. Together they made a mile-wide river, trapping the people of both the First and Last Chance and the Ark.

The town itself was having its bout with the flood water, too. Three feet of water was flowing down main street. The residents had too much to do to think of the river saloons. They were busy trying to save their own houses and business establishments.

One lone citizen, Bob Scott, a farmer who lived near the east bank of the river, made the two saloons' captives his concern. It was nearly night, so he had to work fast. Using a trusted big-footed plow horse as a conveyance, he made his way through the churning water to the First and Last Chance saloon where he found three men, two of them sober enough to mount the horse. He took them to high ground and returned for the third. Back at the saloon, Scott loaded the drunk man on behind the saddle.

The man was too intoxicated to stay on, so he slid off behind the horse, making a futile grab at the animal's tail. He was soon lost in

the swift, muddy waters, never to be seen again.

Darkness was coming, and the river was rising as Bob Scott started his hazardous third trip through the turbulent water toward the Ark. Charley Lissauer, the bartender, and a customer were hopefully awaiting a rescue. Only two of the men could ride on the horse with Scott; the third had to wait for the next trip. Lissauer and his bartender went first. For Scott, the third man's rescue was too much to hope for. When the farmer braved the merciless water to complete his mission, the Ark was gone--taking with it the remaining man.

The Ark was restored to its mooring and rebuilt by Tom and Ray Farmer, brothers, but its tenure was brief. By this time, the novelty of the birdcage saloon had worn off. Crime became rampant, made so by gamblers, robbers, and gunmen. The saloon, no longer profitable, was soon abandoned.

For many years, so one settler said, "Charley sat on a bench in front of Little Sam's saloon, talking and dreaming of the fortune he might have made."

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of battered cotton from the silted, solid dirt. Dad strode on, head down, hands deep in his pockets. But when he looked at me, I felt that his eyes didn't touch me. I felt sad.

And I remember the dust storms that made the Thirties notorious. But my memories are not the desperate ones shown in LIFE. I watched them (at least one I'm sure of) come rolling from far off across our farm. I remember thinking that the dust clouds looked like the wind ballooning Mother's sheets--only these sheets were brown. But the clearest memory is the sand those storms left. The floors were grainy and gritty underfoot, and Mother's sweeping seemed to go on and on. Twitching a window curtain brought down another veil of dust, and lifting a crocheted doily left its imprint on

the wood beneath.

But at that time during the early Thirties, I had no way of knowing that the times were unique. I had no point of comparison. To my way of thinking, things were worse when the cows got out--or when it was too muddy to go to town on Saturday--or maybe a special event was cancelled because the car wouldn't start. Those were the real heartbreakers--the ones that make my throat tighten even now. Or the day Old Major died. The death of that beautiful bay horse put a pall over the whole summer. I'm sure Dad's grief was deeper and more severe than mine. I had only lost a dear riding friend--he had lost half of a team.

Such was the texture and rhythm of childhood--or at least *my* childhood--in the Thirties. As all of childhood seems to do, time moved slowly--so slowly that there

was always some incredible adventure waiting somewhere out beyond the fringe of time. Maybe it was an ice cream social at a neighbor's; maybe it was going to visit a little friend who had a new blackboard and real chalk; maybe it was Mother and Dad playing Rook with neighbors (like the night I put a pink doll dress on their big white cat who then jumped into the middle of their game); maybe it was the Old Settlers' Reunion and parade at Mangum (always a birthday treat); maybe it was a birthday or Christmas--the time between those events stretched on endlessly then.

I know now, of course, that the times were hard financially--for us as well as everyone else. But at the time I didn't know it.

