



6-1-1990

Westview: Vol. 9, Iss. 4 (Summer 1990)

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(1990) "Westview: Vol. 9, Iss. 4 (Summer 1990)," *Westview*: Vol. 9 : Iss. 4 , Article 1.
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W E S T V I E W

A JOURNAL OF WESTERN OKLAHOMA

VOLUME 9

NUMBER 4

SUMMER 1990

\$3.⁰⁰



W E S T E R N O K L A H O M A ' S

DIVERSE VOICES

WESTVIEW

SUMMER, 1990

FOREWORD

There were no filling-up problems with this issue, "Western Oklahoma's Diverse Voices." In fact, before we go to press, we may be re-scheduling some of the manuscripts for a later issue. We always hope that our writers understand our space dilemma (we try to stay within forty-four pages) when we must do our bumping. Realizing that a "promise made is a debt unpaid," we can always be depended upon to publish everything we accept. It's just that we may sometimes require a while longer than we originally thought.

Our main purpose in the Foreword this time is to introduce Steven Cost, new WESTVIEW Art Director. Mr. Cost assumed a teaching position in the Art Department in January, 1990. His B.A. is from SOSU; he has earned three Master's degrees—an M.A. in Communications Arts from the University of West Florida in Pensacola, a Master's of Arts in Studio Art/Painting from West Texas State University in Canyon, and also a Master's of Fine Arts in Computer Graphics/Graphic Design from West Texas State. In addition, he has studied extensively in other areas which will be a benefit in his new WESTVIEW position. He has had four years of military duty in the United States Navy and has had extensive experience in teaching, commercial art, advertising, and computer graphics.

With Mr. Cost's help, we will hopefully continue to produce what we modestly consider a quality journal. In all things, of course, we recognize the contributions of our patrons and contributors, to whom we extend much gratitude—including, of course, Margie Snowden North, who suggested most of the new themes listed in the "Future Issues" feature.

Gratefully,

Leroy Thomas

Leroy Thomas
Editor

WESTVIEW

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Publisher.....Dr. Dan Dill
EditorDr. Leroy Thomas
Assistant EditorDr. Roger Bromert
Assistant EditorDr. Jeanne Ellinger
Art DirectorMr. Steven Cost

Published by Southwestern Oklahoma State University,
Weatherford, Oklahoma 73096

WESTVIEW is the official quarterly of the Southwestern Center for Regional Studies. To be published in the journal are scholarly articles, local history sketches, memoirs, biographies, autobiographies, graphic arts, book reviews, and creative writing. Submissions along with SASE are to be sent to: Dr. Leroy Thomas; Editor, WESTVIEW; Southwestern Oklahoma State University, Weatherford, Oklahoma

FUTURE ISSUES

FALL, 1990 (Western Oklahoma Friendships;
Deadline: 7-1-90)

WINTER, 1990 (Western Oklahoma Reunions;
Deadline: 9-15-90)

SPRING, 1991 (Western Oklahoma Romance;
Deadline: 12-15-90)

SUMMER, 1991 (Western Oklahoma Pastimes/
Entertainment; Deadline: 2-15-91)

FALL, 1991 (Western Oklahoma Seasons;
Deadline: 9-1-91)

WINTER, 1991 (Western Oklahoma
Christmastime; Deadline: 9-15-91)

SPRING, 1992 (Western Oklahoma Relatives/
Kinfolks; Deadline: 12-15-91)

SUMMER, 1992 (Western Oklahoma
Daydreams/Illusions;
Deadline: 2-15-92)

FALL, 1992 (Western Oklahoma Dustbowl
Days; Deadline: 7-1-92)

WINTER, 1992 (Western Oklahoma Colorful
Characters;
Deadline: 9-15-92)

SPRING, 1993 (Western Oklahoma Lawmen
and Outlaws; Deadline: 12-15-92)

SUMMER, 1993 (Western Oklahoma Feasts;
Deadline: 2-15-93)

FALL, 1993 (Western Oklahoma Farmhouses;
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WINTER, 1993 (Western Oklahoma Youth;
Deadline: 9-15-92)

SPRING, 1994 (Western Oklahoma Flora and
Fauna; Deadline: 12-15-93)

SUMMER, 1994 (Western Oklahoma Hard
Times\Good Times; Deadline: 2-15-94)

FALL, 1994 (Western Oklahoma Terrain—
Rivers, Lakes, Hills; Deadline: 7-1-94)

WINTER, 1994 (Western Oklahoma's
Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow; Deadline:
9-15-93)

SPRING, 1995 (Western Oklahoma's Cowboys
and Indians; Deadline: 12-15-94)

*NOTICE: We prefer 5 x 7 or 8 x 10 black & white
glossies that we can keep—also, clear, original
manuscripts (no copies, please).*

STYLE SHEET

Being published in *WESTVIEW* is mission possible if a writer follows these guidelines:

1. Always mail a submission flat in a 9 X 12 Manila envelope, remembering to include a SASE for possible rejection. Mail to : Dr. Leroy Thomas; Editor, *WESTVIEW*; 100 Campus Drive, SOSU, Weatherford, OK 73096.

2. Use a coversheet that contains name, address, telephone number, suggested issue and date (e.g. "Western Oklahoma Friendships"— Fall, 1990).

3. Remember to leave your name and address off the submission itself. We want each contributor to be anonymous during the Board's assessing procedure.

4. Remember the importance of a clean typewritten or word-processed manuscript (double-spacing for prose and single-spacing for poetry). Use a good grade of 8 1/2 X 11 white paper. Submit pen-and-ink graphics on white paper. Submit 5 X 7 or 8 X 10 black & white photos that may be kept on file in our offices and not returned.

5. Be sure to submit material that is related to Western Oklahoma. The geographical boundary is the area lying west of Interstate 35. However, we don't require that our contributors be Oklahoma residents.

6. Feeling that your submission will be accepted, you also need to send along a short biographical blurb written in third person. Example: MORTIMER MULDOON of Weatherford is a SOSU senior majoring in English Education. Mortimer makes his debut as a published writer in the present issue of *WESTVIEW*.

7. After your manuscript is accepted, please provide changes in status and address as needed.

8. Strive for a natural writing style, good grammar, good taste, correct spelling.

9. Accentuate originality and creativity.

10. After you have made your submission, sit back, relax, and expect the best.

HOW?

By Denny Old Crow

I am a Cheyenne.
Straight I stand.
My eyes look into the future,
And white brothers struggle
hard to read the secret there.

How can I, with heritage of mine—
Free open lands, no fence
or boundary anywhere,

A horse to ride,
No hours to keep—
How can I then fit
My way to yours?

I am a Cheyenne.
To me has been given
Limbs to ride the wildest
horse or run the hills,
Eyes to see the distant eagle,
Strong, lean body made to war,
to dance, to love.

How then, white brother,
Can I stay within
And make your ways mine?

I am a Cheyenne. ✱

(DENNY OLD CROW was a well liked Thomas High School athlete in the late 1930's. After high school, he worked as a mechanic in Hammon. He died in 1978 and is buried at Thomas. This poem was submitted by regular WESTVIEW contributor Margie Cooke Porteus, one of Old Crow's high-school classmates.)

Artwork by
Scott Voigt



CHEYENNE VOICES

By Dr. Karen McKellips

When Western Oklahoma was opened to white settlement, the voices of the Cheyenne and other Native Americans were already here. The federal government's power had years before decided this to be the place where the Cheyenne must live. Yet, here, as in so many other places and with so many other tribes with the coming of white settlement, the federal government and the dominant white culture, officially and unofficially, blatantly and subtly, undertook to replace the Cheyenne voice and the Cheyenne ways, to minimize, even eliminate, this voice in Western Oklahoma.

Major tools employed to accomplish the stilling of the Cheyenne voice were religious conversion and education, often linked together. Various religious denominations were given by the government the right and responsibility for providing the schools and teachers to convince Native Americans that they shouldn't "put on the blanket," an expression used to describe the wearing of tribal dress, the symbol of failure to adopt the white man's ways.

Attempts to still the voice of the Cheyenne and other Plains Indians tribes such as the Arapaho, Comanche, and Kiowa began in Western Oklahoma years before the opening of their lands in the two decades bracketing the turn of the twentieth century. The Washita campaigns of 1868-1869 and the Red River War of 1874-1875 resulted in the decision to try to end such conflict through conversion and education of tribal leaders and Native American children.

Most of the Southern Cheyenne came into the Agency at Darlington in March 1875, driven by hunger. From these were selected thirty-three Cheyenne who joined thirty-nine other Plains Indians—Arapaho, Kiowa, Comanche, and Caddo—who were



Illustrations by
John Crawford

sent for punishment and to prevent further uprisings to imprisonment at Fort Marion in St. Augustine, Florida. The group also included Lone Wolf, who was among 250 Kiowas who had surrendered at Fort Sill the month before. Some of those

chosen to go were picked at random and others because of participation in certain incidents.

Among the Cheyenne were Making Medicine (Okuhhatuh), who had participated in the battle of Adobe Walls; Medicine Water (Mihuhyeumup); White Man (Owussait); Long Back (Chaseyunnuh); Rising Bull (Otoashuhjhos); Bear's Heart (Nockkoist); Chief Killer (Nohhunahwih); Broken Leg (Cohoe); and Buffalo Calf (Mochi), who had been in the party that killed five members of the Germaine family and abducted the four daughters. Others accused of participating in raids in which whites had been killed were Bear Shield (Nockoyouh), Soaring Eagle (Ouho), Bear Killer (Nocomista), Left Hand (Nomohst), and Big Moccasin. Those who had been accused of nothing except being "ringleaders" included Heap of Birds (Moeyauhayist), Eagle's Head (Minimic), Star (Holtoich), Howling Wolf (Honanistto), Antelope (Wuhah), Wolf's Marrow (Comeuhsurah), Little Medicine (Mohaihhachit), Shave Head (Ouksteuh), Roman Nose (Wouhunih), Big Nose (Paeyis), Squint Eyes (Quchkeimus), Little Chief (Koweonarre), Matches (Chisiseduh), Buffalo Meat (Oewotoh), Buzzard (Mohewihkio), Gray Beard, Lean Bear, Shaving Wolf, and Spotted Elk.

These warriors were escorted to St. Augustine by Richard Henry Pratt, later to be called the "Red Man's Moses," who stayed with them as their jailer throughout their imprisonment. He appears to have had more tolerance for people of dif-

ferent races than was typical of those in his profession at the time as he not only commanded a black regiment but also fought army authority to make imprisonment more bearable for his charges. A veteran of the Civil War, Pratt had served in the Washita campaign of 1868 and in the Red River War.

At Fort Marion, to their horror, Pratt made his prisoners cut their hair and wear army uniforms. Otherwise his treatment could almost be described as kind. He took them on outings and let them go to town without passes. They were allowed to work for townspeople to earn money, and local women organized a school and taught them to read and write. Their teachers included one of the first graduates of Mount Holyoke and another woman who before the Civil War had owned a rather exclusive private school for girls. They went sailing and fishing for sharks. They presented dances to entertain the local townspeople. Among the people who came to observe them was Harriet Beecher Stowe, whose brother was Superintendent of Schools in Florida during the Reconstruction period.

In April of 1878, three years after their arrival, thirteen of the Cheyenne Fort Marion Boys, as they had become known, were released and returned home. (One had been shot and killed trying to escape on the trip to St. Augustine.) Seventeen of the young men were sent as the first Native Americans to be enrolled at Hampton Institute, the Black school founded a few years earlier for the newly freed slaves and whose most-noted student, Booker T. Washington, had graduated three years earlier. The other two went with three from other tribes to New York to study for the ministry, four to become Episcopal deacons and one a Presbyterian minister.

At this time Pratt had received permission from the Secretary of War to open an off-reservation Indian school at the abandoned Carlisle Barracks in Pennsylvania, and in 1879 the school opened with 136 students.

Three of the Cheyenne Fort Marion Boys showed exceptional promise in regards embracing white man's ways. They had spoken and written frequently about how

earnestly they now believed in adopting the white culture. They were Roman Nose, Making Medicine, and Cohoe.

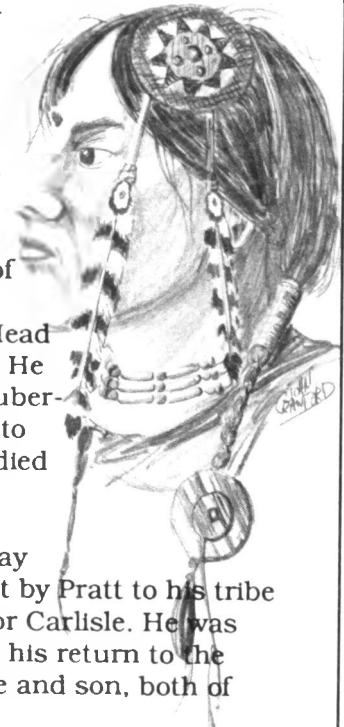
Roman Nose had asked to stay in the East and went with Dr. and Mrs. Henry Carruthers to their home in Tarrytown, New York, for a visit. From Dr. Carruthers, Roman Nose adopted the name Henry C. This taking of a Christian first name has helped Cheyenne historians keep Henry separate from the old chief Roman Nose, who died in 1868. At the opening of Carlisle, Henry asked to be enrolled and was. He stayed there three years, spending summers with the Carrutherses in New York and working for a few months on a farm in Massachusetts.

By the time Henry had finished his three years at Carlisle, all but three of the Fort Marion Boys had returned to Indian Territory. In August he returned himself to Darlington.

Cohoe was admitted to Hampton Institute where he studied tailoring and then to Carlisle; but at the age of 26, he was unhappy there and homesick to return to the reservation. In 1880, he, too, returned to Darlington.

Of the four prisoners who went to New York to study for the Episcopal ministry, two were Cheyenne—Making Medicine and Shave Head. They took English names when they were baptized. Making Medicine took the name David Pendleton in honor of Senator George Hunt Pendleton, a supporter of Carlisle, and added an English spelling of his Cheyenne name, Oakerhater. Shave Head became John Wicks. He was suffering from tuberculosis; he returned to the reservation and died within weeks.

Oakerhater in the second year of his stay in New York was sent by Pratt to his tribe to recruit students for Carlisle. He was successful and upon his return to the East brought his wife and son, both of



whom died after a short time in New York.

In June 1881 Oakerhater was ordained in Syracuse. On the same day, he, Zotom, a Kiowa Fort Marion Boy, and Rev. J. B. Wicks, an Episcopal missionary assigned to Indian Territory, set out for the reservation.

Thus, three Cheyenne leaders had become convinced to quit the blanket and spoke of returning to their people to urge them to adopt white man's ways and the white man's religion. It was hoped by those who had a hand in their conversion and education that they would be leaders among the Cheyenne in guiding their people toward the new culture. Were they faithful to this task in the years to come? Did they aid in the stilling of the Cheyenne voice?

Other Fort Marion Boys had quickly returned to the ways of their people. Most of them hadn't expressed intention to do anything else. Lone Wolf returned home after his release, put on the blanket, and died—some said of a broken heart. Zotom, the Kiowa ordained with Oakerhater, returned to the old ways, participated in the Ghost Dance movement, left the Episcopal faith.

Upon his return, Henry Roman Nose tried many different occupations. Trained as a tinsmith, he had been promised he would be hired by the Indian Agent Miles to follow that trade, but he wasn't. He worked briefly as a scout at Fort Reno. Miles again promised the tinsmith job if he would go back to Carlisle and take a refresher course. Roman Nose left his family and did so. When he returned again to the agency, Miles was gone and the new Indian Agent had appointed another Cheyenne to be tinsmith. Roman Nose took a job as an agency policeman and complained to the government. Eventually he received the tinsmith job, but the pay was so low that he couldn't move from his canvas tent into a house.

In 1890 many of the Southern Cheyenne took up the "Ghost Dance," a religious movement promising the coming of a messiah if the Native Americans returned

to the old ways. Henry Roman Nose joined them. He renounced white ways and refused to send his children to school, even when rations were withheld to force him to do so. He was tired from his tinsmith job.

In 1891 he received his land allotment and lived out his life on it, serving as a chief and as a leader in the Native American Church. Indian agents weren't pleased with his leadership. Agent A. E. Woodson accused him of setting a bad example for the younger Cheyenne. When Roman Nose and Cohoe participated in a delegation of Cheyenne who traveled to Washington, D.C., Agent Woodson wrote to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs saying that

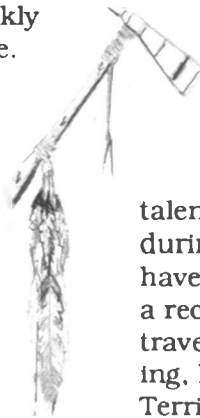
Roman Nose had engaged in evil, forbidden practices and followed non-progressive, superstitious ways. Henry Roman Nose died on William Cohoe's allotment during a peyote ceremony in 1917.

Cohoe had taken the name William during his captivity. He was a talented artist, and his drawings made during the Fort Marion imprisonment have been published and were the focus of a recent Oklahoma Museum Association traveling exhibit. He did very little painting, however, after his return to Indian Territory.

Upon returning home, Cohoe worked at the agency as a laborer, mill hand, teamster, brick molder, and baker—all in the space of two years. At Hampton, he had trained as a tailor. He later worked as a butcher and also built fences. In 1882, he quit his employment at the agency and worked for six years as a clerk at a trading post, followed by a stint as a scout at Ft. Supply. Once he received his land allotment, he worked as a farmer.

Like Henry Roman Nose, he put aside his white man's Christianity and became a member of the Native American Church. He grew his hair long and put on the blanket. He became head chief of the War Dancers Society and followed Cheyenne custom by taking two sisters as wives. He died in 1924 on his allotment in Blaine County.

David Pendleton Oakerhater was to serve the Episcopal Church in Oklahoma



longer than any other cleric. Ordained a deacon, he was never made a priest. For three years, he and Rev. Wicks worked among the Cheyenne. In 1884, Wicks' health failed and he returned home. For nine years Oakerhater was alone as representative of the Episcopal Church among the Cheyenne. During this period, many Cheyenne converts left the Christian religion, but Oakerhater worked faithfully by word and example to show the advantages of the white man's ways and religion to his people.

He was much praised by the white society of the area. The Indian Agents praised his work in official dispatches. Several favorable mentions of him and his work were made in the *CHEYENNE TRANSPORTER*, a newspaper published at the agency. He is credited with conducting the first Christian burial among the Cheyenne and with persuading sick Cheyenne to see the agency physician instead of the tribal medicine man.

His church, built in 1882, was near Darlington. Nearby was established a mission school which later moved to Fay and finally to Whirlwind Camp. Later another mission was built at Bridgeport, which he also served.

Episcopal Bishop Francis Brooke arrived in the Territory in 1893 and Rev. David Stanford in 1896. They received permission in 1897 to take over the government school at Whirlwind. The effect of this school on the Cheyenne didn't please the government authorities. They were trying to persuade Native Americans to live on and cultivate their allotments while allowing their children to be educated at boarding schools. The Cheyenne and Arapaho would leave their allotments and camp around the schools where their children were enrolled.

For this reason, Whirlwind School was closed in 1901. In 1904, Rev. Stanford persuaded the government to let the school be reopened as a school for children in bad health. However, able-bodied children continued to attend, and their parents continued to camp nearby.

When Stanford left in 1908, an Episcopal missionary, Miss Harriet Bedell, took his place as head of the school until the



government ordered it closed in 1917.

During the entire period of existence of the Whirlwind School, Oakerhater lived among the Cheyenne at the camp. He served as translator and interpreter of Native American ways to all the priests and missionaries in the area. Whirlwind Day School was more popular with Native Americans than the boarding schools and was consequently unpopular with the Indian agents and officials of nearby boarding schools. Much of the credit for this popularity was probably attributable to Oakerhater.

With the closing of the school in 1917, Oakerhater retired but continued to counsel, preach, and baptize. He died in 1934 at about the age of 84. In 1985, the Episcopal Church named David Pendleton Oakerhater to its calendar of saints, the first Native American to be so honored.

If we listen for diverse voices by listening to the Cheyenne, perhaps we find diversity not just between the white voices and the Cheyenne voices. Perhaps among the Cheyenne voices themselves there is diversity. *

(DR. KAREN MCKELLIPS was born and reared in Thomas and has a B.S. from Southwestern. Her father grew up on a farm across the South Canadian River from Whirlwind Camp. She has an M.S. and Ed.D. from OSU and teaches history and philosophy of education at Cameron University.)

What A Racket!

(The Old Racket Store)

By Pat Kourt

During the early years of this century, citizens of growing communities depended on stores to supply needs that couldn't be grown, raised, or made at home. One of the most intriguing stores to all ages was the general merchandise store that made eyes twinkle, mouths drool, and hearts ache with longing. In many Oklahoma towns, this hub of activity was called the **racket store**.

The origin of the term **racket** is somewhat hazy, but according to slang of the time, **racket** referred to any legitimate business or occupation. In the nineties, however, racket conjures up the idea of a business that is illegal and undermines the consumer.

Thinking back to the legitimate meaning of **racket**,

George Donley of Elk City remembers that some of his happiest childhood afternoons were spent in Turner's Racket Store in Clinton. George, along with Harry

Turner (the owner's son), loved to eye the candy that could be bought for twenty cents a pound. Their favorite purchase, though, was a nickel's worth of caps to keep their silver cap guns smoking as they acted out their desperado games.

Located in the Mississippi Building on Frisco Street, the store became a focus for unplanned social gatherings. Of course, Saturday was the most special time to visit the racket store. Chores had been done; eggs and cream had been sold; the horse and buggy had been left at the nearby wagon yard. Families mingled and exchanged news of the past week. Women bought yard goods and notions for sewing while children planned their birthday and Christmas lists in the fascinating maze of variety. What a fun racket it was!

THE OLD RACKET STORE

Miscellany. A tempting medley of confections...

Rubbery licorice sticks hard, tart lemon drops cool red and white peppermints sugary, gooey gum drops

A dazzling emporium of gifts... lace-edged handkerchiefs; delicate gold brooches; hand-carved pipes; warm, wool argyles;

A jumbled conglomeration of necessities... creamy Palmolive soap; beeswax bootblack polish; smooth, starched gingham; soft skeins of colored yarn;

A guarded collection of toys... coarse

pages of paperdolls, fragile sets of miniature china, competitive jingles of jacks and ball, mesh bags of cat's-eye marbles.

Variety... the spice of life! ✱



Turner's Racket Store

(PAT KOURT of Thomas makes another of many WESTVIEW appearances. Having been reared in the Sentinel community, she came to SOSU and earned a B. A. in English Education; afterwards, she moved on to Thomas to teach.)

THE TONGUES THEY SPEAK

BY AARON BAKER

They hanged Mr. Wendell to a tree a way north of Sweetwater on the Cimarron.

The sheriff asked him if there was anything he would like to say, and Mr. Wendell sat on the horse, looking down at a handful of

lawmen and curious homesteaders and seemed

to be thinking about it—pondering as he gazed toward the deputy of Cloud Chief, who had arrested

him at a singing convention which Mr. Wendell

was leading back there on the Washita. Mr. Wendell, the name the itinerant singing professor

went under, was accused by the deputy of seducing

one of the young ladies with his golden voice and smooth talk. Though that was no capital crime,

the young widow happened to be the girlfriend

of the young deputy sheriff, who stood there coldly smug, waiting impatiently under the elm

to see what the prisoner was going to say.

Mr. Wendell finally spoke: "In this river I was aware of quicksand,

but in my heart there was only singing."



Artwork by Luciano Cerda

And before the puzzled sheriff could drop a hood over the victim's eyes, Mr. Wendell kicked his mount

forward, thus showing his courage and final protest

of innocence—claiming he borrowed horses only from would-be friends, never to steal them.

Of course, there's always talk after an execution.

"A man at the trial said he would have loaned him the last high-stepping, sorrel filly if he had

asked him." And "Here comes a wagon to cut him

down. Let's go!" The wind kicked up a late dust devil across the river, and the sunset was casting

*long shadows on the departing riders. **

(AARON A. BAKER, like many Oklahomans who for one reason or other live in exile, resides in Shreveport, Louisiana. He is a prolific writer and regular contributor to WESTVIEW, his favorite journal, and believes that SOSU offers a helpful service to readers of the unique history and folklore of the great Oklahoma Southwest.) (Editor's note: The preceding compliment wasn't solicited.)

What Was It Like Grandpa?

By Orv Owens

"Wasn't a picnic; that's for sure.

Dark clouds hovered over America like monkeys on our backs. Hunger stalked the land. Not hunger for the belly, boy. Hunger for a better life.

"It was a time to work like the devil for your pay. And you sweated, boy. There wasn't air-conditioning to cool you in the summertime, but we did have heat. Some folks had wood stoves for cooking and heating, and some folks in the city had gas. At one time or another, we lived in town and out.

"That big old falling-down house ten miles out in the country had a big fireplace, and I had to cut wood for it after I hoofed it three miles home from school—through all kinds of weather—just like the mailman did—never could cut enough wood to last the night for that fireplace. It would have helped if I could have hit twice in the same spot—like Papa.

"No sir. Never had enough wood cut, and Papa cursing every time he had to cut wood after a hard day at the fishery (hatchery).

"Those folks who had regular jobs used to accuse Papa of having broken the most

shovel handles—by leaning on them.

"Wasn't true.

Nobody worked harder than Papa. I can say that because I witnessed the fact. Besides, if they had leaned on shovels that much, the P.W.A. (W.P.A.) couldn't have built all those school houses, bridges,

and fish hatcheries still in existence today.

"There was that house on Pine Street that had imitation brick siding on it. Three rooms and an attic. It wasn't any better or worse than the rest in our neighborhood.

Everyone was in the same situation those days. If you'd told them they were poor, they'd have thought you nuts. When everyone's poor, it's the same as being rich, and folks don't think about it much. They just dig in and pray a lot.

"Two things I remember about that house. I remember the rose bush by the front porch vividly. The reason I do is because I stripped off my clothes and went swimming naked in the creek bisecting our neighborhood. Papa didn't like me running around like that in the wintertime or breaking the ice on the water either. You can guess what happened between the rose bush and me.

"Papa didn't think we could afford doctor bills on his salary, but that rose bush never failed to bloom. It made a spot of color in a drab neighborhood and a spot of color on my posterior, too.

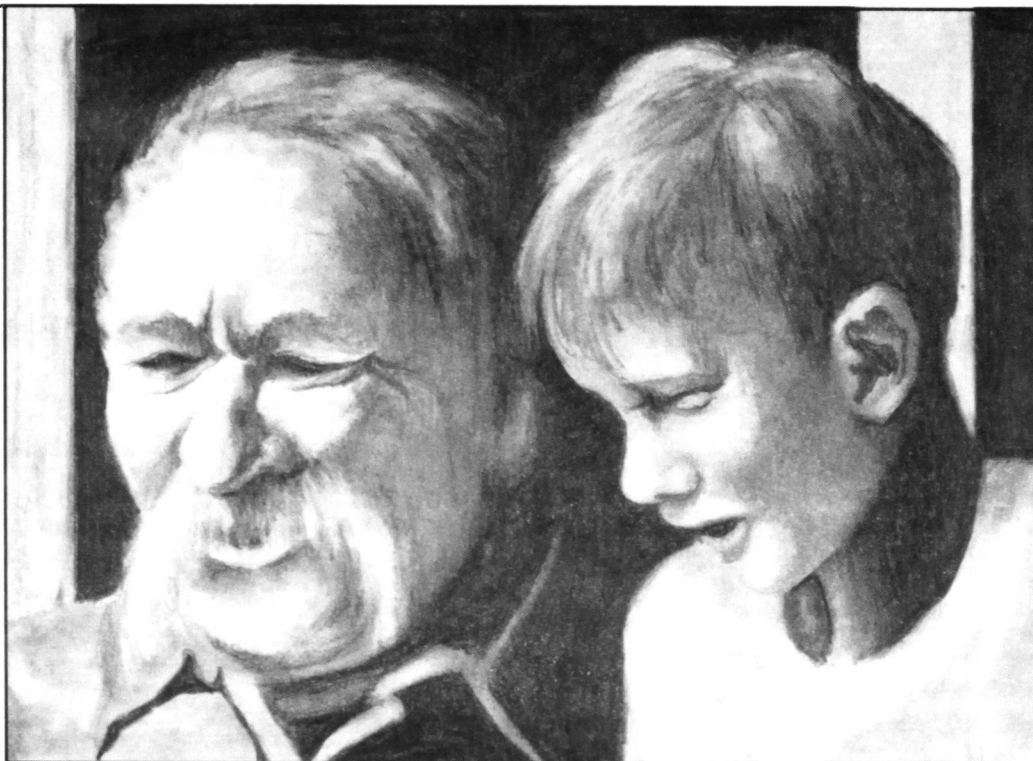
"Funny how you remember things like that, and sparrows in the attic. I just thought I had problems until I listened to those sparrows night after night. At first I felt kind of haunted by them, but after a few nights, I ignored scratching and arguments.

"Another house we lived in was in black town across the tracks west. It was as though the railroad tracks tried to segregate races. Times have changed now. Nobody tries to tell folks where to live.

"It was so much like the other houses we lived in; it was right painful to live there. Even the blacks kept their distance from us. We must have seemed like sorry trash indeed. What it taught me was that being white is no better or worse than being black. You just have to do the best you can with what talents you have—if any—and let the devil take the hindmost.

"The most colorful house (dugout is what I called it) of all was that home in the side of a hill. It looked strange out in the country that way with cows threatening to graze on the roof. All the time you're

"It was a time to work like the devil for your pay."



Artwork by Cindy Fast

hoping they won't knock your stovepipe down.

"Mama killed many a scorpion in that dugout. She tried to keep five boys and two girls safe from danger in that cow pasture home.

"We went to a country school about a mile and a half from our house—just across the pasture to the west. It was like other country one-room schools of that era.

"It was an era of faded work pants with patched rears and aviator caps Mama made out of scraps to keep our ears warm.

"Some of the kids used to poke fun at those caps, jerk them off, and stomp on them.

"That's when I discovered some bullies are as tough as their mouths say they are. And they believed in cap stomping and fight starting.

"Won a few, always on an empty stomach. Notice you get real mad over nothing when you're empty, too.

"What was the furniture like? You'll probably never sleep on one of those old iron bedsteads with four brothers to keep you company. Wasn't too bad unless one of 'em had a hangnail to scratch your nose with, whether it needed it or not, or worse, a brother who wet the bed.

"We used kerosene lamps until Papa got rich enough to afford electricity when we moved to town. Back then, we thought we

had it made if we had gas and electricity. And if we'd had something besides one-dish meals of beans and cornbread, potatoes, and biscuits or water gravy and biscuits to eat, we'd have thought we were in hog heaven.

"No such place? What's all this prove? "If you can survive a depression, you can survive anything.

Someone has to pave the way. You get my meaning?

"Table? No, we didn't eat off the floor. We had an old battered oak table and matching chairs. A coal oil lamp sat in the middle of the red and white oilcloth-covered table in the evenings. It shined through the window and welcomed me home on many a dark and scary night.

"You say you've got enough for your report? I certainly hope so. Lord only knows how long it'll be before you ask me anything else. What are you thanking me for? That's what Grampas are for." *

(ORV OWENS writes a column for the WATONGA REPUBLICAN and submits articles for publication in WESTVIEW.)

Summer Voices

By Aaron A. Baker

*The heat of summer rolls with the dawn.
A puff of brown wrens
Sweeps the Cheyenne sky.
A halo hovers over newly mowed fields,
And the stars which bloom
At night for youthful dreamers
Pale with the white rays of the rising sun,
A sputter of wild flowers
Bows to the flutes of the orioles,
And black cattle graze in the drowsy lanes.
Lord, help me to listen
Again for whispers of love.*

*Dreamers speak softly when long rays of the sun
Filter through rustling
Leaves of gaunt cottonwoods
Where starlings swoop to roost on the gnarled limbs,
But where do the bluebirds go?
Cardinals must hide in sumac brush
When the hot-plate sun reddens hikers' cheeks.
August is a whole season
For young lovers who laugh—
And are unmindful of the briefness at hand.
Well, let their voices stand,
For even the mourning dove can
Least understand when warblers fall into the
Ageless burning sand. **

Life

By Francis Maud Sadler

*Life is only what we make it—
Be it good or be it bad.
As we travel over life's highway,
Many temptations all have had.
If we choose to do the right thing
In each task we undertake,
As we overcome temptations,
It will us much better make.
For we are here such a short while,
So let's choose the narrow way,
And when this old life is over,
"Well done" we'll hear God say.*

(written in 1938; submitted by the poet's son, Carl K. Sadler)

(FRANCIS MAUD SADLER was from the Lowes, a pioneer family that settled in the Cowboy Flats area north of Guthrie in the early 1890's. Her son refers to her as a "learned self-taught individual who literally revered education and everything about it all her life.")

A BRIEF AFFAIR

By Inez Schneider Whitney

Papa's mother died in 1906 when I was three months old. My German grandpa was grief-stricken. He missed her companionship and her good cooking. Her daughter, my Aunt Gussie, was fifteen. She had been spoiled and waited on by Grandma; so because of no fault of her own, she was of little help.

A few years passed. One day Grandpa saw a notice under "Personals" in *CAPPER'S WEEKLY*. A widow about his age wanted to re-marry. Her name was Mrs. Foderal, and she lived in Kansas.

The notice sparked Grandpa's interest. He wrote a letter to her, and soon there was a lively correspondence in progress. Mrs. Foderal said that she wouldn't object to living in Oklahoma, although it had been a state only three years. In fact, she thought it might be very interesting. After a few months of correspondence, she agreed to travel by train from Kansas City for a week's visit.

Although I was only four at the time, I remember the air of excitement. We lived less than a mile from Grandpa and Aunt Gussie, and they were often at our house. Pootsie (the family's pet name for Grandpa) bought a new suit, a white shirt, and a red tie. He spent much time polishing his buggy and the horse harness.

At last the day of Mrs. Foderal's arrival came. Pootsie stopped by our house and was complimented on his fine appearance.

"I must go now," he said. "I want to be there when the train pulls in." With a crack of the whip, he was off and soon disappeared down the road in a cloud of dust. Plans had been made for them to stop at our house for dinner—the noon-time meal—on the way back. On the farm it was dinner and supper—not lunch and dinner.

Papa decided to stay in from the field to help welcome the guest. He and Mama were hoping the visit might blossom into a marriage. It would relieve them of some of

the responsibility they felt for him and Aunt Gussie. Everyone, including the hired hand, eagerly awaited the return of the happy couple.

"There they come," Aunt Gussie said. They drove into the yard. Grandpa pulled the buggy up short. His facial expression was grim. "Mrs. Foderal, you can get out," he said shortly.

She looked surprised but stood up and started to climb down from the buggy. Papa rushed over and grasped her hand to steady her as she stepped down.

"I'm Mr. Schneider's son," he said, and introduced her to the others. Then Mama took her into the house.

Papa went with Grandpa to the barn to help him unharness the horse.

"Pa, where's your manners? Why didn't you help the lady out of the buggy?"

"Ach, Eddie, I will have nothing to do with her. She can stay at your house until time for her to go home."

"What do you mean?"

She came at your invitation. You couldn't wait for her to get here. Why have you changed your mind?"

"She looks like a scare-

crow. How skinny she is. A puff of wind could blow her away."

"I wouldn't call her skinny. A very nice-looking lady, I'd say."

"Now, Eddie, you know we Germans like fat cows, fat pigs, and fat horses. And we like fat women, too. No beanpoles for us. I do not want her in my house. She might never leave."

The week passed slowly. Pootsie would have nothing to do with Mrs. Foderal. It was up to Mama and Papa to keep her entertained and show her the countryside.

The day she was to leave, Grandpa was not to be found anywhere. Mama bade her goodbye, and Papa took her to Custer to put her on the train.

That afternoon, Grandpa and Aunt Gussie came down for supper. Aunt Gussie pulled me over to one side and whispered, "Go say to Pootsie, 'Do you love Mrs. Foderal?'"

Like any four-year-old, I obeyed. Trotting over to Grandpa, I asked, "Pootsie, do you love Mrs. Foderal?"

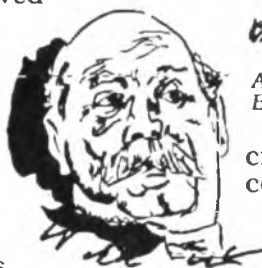
He threw up his hands. With a pained look, he said, "Ach, honey! How can you say such a thing?"

He never looked at any woman again. This definitely ended his quest for romance. *

(INEZ SCHNEIDER WHITNEY lives in Arlington, Virginia.)



Artwork by
Bryce Brimer



By Richard Garrity

The River

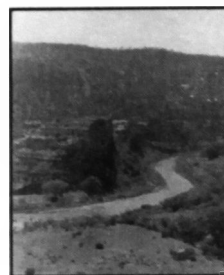
On the eastern slopes of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of South Central Colorado, a river is spawned. At the end of a nine-hundred-mile flow, it enters the Arkansas River near Tamaha, Oklahoma. It's a river of conflicting names.

When the Spaniards were searching for gold in the area, they called the river the **Canadian** from the Spanish word **Canada**. *LIVING WEBSTER DICTIONARY*, 1972, records: "a deep narrow valley in Western U.S.; a river bed which is dry." George Shirk in his *OKLAHOMA PLACE NAMES* states, "The accepted explanation of the name is that it is a reference to Canada." Which is correct?

South of Taylor Springs, New Mexico, the Canadian River enters the thirty-mile-long Mills Canyon. It's a six-hundred-feet deep rocky gorge. The sides are thickly forested with pinion pine, oak, and cedar. Sheer eroded side canyons slash the red earth. Small waterfalls tumble over the brinks. Undeniably, this is the first part of the definition. It's a "deep narrow valley." At Wagon Mound, New Mexico, the Canadian River is released from Mills Canyon to enter the sandy plains—"a river bed which is dry"—the second part of the definition.

As the Canadian River meanders across New Mexico and Texas, the original name is retained. The town of Canadian, Texas is named after the watercourse. It continues as the Canadian River until it

Canadian River in
Mills Canyon,
New Mexico.
About 600 feet deep.
Photograph by
Richard Garrity



Misnomer

crosses the Texas-Oklahoma state line. At that place, it suddenly becomes the South Canadian River. What's the reason?

When General Edmund L. Gaines was stationed at Fort Smith in 1822, he explored the rivers of the area, which included the Kiamichi, the Poteau, and the South Canadian River. At that time there was a South Canadian River.

In 1830, J. C. Russell published a map of the eastern section of the present state of Oklahoma. The map shows the main river as the Canadian. A lesser stream flowed from the south to enter the Canadian near the present town of Eufala; it was called the South Canadian River. General Gaines renamed it **Gaines Creek**. The change was accepted, and the Canadian River was lost.

Presently, all Oklahoma highway signs refer to the Canadian as the South Canadian River. Most maps, especially those prepared in Oklahoma, identify it as the South Canadian River.

For the few who call it correctly, their protest is lost like the waters "on a riverbed that is dry." ♦

(RICHARD GARRITY of Oklahoma City is a free lance photographer and writer.)



Canadian River from the highway 177 bridge south of Asher, Oklahoma. Photograph by Richard Garrity

T H R E E

By Sandra Soli

WEATHER CHANGE

A cold front
scatters afternoon light;
southwest skies
thread needles with fire.
Past the weather line
you could burn fingers
in so much blue.

No place for illusions,
this porch. The cutting done,
tubs boil on portable stoves
away from women.

One twelve-point buck
comes easily to bone,
muscle melting, flesh
a quick memory. Skull worthy of a fair
mount,
decent wood.

Sizzling, the rest of the harvest
percolates through coal. It's only meat
now, like any other.

The buck's eye
watches me,
asks How's the weather
up there?
Seasons change

HARD TRIP

They refused their lives,
these animals of Mexican provinces,
Bundles of freight stacked near
an air hole; they accepted their deaths
on the Texas rails but went down biting.
This journey was an economic decision;
their deaths were economic deaths.

We had imagined no such possibility.
The indecency of death in boxcars
now forty-year-old baggage,
these eighteen will rate not so much
as a paragraph in the histories.
They weren't even Jewish.

Once you see the faces,
the bruised eyes of lost men,
they stay with you. Your own stigmata.
such a thing, this crazy death
for a job washing dishes. But of course
dreams of sons extend beyond the fathers.

It is a problem, these illegals,
They knew at the beginning
this consignment was a dirty business,
El Paso to Dallas a really hard trip.
But this thing. It is not bearable.
It is not to be borne.

SIGNATURE

I fold stillness like curtains the heaviest of air after misty rain at breakfast. It is a desperate day, as the Irish would say. A morning to speak to absent fathers, for walks near a sea. Not this one or that—any sea will do. But a beach, a tongue of salt in the wind, the hearing of lost voices, for the sculpted identity of one's own name carved with a stick. Aware of the tide's healing intention... the filling of a damp signature with foam, a bit of water teasing in, the warning that this most intimate of moments approaches, disappears. *

(SANDRA SOLE of Oklahoma City is working on a Master's degree in Creative Writing at CSU.)



COTTONWOOD

Turkeys' roost,
Owls' perch
Hunters' stand.
Giant tree of the prairie stream.

The constant wind sends seeds on wing mile for mile,
And a little water, once in awhile,
in sandy soil can make a tree.

Not too dumb, this mighty plant.
Greens up late, one of the last, and
grudgingly drops the russet leaves,
But not until November.

Some seek its pulp for paper,
and others will take the green paper to let it be felled.
That is wrong.
It is sad.
This wood is worth more to Man as tree,
And much, much more to beast.
Make paper from forest pine, if you must,
But leave the prairie tree stand tall.
Keep ax and blade away!

Listen to the rustle.
Enjoy the green.
The shade.
Let clamor squirrel and creeper
Let crow call out atop a century's growth.
And Man, plant now and then a new member of this tribe.
Save the prairie's majesty! ✱

(DR. JAMES LOWELL (JIM) MALES graduated from Southwestern in 1962 and practices Endocrinology at the Oklahoma City Clinic.)

Ivy Inside The Walls

Upon these ruins sunlight plays
makes green the site of other days
when family hands preserved with care
the red stone house then standing here.

Thick sandstone walls two stories high
staunchly the elements defy,
with vacant squares like staring eyes
their roof replaced by western skies.

Where wild grass grows was once a floor,
empty rectangle was a door.
Brave remnant of the bygone times,
inside the walls the ivy climbs. ✱



Photograph by Lisa Bradford

(MARJ MCALISTER attended a rural elementary school in Oklahoma County, was graduated from Edmond High School, and received a degree with honors from Central State University. She has been active in Oklahoma poetry circles for many years and still teaches a weekly class on the writing of poetry at St. Luke's School of Continuing Education in Oklahoma City.)

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ON THE BANKS OF THE CIMARRON

By Bessie Holland Heck

Mary Jane sat her horse at the 98th meridian,
Wedged among thousands waiting
the signal to
Run for free land.

"Unassigned Lands," they called it,
Meaning the United States Government
Hadn't allotted it to any Indian tribe.

A southwest wind blew her
Golden hair across her face,
Lifted red dirt that
Grittled in her teeth.

The noisy camp hushed.
Mary Jane tensed, Heart pounding.

April 22, 1889. Noon!
Cracks of pistol fire along the line
Turned calm to crashing thunder.

Mary Jane shot forward on her steed,
Stopped in a blossoming wild plum
thicket, Claimed 160 acres of virgin land
On the banks of the Cimarron River.

She met her claim neighbor,
Rangy, rock-jawed Jonathan,
Took his name in holy matrimony.

Jonathan planted;
Mary Jane watered.
They raised wheat, cattle, sorghum cane,
Four sons, three daughters.

They loved, laughed, lost, weathered
Floods, tornadoes, drought, blizzards.
Outwitted wolves, coyotes, rattlesnakes.
Helped build a church, a school,
A state called Oklahoma.

Mary Jane taught school,
The Ten Commandments,
Music.

They drilled for water; got oil.
Built a mansion over the dugout in which
Mary Jane had birthed nine.

(Two had died.)

The dugout became a cellar filled with
Vegetables, fruits, wild plum jelly.
(The plums produced plentifully
On the banks of the Cimarron.)

Old age came to Mary Jane and Jonathan
As surely as it comes to
All who live long enough.

A southwest April wind blew
Mary Jane's silver hair
Across her faded eyes as
She buried Jonathan in
The courtyard over the hill—
The one they had helped build.

Jonathan slept man's' long sleep
Near his first and last Human seed.

A week later Mary Jane was laid to rest
Beside her man—the man she had met
long ago...
On the banks of the Cimarron. *

(BESSIE HOLLAND HECK of Tulsa is author of several books for children. She works faithfully as vice-president of the Oklahoma Writers' Federation, Inc.)

REVISITED

By Michael G. Smith

Though standing silent in the grass You
speak often to me through glass,
Which then young eyes peered from,
Broken boards, mortar, and some
Fragments of once precious toys
Reconstructed in memory
amid noise
Of prairie wind caressing your walls
And a dead child's whispers in your halls.
You once glowed through rainy night
And gave place of rest from plight
That still seems so. *

(MICHAEL G. SMITH, whose first WESTVIEW submission appears in this issue, is an attorney in Ada.)

SETTLERS WHO WON'T DIE

By Aaron Baker

They are waiting at the ranch when the guest arrives. They sit in the shadows of the old front porch, waiting for the chance to show the home-place to a stranger, to have him find something to talk about.

Right away, I see in an old carport a dust-covered, time-frozen horse collar, a lucky horseshoe, and a rusty pair of wicked-looking spurs hanging from spikes on the wall.

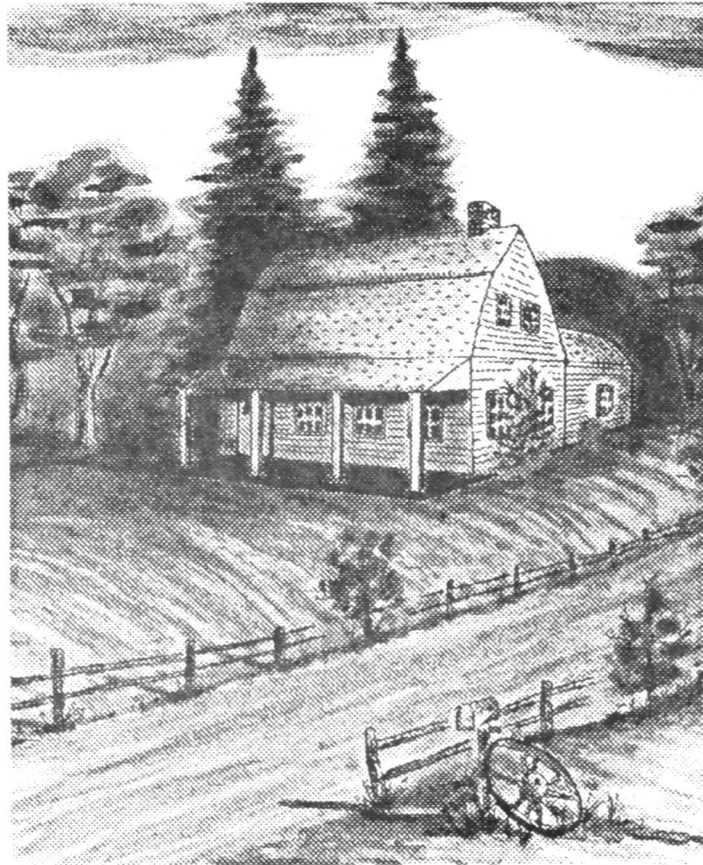
Down at the barn and hayloft there's a brown, now brittle, leather saddle with one stirrup missing, thrown over a rafter above a few square bales of black, rotting hay.

In the kitchen of the old farmstead, I see an antique mill for grinding home-roasted coffee beans and an old wooden churn once used for making golden country butter.

In the den I talk about an iron shoe last standing near a withered, water-stained duck decoy used as a door prop, and I notice on a rustic table a huge ring of keys for which there are no locks. On the wall is an ancient clock which ticks loudly and proclaims with a dignified alarm the half-hours.

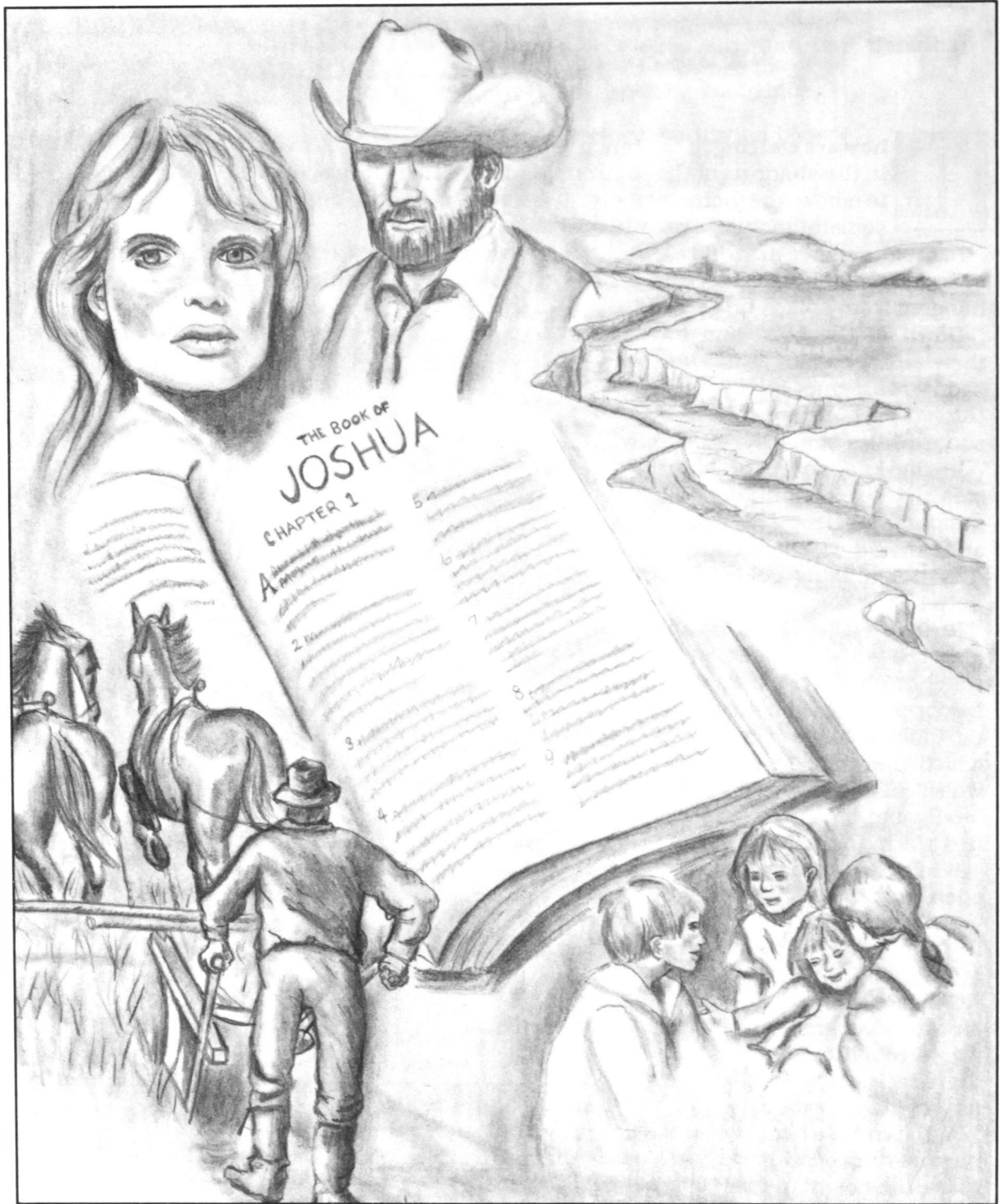
While up in the musty attic they open an old green-chipped trunk with broken leather handles and find a battered gray copy of *MCGUFFY'S FIFTH GRADE READER*. One rarely sees a McGuffy for any other grade. The fifth grade was a tough one for pioneer children. By the time they had finished it, they had grown old enough to work in harvest fields.

At the end of a bent, tree-lined driveway, the visitor notices a busted, narrow-rimmed wagon wheel leaning against a rural mailbox. Though today the postman fails to leave them any mail, old red-dirt farmers sense the Second Coming will prevail. *



Artwork by Mike Sigurdson

*"The men with their hope for a new land to conquer—
The women with dreams to fulfill."*



Artwork by Leigha Helt

Genesis

By Ruby Faye Ross

In the beginning they came with their horses and wagons,
 With their plows and their tools and their strength,
 The men with their hope for a new land to conquer—
 The women with dreams to fulfill.
 Oh, it was a brave and wonderful time,
 The men breaking the sod with their plows—
 Looking forward to crops and herds on the prairie
 And visions of towns here and there.
 And the women— what did they dream of
 As they brought what they could to the land?
 Did they see new homes with wide verandas
 And tall trees shading the lawn?
 Did they see rosy-cheeked children running and playing—
 Sons growing straight and tall,
 Lovely daughters, graceful and gentle—
 What plans did they have for them all?
 Oh the men did their work and they did it well,
 And the women did well in their way;
 They created homes where the children grew;
 They did their share of the labor;
 And the land was fair and the future grew
 Into what is now Oklahoma.
 They came with their plows and their Bibles, too.
 They came with their strength and their faith.
 Through the grace of the Lord and the strength of their hands,
 They created all this— their own Great Promised Land. *

(Based on JOSHUA 1: 1-2)

(RUBY FAYE ROSS of Weatherford was born in Houston. She is a retired teacher who gradually migrated north— a Texan transplanted to Oklahoma where her roots "are growing strong and the green leaves of Soonertism are flourishing.")

Letter

By Sara Nee Ball

Dear Dr. Thomas:

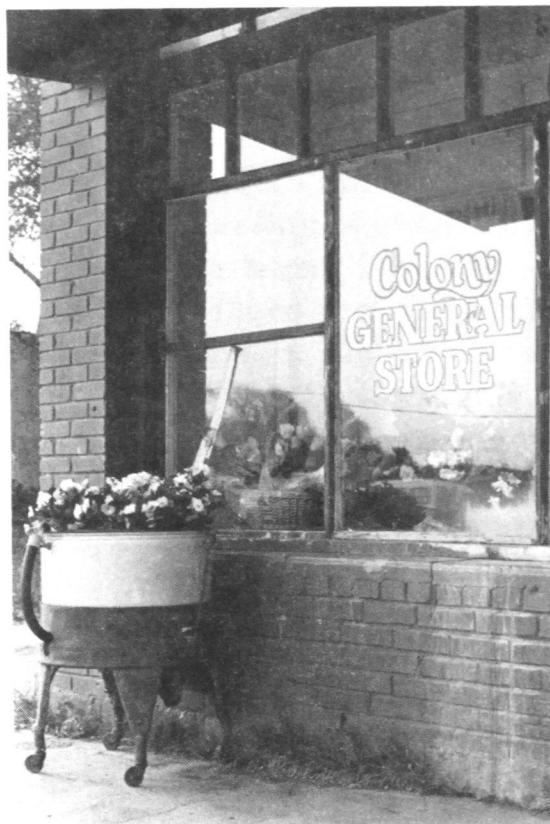
I always enjoy *WESTVIEW*, although sometimes I do not find time to read it thoroughly. I keep all the issues; today I had a few minutes and picked up the Summer 1986 copy and for the first time noticed the "Foreword" in which you mentioned Colony. It brought back a flood of happy memories, and I decided to write quickly some of those memories as I have never even told my children very much about my time there. I am 82 now with a wonderful large family and am now writing a book on the history of Yukon's one hundred years. If I don't jot this down right now, I never will.

I moved to that tiny, dusty little village on a sweltering August day in 1917. I had just gone to live with my Uncle Ord Cutright and his wife; my parents had recently died. Uncle Ord bought the mercantile store in Colony, and at first we lived in a little storeroom of the store. It was a smothering experience. But my memories of Colony are mostly very happy ones. People were friendly, and my girlhood playmates were wonderful friends. I think of my Colony days as the most carefree of my childhood after my parents died. Earlier I had sad experiences while living with an aunt.

The little town had few business buildings. Across the road south of my uncle's store was a farm; on the east was the Seger Indian School. Across the alley west were a barbershop and drugstore. North of those were some other buildings and residences. Diagonally was the bank operated by the Ebys. They lived in a large house near it, and, I assume, oversaw the farm it was on. We soon moved into part of the empty adjoining building to the east. It was there that all the family except me had the influenza which swept over the United States during World War I. Then

we moved to the empty motel to the north. Perhaps during the days of the traveling salesman it was busy; but during the year we lived in it, there was only one paying guest. In the spring of 1919, my cousin Otis was diagnosed by the young doctor at the Indian school as having spinal meningitis. We were quarantined for a month, which certainly evokes very unhappy memories. Otis was so ill, and there were nothing to read—no books, no newspapers—not even school books. If there had been a Bible, I likely would have memorized it.

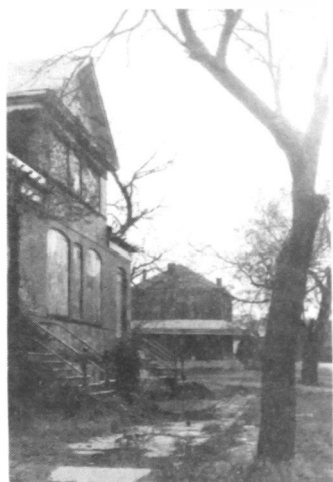
Otis died, and his parents took him to Bridgeport for burial. They were gone for two weeks and during that time my brother Roy developed mastoid trouble and became seriously ill. The Brinks were taking care of us, and Mrs. Brink tenderly nursed Roy. The three Brink children were Mary, Pete, and Alma. Uncle was so heartbroken over Otis' death that he sold the store and moved us to Yukon, where I have lived ever since.



Colony General Store today. Photos by Lisa Bradford

During our time in Colony, a kindly old man brought the mail from Weatherford to Colony and also took passengers in his beaten-up, old, open-topped Ford. The two summers I was in Colony, Uncle sent me by the mailman to the railroad to go visit my sister and little brother, who lived in Yukon with our grandparents. That was a big adventure, and it was quite safe during those days for little girls to go almost anywhere.

I adored a lovely caring teacher in Colony, Mrs. Leticia Webb. She was so sweet and helpful to a homely little orphan. My chums were Elsie Hasbrook, who lived with her sister—a daughter-in-law of Mr. Seger's. I had no idea at that time of what an important historical



Colony Indian School

person he was. Now I think how great it would have been if I had talked with him about his experiences. Of course at that time there were a great many Indians all around Colony who had come with Seger when he brought his "colony" there.

The older ones still rarely spoke English and wore blankets and braids; I was always very much impressed by the all-night wailings when there was a death. When Uncle bought the store, an employee who could speak the Arapaho language stayed on. When the employee moved to a larger town, Uncle had a terrible time trying to do business in sign language. It was wartime, and there were all sorts of shortages—especially flour and white sugar. It seemed that the Indians got more ration stamps for those

two items than others. They seemed to outsmart Uncle and got his supplies.

Other girlfriends were Iris Humbarger and the Holly girls- Laura and Tilly. The Hollys were a large, happy German family. The mother and older sisters were always baking goodies and all kinds of goodies

which they shared with us; we were also welcome at their house at all times.

Every other Saturday night, the town children could go to the movies at the Indian school, and we would all happily run down there together. I doubt if



The Old School Steps

there were ever over twenty-five children altogether. The school was situated in a beautiful area surrounded by a park which had many big trees in it; there was even a deer. The clear little stream east of Colony ran across the east side of the campus of the boarding school. The boys were taught farm work, dairy, etc.; the girls learned to do laundry, cook, and sew—in addition to their studies. I hope to go back to Colony one of these days to see the museum set up by our Justice lady. *

(SARA NEE ALLEN BALL is a resident of Yukon. This letter is her first WESTVIEW publication.)

TWO

By Hazel Ward Adcock

PIONEER WOMAN

On barren plain
In savage sun
And gritty wind
She planted
Cabbages, potatoes,
Beans, and turnips
For the hungry young.

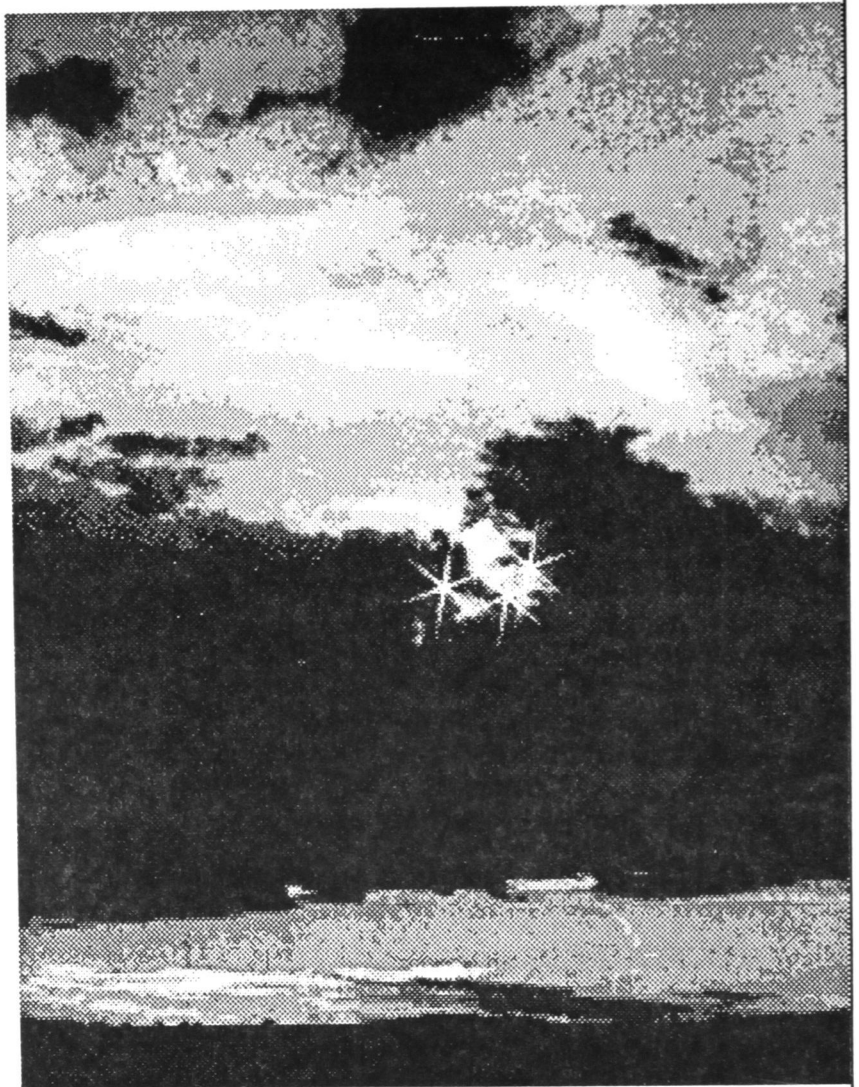
Around the dooryard
Purple lilacs
Yellow flags
For hungry souls.

THE PRAIRIE REMEMBERED

The sky is the sea of the
prairie ever changing, all
surrounding the round
island where I stand.
White galleons sail gently
on azure 'til demon winds
arise churning them to
angry purples, eerie
greens, horrid yellows.

When all is clear, the great
space ship shows its fiery
light as it slowly sails west.
Then darkness falls and a
thousand, million boats
turn on their twinkling
lights to embark on a
journey toward morning.

The winds of that great
ocean will forever play
through my harp of
memory. *



Artwork by Cindy Fast

(HAZEL WARD ADCOCK was born near Seiling but spent her formative years in Stillwater; she and her late husband both received degrees from OSU. Although she has lived in Virginia over forty-two years, she still looks upon Oklahoma as home and enjoys visiting her remaining Oklahoma friends and relatives when possible.)

MUSINGS

By Dr. Shyamkant Kulkarni

SPIDER'S WEB

Many times I wonder, What makes a thunder, What is pleasure, What is treasure, What is life And what is a home?

Many times I see wealthy homes and big palaces made of marble, lined with silver panels, floored with turkish carpets, decorated by high brow architects with fancy curios and worldly treasures to be found only in the chests of Sinbad the Sailor, only to discover after a while that was just a tomb of once upon a time "sweet home"—now perhaps just a prison, a place of treason, perhaps just a garden forever forbidden to that Eve and Adam and their children, perhaps only a museum with private bath and coliseum, or a cheap hotel or costly motel with free



Artwork by Clinton Wood

cocktail. At times it is a storehouse to hold— whatever not sold in garage sale.

Many times I try to count, to lose the count, of places and numbers of rooms I inhabited once. Many times I try to define what makes a home sweet home. At times I remember driving on a highway unknown in the midst of a dark night at speed of wind, heading to those small apartments in search of warmth and happiness, to gratify my senses.

A home sweet home is never built of bricks and mortar, steel and wood bought in barter, but it is a web woven of filaments of love and laments, where dwells that spider that brings two together and binds them forever.

THAT PRINCESS

I am wandering lonely, ceaselessly, from place to place in search of that familiar place to call it my place where I can rest.

Wherever I go, I get tired of those weird looks, of foreign accents, unknown faces new customs, houses with new faces, dark lanes, congested squares, jagged roads and diversions with red stop signs.

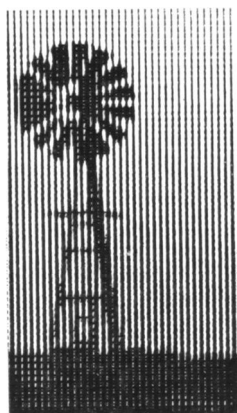
Whenever I get to a new town, I try to forget faces with frown, to turn pages now turned brown, to compare those sketches now about to fade. May I hope to find before I am exhausted those lost dreams, that owner of face For whom I left my home and all the riches for one glimpse of that princess, for whom my heart is aching for ages

(DR. SHYAMKANT KULKARNI, age 52, is a physician practicing in Watonga. His first poem appeared in WESTVIEW's SUMMER, 1989 issue. His compelling urge as a writer is to portray ever-changing life through the poetry and short-story genres.)

The Newcomer

By Dr. Helen Maxson

Last summer, I moved to Weatherford after forty years in the Northeast.



I spent the fall fascinated by the landscape of my new home and trying to understand why. I still don't

have my finger on it, but I have collected a number of impressions that the land has conjured up for me. In this region where I spend so much time seeing what is at a distance, impressions may be as close as I can get to understanding my position in all this space.

Impressions, of course, are shaped as much by the person who has them as by the thing perceived. It may be that my acquaintance with the Oklahoma landscape reflects my moving here at the age of forty, with a strong sense of having completed half my life. Dividing it into just two parts makes an expanse of my life similar to the expanse of land I have moved into. Is that aspect of Oklahoma so powerful

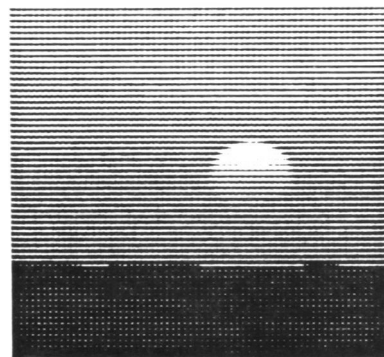
for me because it reminds me of my own experiences? How much do I create my Oklahoma in the image of my own life?

The sense of liberation I find in this land may be related to the liberation I feel at starting a new life. On one hand, I have left behind a great deal that I have loved in the culture, landscape, career, and friends I knew in the Northeast. And I find desolation in the Oklahoma landscape, particularly on a gray day when the endless sky is heavy with low clouds, and seems, especially in the country, to flatten any sign of human sympathy or comfort. On the other hand, a new life at forty is full of opportunity and promise. And there's something about the land down here that is inviting to me. It is easy to move through, on foot, on bicycle, or in a car. Don't you feel tiny down there, my Northern friends ask on the phone. The answer is no. The vertical structures in the land are dwarfed by breadth, so they do not dwarf me the way a Michigan city or a Vermont forest does. Having added to my sense of stature, the Oklahoma landscape invites me to move through it, discovering.

Much of the time, moving through it feels to me like moving over it, looking down. Sitting on a rise

surrounded by miles of wheat fields, I get an impression of the whole earth as it lies under its surface features. I have even wondered if I could discern a curve toward the horizon. It's an absurd notion, given the size of the planet, but I can easily multiply what I see from a given vantage point until it suggests an entire state's worth of space. If I visualize the land going on, much as I see it before me, for hundreds of miles in all directions, the earth takes shape as a huge ball under my eyes. I am seeing the whole—the overview. It is like summarizing about my life: I have lived forty years, I will live forty more, and that will be the whole of it.

The sense of overview I find in the Oklahoma landscape takes other forms as well. When my son and I drive south from Roman Nose State Park at dusk, the headlights on the interstate in the distance etch an east-west horizontal across the rolling land.

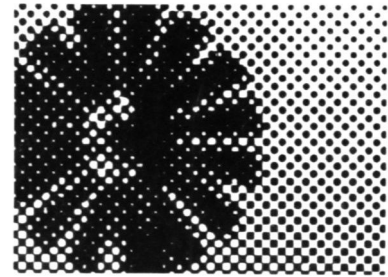


It is so easy to follow their line of travel that we seem to be looking down on them, as from a plane. The effect is repeated driving north at night from Corn, where I spent Christmas Eve with the family of a friend. On the way back to Weatherford, her daughter pointed out how many towns were displaying their lights to us. At that moment, at different points within our 360 degrees, Corn, Colony, Bessie, Clinton, and Weatherford signalled their presence, either in a paling of the horizon or in a nearby cluster of pearls that deepened the darkness. When my guide explained where we would have to be to add Cordell or Hydro to our collection, I felt, again, as if I were in a plane, glimpsing the whole of the earth.

In such terrain, it seems easy, day or night, to step

outside of the tangle of my life, gaining a philosophical purchase on things. Crises seem inconsequential. Worries seem temporary. I know this buoyancy is part of a mental, not a physical, landscape; life in Oklahoma is as entangling and difficult as it is anywhere. But I have a feeling that driving into the countryside around Weatherford will always give me the relief of an overall perspective, even when I am no longer a newcomer at the tidy midpoint of her life; but am involved in the complications of long-term connections and responsibilities.

In getting to know Oklahoma, it is perspective that I am left with, no matter how substantial the land seems. In this state, where the same vantage point can offer sprouting blades of wheat at your feet and suggest the curve of the earth at the horizon, I have



become especially aware that where I stand determines what I see. I suppose my current feelings about my life are common features of a mindscape at forty. I suspect, despite my complaints to the contrary, that I rather like being half-finished with my life; living well takes effort. Still, I enjoy the satisfaction of having tried it. A sense of fatigue, a sense of having made it halfway: for me, the second must involve the first. Looking ahead, I feel an excitement about the competence, pleasures, and fulfillment I hope maturity will bring. And that it would be almost as nice to take a nap as to start teaching next semester. Perspectives, these feelings, on the past and the future from where I stand now. But are they any less real for being functions of my age? No less than sprouts of wheat or the shape of the earth. I look forward to the promptings of this land in the life I will live here, and to the changes that that life will bring to the way I see the land. *

(DR. HELEN MAXSON, after growing up in New England, lived ten years in central New York State and two in Ann Arbor, Michigan. In August of 1989, she moved to Weatherford, where she teaches at SOSU and learns about life from her third-grade son.)



Photography by Katherine Dickey/ Photo research by Greg Fell

(Arapaho's "poet laureate")

By Marj McAlister

I first "met" Mr. C., as I liked to call him, about fifteen years ago. He was "introduced" to me by a mutual friend. From then on, we enjoyed a lively correspondence until the time of his death two years ago at age 98.

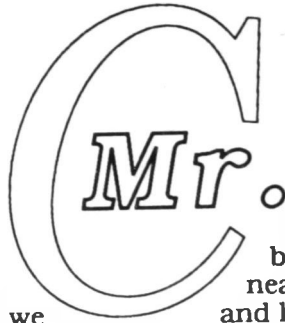
R. R. Chapman was one of the few remaining pioneers who helped to shape our state. Last year was the one hundredth anniversary of his birth. When he was 11, he, his parents, and his older brother came to the Cheyenne-Arapaho country from Kansas in a covered wagon in 1898. They settled on a homestead near Arapaho. From the first, young Dick carefully observed his environment and later recorded it.

To read these stories is to feel how it must have been to live in Oklahoma Territory at the time it was settled. He wrote about coyotes, rattlesnakes, prairie dogs, longhorns, and buffalo; of family, neighbors, cattlemen, sodbusters, and outlaws. For years he wrote once a week for the *ARAPAHO NEWS* and for the *CLINTON NEWS*. His work appeared in almost every issue of *WESTVIEW* and still does—two years after he is gone. He wrote, "They seem to like most of my stuff; I must have them badly fooled."

As a young man R. R. was a waddy. He wandered for a few years and then came back to Arapaho. He farmed and reared a family, living on the family homestead. His daughter Lucille lives there now.

He spent his later years in a little house in town, reading and writing historical pieces as well as poetry. His health wasn't good as time went on. As he expressed it, "Both my ears and eyes are gone." He had other health problems too. He was a spunky little man who protested every ailment. He reminded me of the Gene Fowler title *DO NOT GO GENTLE INTO THAT GOOD NIGHT*.

Dick was a survivor. Perhaps the best recipe for being a survivor is to be salty and peppery with a dash of cayenne. This he was, but the gentle side came out in his poetry. He penned some dainty love lyrics and humorous verses as well as ballads. This from a person who spent only four years in the one-room school, District No. 3, near Arapaho.



I drove out to see Mr. C. a few years ago. He was concerned that I was a "city lady" and would be disappointed with him and his modest abode. I tried to dispel his apprehension. We had a nice visit, but I had difficulty dealing with his near total deafness. But we managed and he was in his element displaying his album and telling about his family.

The relatives had a birthday party for him in June, 1986 with thirty-five people present. He wrote of it with joy and appreciation, wishing a few more might have been able to attend. He had a strong, warm feeling for these family members and corresponded with many of them. He died six months after the family reunion.

One of the Chapman poems is a classic; it strikes a chord with the reader:

DISOBEDIENT

The Lord is my shepherd—I shall not want, But I want many things I need not.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, But I stay not on the right pathway.

He leadeth me beside the still waters, But I dare to wade into the breakers and dangerous places.

He restoreth my soul But I befoul it again and again.

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake, But I choose my own way and fall by the wayside.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for thou art with me But I wander into evil places and risk my very soul.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies. Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over, But I am not pleased with thy bounty and seek after strange things.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. But only by the grace of God shall I escape death And live to see His blessed face.

GOD GIVES MOTHERS GOOD ADVICE

By Mary Elaine Phillips

It began when I was about five years old—the advice my mother gave me that was to bear fruit. She sowed the seeds of what makes a good marriage. It was the year 1919, when I was in love with the iceman—an old fellow fourteen years of age. His one missing tooth, detached when he fell from a pear tree, didn't lessen my slightly concealed admiration for the red-haired, freckle-faced lad.

Mother began talking about people who marry too young and cheat each other out of a carefree, fun-filled time in life. She planted each bit of advice repeatedly each year like a good gardener who drops the seed into the opened earth, going back to cover it quietly lest the crows destroy the plantings.

Adding to her caution as the years passed, Mother pointed out that many marriages were based on the premise of one member feeling sorry for the other as a basis for becoming husband and wife, only to realize later that they were feeling sorry for themselves. She emphasized that no one should be diverted from getting a good solid education by a marriage too soon entered into.

"Never marry a man who is without empathy or compassion," Mother often said to me when I reached high-school age. "If he is educated, a Christian, a man of ethics and ambition and he loves you, he will provide for you. Don't expect to depend solely on your own resources. A prayer life is very important. Family prayer should start your day as regularly as the sun coming up."

She cautioned me always to look neat and attractive—not necessarily in expensive clothes—that it was no compliment to a

husband's hard work and success for his wife to look like a frump!

Mother warned, "If you date a person who wouldn't measure up as a good husband, don't continue the association. This will avoid future problems in your life."

Commenting on every girl's dream of marrying a rich man, Mother said, "If you are courted by a rich man and the dazzle of his affluence gets in your eyes, stop and ask yourself, 'If I married this man and he lost all his wealth and property, would I still feel the same way about him?'"

In her advice, Mother, realizing I too had many imperfections, warned that I must remain flexible in my attitudes. Loyalty to a mate was essential; a wife should never discuss her husband's shortcomings with her friends or relatives. Nurturing and practicing a good sense of humor was very helpful. For humor is a great leveler, saving many a tense moment from becoming a major disagreement.

Mother's final observation on matrimony was always, "Don't marry someone you can get along with . . . but someone you can't get along without. A loveless marriage is a lonely marriage."

Did that marriage advice bear fruit? Yes, we were old maids, John and I, when we married during World War II. He had reached his thirty-second birthday, and I was twenty-eight years old—and he was a redhead! Not an iceman but a lawyer in the United States Army.

Our marriage has had its share of peaks and valleys. Our life has been filled with joy and trauma. Have we ever considered divorce? I'll let John answer that question. "Well, noooo," drawls John, with a twinkle in his eyes, "mayhem at times but not divorce!"

We both laugh and hug each other as we turn out the lights and go to sleep. *

Art selected by Kathy Schmidt

(MARY ELAINE PHILLIPS of Durant, a writer and artist, is a member of Red River Writers, an affiliate of the Oklahoma Writers' Federation, Inc.)

Thanks For the Lessons

By Mary Ann Brookman Rosenbalm



Artwork by Marc Williams

She sits in her chair next to the piano bench, leaning over a little, her hand on the piano tapping—counting.

She's teaching. She's teaching me to play the piano as perfectly as I can.

At the time I thought that was all. "Do it again, Mary Ann." "You need to memorize this piece." "No, No. Your rhythm is off." "First, practice these scales." "Clip those fingernails, please."

It's been years since those weekly lessons, And I see clearly so much more she gave me. She didn't just teach my hands—my fingers; she taught all of me.

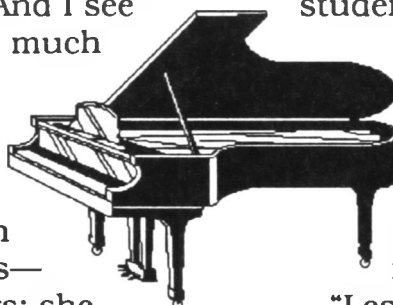


My mind—"You're in control of what you do." My character—"Work hard and do your very best." My patience—"It takes

hard work to be good." My attitude—"No can'ts, nervousness, or luck." My heart—"Always love and appreciate good music."



Teaching. Teaching the only way she knows how. As if her every student will become a concert pianist. Thank you, Mrs. Nichols; Thank you for the "Lessons."



Even now She sits in her chair, Next to the piano bench. And I think of her often. *

(MARY ANN BROOKMAN ROSENBALM, former piano student and resident of Clinton, is a public-school teacher in Edmond.)

MUSICAL ARTIST

By Steve Brookman

The arts in Western Oklahoma have involved many outstanding individuals, but none more influential than Mrs. Ruth L. Nichols.

Mrs. Nichols taught vocal music for sixteen years in Watonga and twelve years in Clinton School. She also taught private piano lessons after school hours. Thousands of Western Oklahomans were introduced to the musical arts through Mrs. Nichols.

The memories that continue with most of her students are not the scales, chords, or quarter notes. Mrs. Nichols went far beyond just music theory. She influenced her students for life by instilling qualities such as perfection, self-discipline, and perseverance.

Since retirement in 1966, Mrs. Nichols has continued to teach private lessons in her home. Her students



Mrs. Ruth Nichols of Clinton, Oklahoma

were and are among the best in terms of piano-playing talent. They have won and continue to win regional and state piano honors. She can be most proud of inspiring young people to strive for excellence.

I'm an adult now and have sons of my own, and I hope someday they can have the opportunity of a dedicated piano teacher. Mrs. Nichols not only taught me and in-

spired me—she gave me a love and appreciation for music. I never see a piano without thinking of those hours of practice, those lessons, and Mrs. Nichols. Her contribution to the musical arts and inspiring of young people will live long. So Mrs. Nichols, we give you hugs and kisses and many thanks! *

(STEVE BROOKMAN, formerly of Clinton, is a chemist in Edmond.)

WITH OSCAR AND VIDA

By Elmer M. Mills

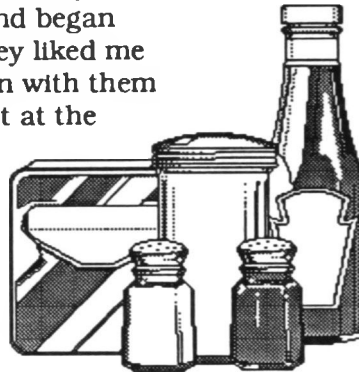
As a kid, I eventually left the town's alleys collecting junk—brass, zinc, etc. My cross-alley buddy, Ezra "Azzy" Etheridge, was my money-making partner. We had quite a business going, but I found out after a job or two of that that "pearl diving" was a much better deal, especially when Oscar and Vida Wallace came to town and began running their "up and coming" restaurant. They liked me and gave me plenty of work; in fact, I stayed on with them even after I had begun wearing long pants. But at the time, I was quite small, and I had to stand on a wooden box in order to do an efficient job. Vida did much of the counter work, tending the front; Oscar did the cooking.

One morning the front was clear. Breakfast was over and all the customers except one were gone. He was the one at the counter staring straight and intently, and most of all motionless, directly at himself in the mirror that stretched across the aisle onto the wall full length of the counter. He was sitting there on the stool, feet on the rail, and his head apparently comfortably perched between his hands and elbows. There he sat, motionless, a sight visible from every angle of the house; and Vida and I had plenty of opportunity to view him without interference. As



I stealthily gazed from behind his back into the mirror beyond, a gruesome, goose-pimpling feeling pervaded me to the bone. Vida and I rotated our best, carefully watching that glassy stare. Just a "Boo!" would have dropped either of us.

The gentleman was no stranger, for he was one of our regular customers. But why this unusual attitude? He was a helper to the undertaker whose place of business was down the street at the furniture store. Finally, Oscar came in and upon observing the man immediately called the doctor. By the time the doctor arrived, we had picked the man up in his sitting position—for he was as rigid as a board—and placed him in a chair at one of the tables. The doctor may or may not have known the cause of this freakish phenomenon, but he proceeded to test for life. No heartbeat was detectable, and the patient's eyes were still set. He was all one piece, as if frozen in ice. The doctor finally placed a spoon in the man's open mouth. Directly upon withdrawing the spoon, he announced that there was still life. Then some men who had come in by that time carried the man away, still in his sitting position. Later on, we heard that he was functioning again. Someone said that he was



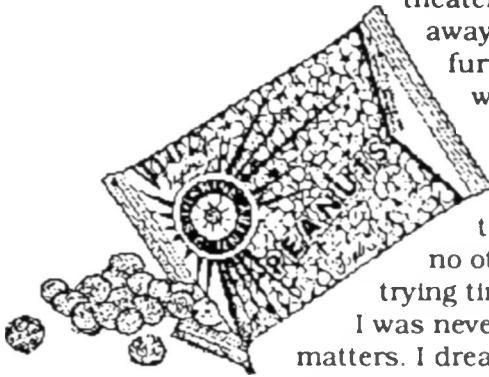
"Vida and I rotated our best, carefully watching that glassy stare. Just a 'Boo!' would have dropped either of us."



addicted to embalming fluid, which was high in alcoholic content, and that he had overdosed on it—thus embalming himself.

I stayed with Oscar and Vida until I no longer needed to stand on a box in order to wash dishes. The two had no children; therefore, it made them proud in a way to be able to refer to me as their son. Finally, they bought a portable popcorn and peanut stand. They located it on the corner directly across the street from the restaurant in front of the bank and put me in charge. Quite a business it was, including a peanut roaster.

My busiest times were on Saturdays, satisfying the streaming crowds as they went to and from the movie theater across the street. The little man grinding away at his barrel of peanuts as they roasted furnished the attraction as the customers waited to be served. I was happy at my work, yet there are drawbacks to all things, I have found. The drawback in this case that was most bothersome was the pesky, ornery boys who were there for no other reason than to tantalize me during my trying times.



I was never inclined to complain to the boss on such matters. I dreaded the Burden brothers the most. They lived out of town three miles and wore the Big Hats. They came on Saturday and stayed all day. It was back in the days when the bigger the hat and the struttier the gait, the tougher the man. That is, until the final showdown! The Burdens had it made to some extent, thinning out the street's population of town boys of my category. Their headquarters unfortunately had to be my peanut stand.

There were three of the brothers, and I dreaded Billy, who was my age, the most. He pretended to like me but had a sneaky, tormenting, and very brazen attitude at times. I tried to accept his manner and put on a front as best as I could. My nature was to try to get along with everybody, and I would sometimes go overboard. Well, one day, Billy haggled me once too many times with his tomfoolery. He'd snuck my peanuts until at last my patience had rubbed raw.

It wasn't the relishing taste of peanuts that pleased him so much; it was the dilemma he kept me in. He was a nuisance at all times, but this act of stealing my peanuts irked me greatly and he knew it. I had warned him but to no avail. The compartment on the far side of the machine held a hole, the only one, and it unfortunately was on the far end next to the closed wing of the stand but still yet facing the front. Its position made it convenient for an impudent kid who had a small arm and a nimble finger to extract nicely roasted morsels at his convenience without much notice.

But notice we did, eyeballing each other through the plate glass compartments—him with his tormenting

"The little man grinding away at his barrel of peanuts as they roasted furnished the attraction as the customers waited to be served."

"possum-like" grin. There was nothing I could do about it during the rush hour. One day, however, it happened and it struck me like a flash. My temper sometimes worked that way. I didn't have it planned at all. My impulsive action went forth as if grooved to a track. The rush hour was on, but this time I vowed to hold my victim in contempt even far after things had quieted. Billy was definitely sentenced to a showdown with the likes of me. He'd now have to curl all of his fingers in making fists.

With the customers served and gone, to their astonishment I gently pushed the boys aside as I lowered the panels, saying that I was closing the joint to settle a little matter that wouldn't take long. I rounded the corner, trimmed off my apron and paper hat telling "Billy the Kid" to do likewise for he'd stolen his last peanut; and furthermore he was paying with his hide not only for the peanuts just taken but also for all that he'd ever stolen. We were settling things in general with a showdown.

Billy answered the challenge by quickly peeling off his coat and slinging it and the big hat a great distance, displaying his valor before the crowd of boys. I must have been blanked out half the time, working on instinct mostly I suppose while the battle raged. After we had stopped and stood panting and staring intently at each other, I could see he'd had enough. Upon moving forward to give him more of the same, he ran for his coat and hat, putting them on while crossing the street. About midway across, with me still standing my ground, such commotion took place I shall never forget and with such fervent satisfaction to me.

Billy looked as though he'd gone mad. Pandemonium broke out. With a jig to start, he struck out into a dead run across the street and up the alley, peeling off his clothes as he went. We found out later that in his mad dash for action showing the boys how easy it was to whip me he had flung his coat on an ant hill and the little devils were all teamed up and seething for his return. Anyone who has never been stung by a Western Oklahoma red ant has missed something. No wasp sting could be any worse. Billy dealt with an unsightly number of ants during those moments of desperation while delighting me.

No, Billy never bothered me anymore. We were young. We grew up, changed, and were more or less forgiving of the childish past. We'd meet up with each other at times and josh about days gone by, especially so of the time the red ants swarmed his pants before that large crowd of spectators. *

(ELMER M. MILLS lives in Neosho, Missouri. He enjoys reminiscing orally and in writing about his boyhood days spent in Weatherford—to the delight of his children and grandchildren and especially granddaughter Lori LeBahn, who serves as his main motivator and assistant.)

"With a jig to start, he struck out into a dead run across the street and up the alley, peeling off his clothes as he went."



Artwork by Joey Conkin

WESTVIEW

Southwestern Oklahoma State University
Weatherford, OK 73096

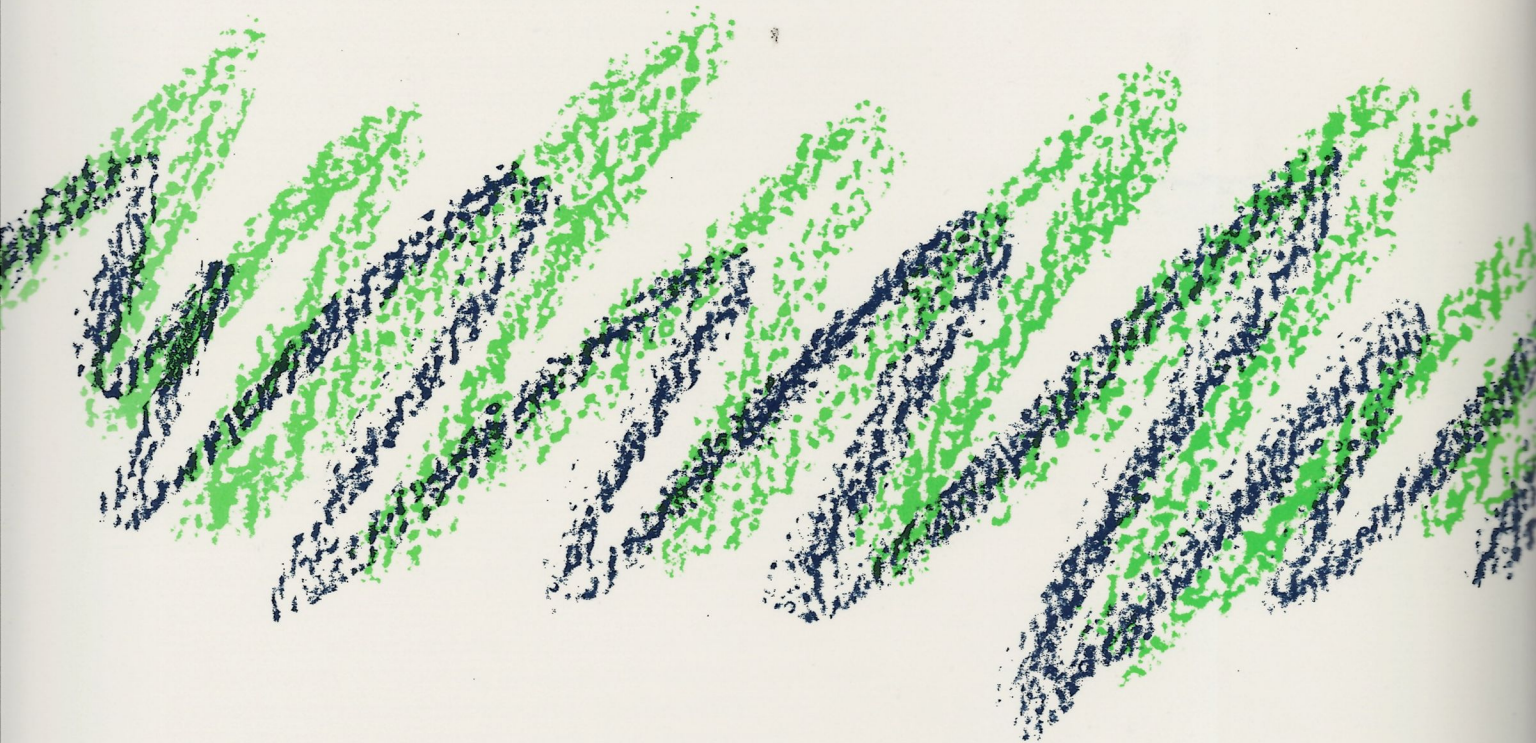
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Published Quarterly by
Southwestern Center for Regional Studies
Southwestern Oklahoma State University
Weatherford, Oklahoma

