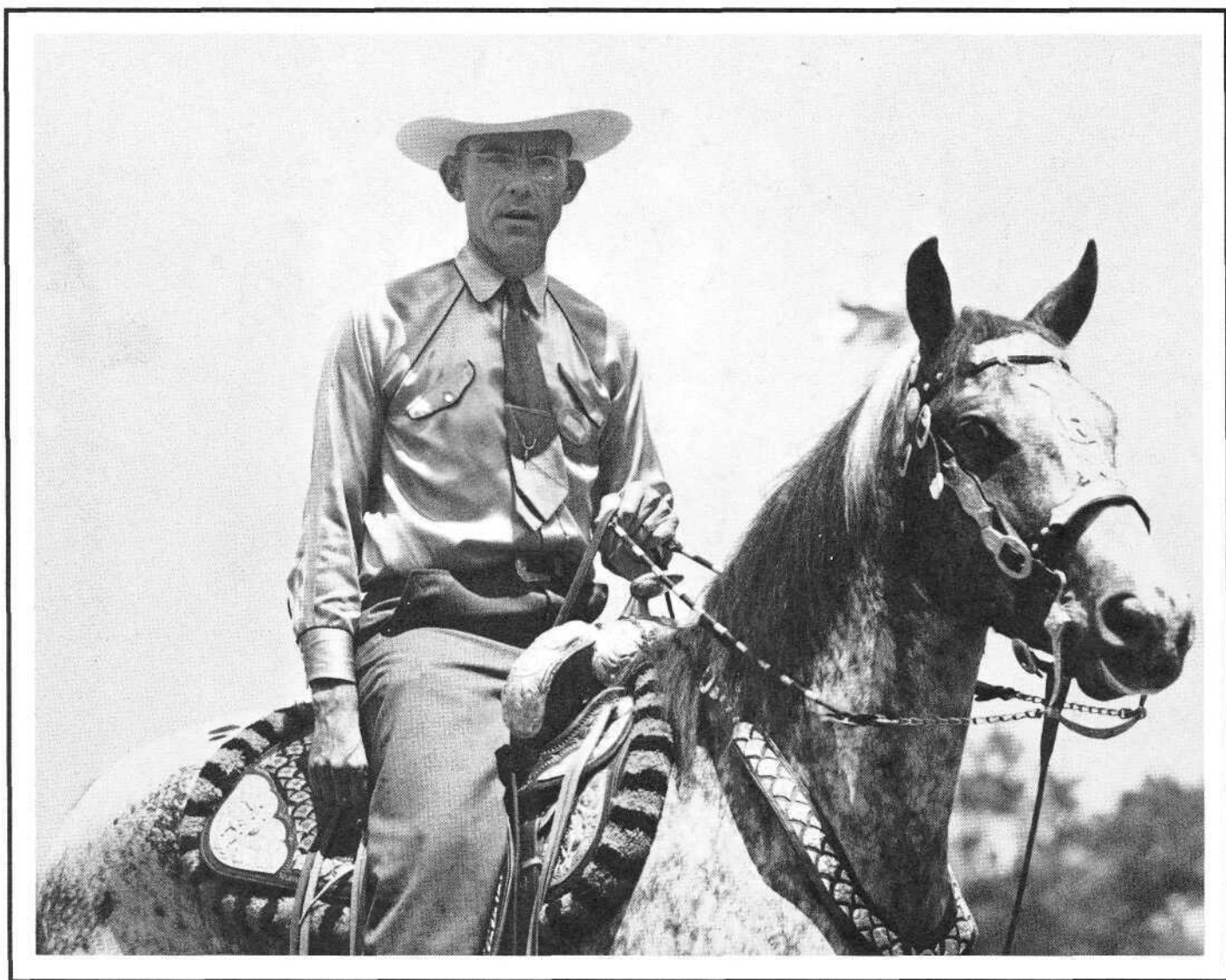


The JOURNAL



Vol. 17, No. 2, September, 1993

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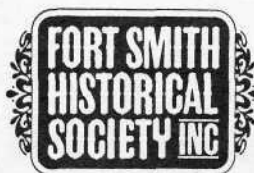
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COVER: R.K. Rodgers at 1942 Rodeo

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Early History of Arkansas-Oklahoma Rodeo & Livestock Show

1934 - April 1, 1975

R.K. Rodgers

(Community leader R.K. Rodgers, for whom Kay Rodgers Park is named, wrote the following history of the Arkansas-Oklahoma Rodeo and Livestock Show. He is now deceased, and we are indebted to his family for permission to publish it and his autobiography which follows the article. We especially thank his grandson, Tommy Blevins, and great-grandson, Ken Pevehouse, for making the manuscripts and family photographs available for our use. Also, our thanks to the Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce for use of the rodeo pictures. The history was written in two parts. The first, dated February 10, 1972, covers the history from 1934 to the date it was written. Part two, which was written on April 1, 1975, extends the history to that date. When reading each part, please keep in mind the date it was written.)

PART I

1934 TO FEBRUARY 10, 1972

The first rodeo put on here in Fort Smith was in Andrews Field in 1934, and was produced by a man named Jack DeLysle from Tulsa, Oklahoma. He built it up on the basis of a joint meeting of the Arkansas and Oklahoma Highway Commission meeting to be held here at Fort Smith.

He was a real promoter. He made up and sold his own program and sold advertising of various types. He got Homer Todd, who then lived in Muskogee, Oklahoma, and Alf Ellis, who lived north of Muskogee, Oklahoma, to furnish the livestock. He built it around and called it "Pawnee Bill Rodeo." He got Pawnee Bill (Major Gordon W. Lillie), who at that time was putting on a Wild West Show in Pawnee, Oklahoma, at the old Pawnee Bill Ranch, to appear in the parade and the grand entry of every show.

The show was well attended at every performance. The price for attendance was 65¢ for the grandstand — there were no seats except the grandstand and a short section of bleachers about 50 feet long. He put a lot of color behind the show. He had a group of Indians that Pawnee Bill brought with him, and they put up tepees on Garrison Avenue in front of the Goldman Hotel. This was 1934. Jack DeLysle did the entire job with the assistance of a team he organized.¹

The following year a group got together at the Chamber of Commerce in an attempt to get the Chamber to sponsor the rodeo that year. The Chamber Board turned it down, and the Amrita Grotto decided to sponsor the show. They appointed me as chairman and allowed



Major Gordon W. Lillie "Pawnee Bill"

me to pick the committee, which consisted wholly of the main officers of the Grotto. That show was well attended; however, there was a

one-day rain out and the Grotto barely broke even. The deal was made between the Grotto and Homer Todd and Alf Ellis. They were to furnish the livestock and all the acts and were to get the first \$5,000 of the gate receipts. The gate receipts would be split thereafter fifty-fifty. The Grotto was to furnish the tickets, grounds, advertising, ticket takers and sellers, utilities and the clean-up after the show. The Grotto just barely broke even.

The following year the Grotto decided it was too much of an undertaking for them and they wouldn't sponsor it for fear of the weather. A committee got together at the Chamber of Commerce with Scott Hamilton, Manager of the Chamber. This committee consisted of me, Frank Youmans, Bert Harper, Al Henderson, Rudd Ross, John England, Louis Cohn (Manager of the Fort Smith Office Supply), and Harry Robinson, who then was the key man for the *Southwest American* newspaper. We decided at that meeting we would sponsor the show ourselves and that each of us would be responsible for as much as a \$500 loss in case there was a failure to produce enough revenue to pay all the expenses.

We decided to sponsor the show as the "Pawnee Bill Rodeo" and we got him to come here from Pawnee, Oklahoma, and lead the parade and the grand entry. The show was a success. The parade on Saturday morning was at 10:00 o'clock and the first show was on Saturday afternoon at 2:00 o'clock, followed with a show that night at 8:00 o'clock and a Sunday afternoon show at 2:00. The Sunday afternoon show had the largest attendance at that time. The price of admittance was 65¢. We sold jobber tickets to wholesalers and jobbers in Fort Smith at 40¢ each in 500 lots. This helped out on the advertising as these tickets were given to retailers throughout the Fort Smith trade territory.

We made our deal with Homer Todd and Alf Ellis again on the same basis that the Grotto had made the year before. We were very successful with this show and came out with about \$2,500 profit. Todd and Ellis made an agreement with the Cowboys Turtle Association and furnished all the special acts except the payment to Pawnee Bill of \$250.00, the charge for his appearance.

The committee, as named in the previous year's rodeo, was a standing committee. We decided to go ahead with the show the following year and made the same contract with

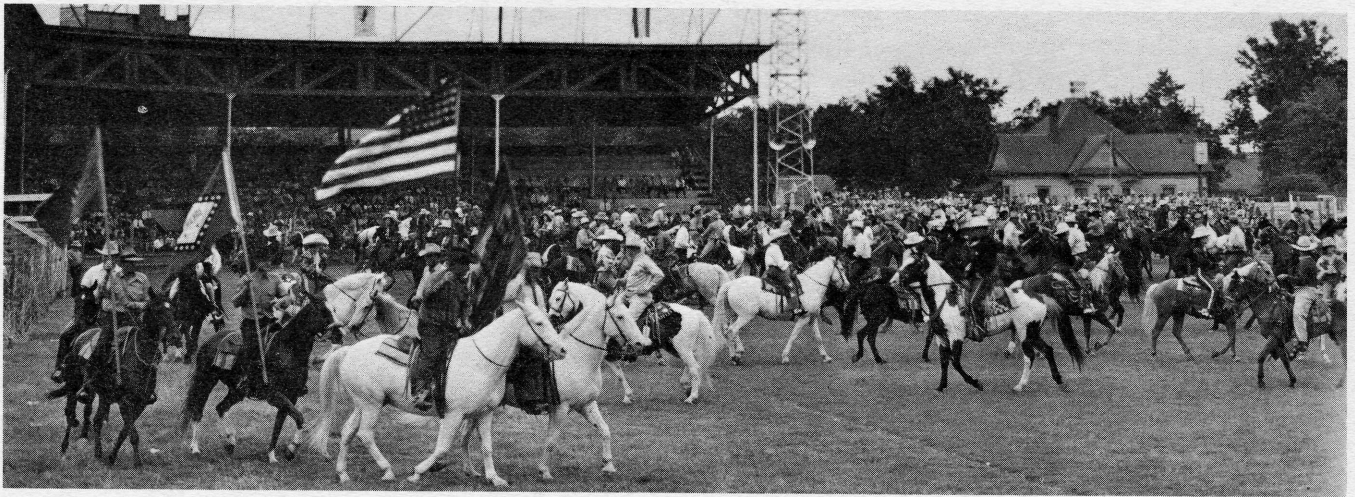
Todd and Ellis. After the contract was made, Todd and Ellis visited the Cowboys at Fort Worth and they declined to make a contract with them, after which they came back and had a meeting with our committee. They gave the contract back to us. At that time we decided to go ahead with the show and took it on ourselves, making a deal with the Cowboys, renting the stock where we could get it, and hiring special acts. We decided to employ Floyd Gale, member of the committee of the Cowboys Turtle Association, from Morris, Oklahoma. We gave him \$500 to set up the show and supervise it during the production as arena director.

Floyd Gale was one of the calf ropers and had served some of the previous years as a Judge at the Madison Square Garden show. We built our own bucking chutes under Floyd Gale's supervision. He was able to get the livestock together for the entire show. Some of the bucking stock came from Kansas. The show was very successful. We had raised the price of admission in the grandstand to 75¢ and still sold the jobber tickets to jobbers and wholesalers. That year we made about \$4,500 clear.

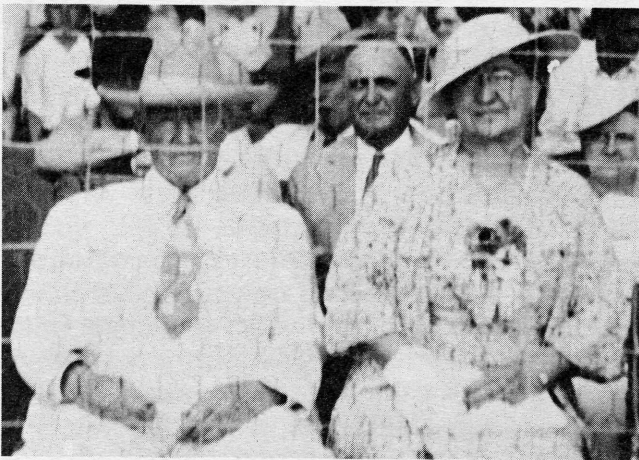
It might be well to mention that in all of our early day shows we had cowgirl bronc riding contests which made very attractive acts. Usually we had eight or ten cowgirls that would bronc ride. One of our leading cowgirls was Von Craig who lived at Valliant, Oklahoma. She later married and put on a rodeo once a year for many years at Fort Towson, Oklahoma. In one of her later shows Von Craig bulldogged a steer, which was a very attractive act. One of the other leading cowgirls was Alice Sisty.² She was about one-half Mexican and was introduced as Alice Sisty from Mexico City, Mexico. She was a trick rider as well as a bronc rider.



Alice Sisty, Roman Jump over automobile



Grand Entry at Andrews Field, 1941



Arkansas Governor and Mrs. J.M. Futrell at 1936 Rodeo



Tad Lucas

We employed Jimmy Nesbitt of Nowata, Oklahoma, as our bull fighter and clown. He was the world's best. His wife was a trick rider and she was the first one in our show to trick ride and go under her horse as the horse went around the arena. The show got more publicity and continued to grow, at which time we decided to build the bleachers at Andrews Field on the west side of the park and on the north side of the park so we could seat a larger attendance. We bought the lumber, which was all pine, from a mill at Waldron, Arkansas. It gave us 2,000 more seats.

About this time the rodeo committee decided to sponsor a livestock show and it was held in the mule barn at the stockyards. The only prizes given were blue ribbons. The show lasted two days. This was repeated at the stockyards the second year and we appointed Collier Wenderoth, Sr., chairman of the livestock show. He took a very interested part and it was decided to move the livestock show to Andrews Field, put out a prize book and put on a real livestock show. We solicited funds for the prizes, approximately \$5,000, but no one knew about the prizes to be awarded. We decided to go to Springfield and employ Mr. Boyd, manager of the livestock show at Springfield, Missouri, for a number of years. He charged us \$500.00 to come here, set up the show and supervise throughout the show. Scott Hamilton, Bert Harper and I made the trip to Springfield to employ him and it was money well spent as none of us knew anything about a livestock show. The annual rodeo, along with the livestock show, continued in Andrews Field and both proved to be successful and well attended.

Bert Harper and I called on Walter Vansickle, who was then the Manager of OG&E, and asked him to give us the old Electric Park for a showground for both the livestock show and rodeo. We were unsuccessful. However, after Morgan Wright was appointed Vice-President and General Manager of OG&E for this division, we called on him to see what he could get done in this respect. He advised us about a week later that OG&E had agreed to let us have the old Electric Park for what they had it on the books, which was \$7,500.00. At that time we had about \$60,000 in the treasury of the rodeo fund. The livestock show fund had only about \$5,000.00.

We decided to purchase this property and have it deeded to the Chamber of Commerce. Ralph Speer agreed that he would let us have the wire for the armoured fence that surrounds the park at his cost, which contained about a carload of wire. This wire was unloaded on the spur track of Dixie Cup Company. Bert Harper took some of the employees of the Gas Company and Jack Bland and erected the fence around the park, after it was surveyed by Lem Bryan's father, who did the work gratis.

The park was loaded with dead trees and County Judge Strozier came to our aid and agreed that the County would remove all of the dead trees and level the grounds, which was a big help at that time.

Our first activity on the grounds was our livestock show and I'll have to admit the dust was 6 inches deep. The only wood buildings on the grounds were three small tourist cottages which were attached together and moved from Andrews Field, where at one time the Lions Club had seven or eight cottages. These three cottages were lent to the Methodist Church to set up eating quarters. All the remaining enclosures on the grounds were tents. Bread boxes were cut apart to cover the dust on the floor. We were so well acquainted with the livestock show movement at that time that no one had to be brought in to assist Collier Wenderoth, Sr. and Scott Hamilton in getting out the necessary livestock prize lists. I cannot brag about this show being too successful on account of the dirt and dust.

I think before leaving the operation of the livestock show and the rodeo at Andrews Field, I should reveal to you the troubles we had in 1942, while World War II was in progress. Some of our committee doubted whether we should have a show that year on account of the war. We took the matter up with the proper government authorities, and their recommendation was that the show should go on as usual.

We had our regular parade on Saturday morning at 10:00 o'clock and our opening show set for 2:00 o'clock that afternoon. The noon newspaper came out with the news that France had fallen to Germany, which was a big shock to everyone. Our attendance at 2:00 o'clock was very light.

Our storage space for the bulls we used in the bull riding was under the bleacher seats we had built on the west side of the arena, and as each bull was ridden the gate was opened and they were kept under those seats. As the last bull was ridden the people started to leave. There was an overpass built for the bulls to leave the arena ground for storage under the seats. As a man from Texarkana started to walk over the overpass, he walked down to the ground and opened the gate and left the gate open and walked on through. The people seated in that area followed this man and about that time three or four bulls ran back from under the bleacher seats to the arena and in doing this they injured 16 people.

There was only one serious injury and that was Dr. E.H. Leonard's wife, who, unfortunately, lost her baby. We obtained the names and addresses of those injured and employed Lem Bryan, attorney, to travel through the country and look them up, getting releases when possible. We had one party in Fayetteville who had hired an attorney and he gave us more trouble than anyone else. It took him about two weeks to get the claim settled and we were out about \$2,500 settling all the claims. The most outstanding thing was that Dr. Leonard and his wife would not accept anything — their theory was that it was not our fault. Mrs. Leonard's father was a doctor at Mansfield, Arkansas, and he came to Fort Smith and took care of her at Sparks Hospital. We finally got her to go to the Boston Store and buy some clothes as hers were ruined at the time of the accident.

After the show that afternoon Bert Harper and I got in his car and drove to my home on South 23rd Street. We talked about an hour in the car. I think this is the lowest either of us had ever felt since the rodeo started. We had never had any accidents to amount to anything previous to that. We didn't know whether we would be out of business or not, but from that conversation we decided to start Lem Bryan out the following day to see what could be done. Of course, with France falling to Germany, it was an extreme shock to both of us. The show that night was light in attendance but Sunday afternoon we had an overflow crowd. The rest

of the week came out all right and we wound up the year with a reasonable profit after paying all the claims.

The show in the year 1943 was an exception. We had advertised the show to open and cover Decoration Day as usual, but one week before the show was to open, the Arkansas River was 2½ miles wide and on Highway 64 west they were having trouble with the Van Buren bridge. A pontoon bridge was placed across the river between Van Buren and Fort Smith. We decided to postpone the show for two weeks and advertised it for the new dates. The show was held on the new dates and we had a good attendance and showed a nice profit, actually more than we had expected.

After moving from Andrews Field to Exposition Park it was the decision to build an arena. Bert Harper felt that since the electric company had donated the land at a reasonable price of \$7,500, that the gas company should go as far as they could in building the arena and the cattle and horse barns. The gas company was taking up the pipeline that ran from Sallisaw, Oklahoma, to Vian, Oklahoma, which consisted of 8" and 10" pipe. The gas company would deliver it to the park and would furnish Jack Bland to draw the plans and supervise the construction of the arena.

The arena was partly completed in 1948, and the first show was in 1949. Bert Harper died in January, 1950, and we got Jack Bland to draw plans for completing the arena, which included Section "AA" and Section "O" and the building of the new chutes, the holding pens immediately

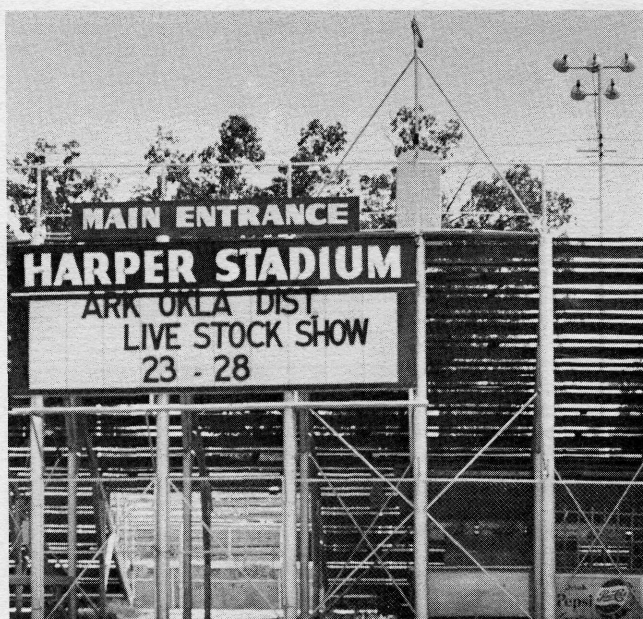
behind the chutes, including all roller bearing gates, metal fences, and the unsaddling chutes, together with the calf roping and bulldogging chutes. This was done at a cost of approximately \$12,500. Jack Bland, Engineer of Gas Company, supervised this construction work. The original part of the arena that Bert Harper finished cost \$41,000. The seats were of oak timber purchased at Ozark, Arkansas, and delivered to the grounds for \$55.00 per 1,000 feet.

At that time one beef barn was constructed and the chicken barn, along with what is known as the Homer Todd barn, which was used for his horses during the rodeo and was used for the dairy cattle during the livestock show, and the hog barn. After 1950, the cowboy's barn was built for the use of the cowboys during the rodeo and for sheep and other animals during the livestock show when it was needed. The barn for the queens was constructed about 1960 for the queens' horses during the rodeo and to be used for the judging of livestock during the livestock show.

I will go back to give you the history of the Chamber of Commerce building which was owned by Ben Cravens, who had recently died, and the building was up for sale. The rodeo committee had taken a rear office in this building, furnishing it with furniture, decorations and carpet. They called it the rodeo office. An offer was made on this building that with \$1,000 down payment, the Chamber of Commerce could pay the balance out like rent. The Chamber of Commerce did not have the money for the down payment, so the rodeo committee decided to make the down payment.

At a later time the matter of air conditioning came up, which was a very expensive item for the entire building, and the Chamber of Commerce asked the rodeo committee to give consideration to air conditioning the main floor of the Chamber of Commerce building, which was done. I believe the expense of this ran around \$2,000.

In the year 1947 there was a committee called to Little Rock from livestock groups from Fort Smith, Fayetteville, Pine Bluff, Blytheville, Hope and El Dorado, to get together on a bill to present to the legislature which was then in session, to create the Arkansas Livestock Show, and four district state livestock shows. Bert Harper and I attended this meeting which lasted two days. We wound up with a joint meeting of the legislature in the Marion Hotel which lasted four hours and ended at midnight.



Harper Stadium circa 1949

Clyde Byrd was Senator from El Dorado, and he and Col. T.H. Barton of the Lion Oil Company took a big part in getting the bill approved for all the livestock shows of any importance in the State of Arkansas at that time. The bill named the four district shows, and appropriations were to be made not only to the state show but to the district shows for construction money. We worked hard to get this bill approved. There was one man from this county who helped tremendously to get it approved and that was Representative "Red" Turnipseed who lived in Midland, Arkansas. He was a coal miner and many of the Representatives from small counties followed him in the legislature. "Red" liked his toddy and we saw to it that he didn't run short!

The first appropriation was made to the district shows for construction. Our show got \$20,000. We used this money for building the present office building and ticket sales building. We have received many appropriations from the legislature since then, but in some years the legislature met and there were no appropriations made for any shows except the State Show in Little Rock. They received millions of dollars from the taxpayers of Arkansas for construction money. Their show has been very unsuccessful from a financial standpoint — some years their loss exceeded \$100,000. I have been on that board since it originated. I understand they made money in 1971. They have their rodeo in connection with their livestock show.

Our district show received \$30,000 for construction money from the state at the last, 1971, legislature meeting. This was the largest amount ever received and was used to construct a new building, The Days of '49, on the grounds which cost in excess of \$32,000. The additional cost was borne by our committee funds. This is a free attraction containing early-day vehicles.

The last appropriation before this was made five years ago for \$20,000 and that money was used to build the two large toilet facilities just west of the arena, which are the very latest modern type. I may state that we have three times more toilet facilities for our patrons in our arena than they have at Little Rock State Showgrounds and Coliseum. I am sure all of our toilet facilities have cost in excess of \$40,000. In addition to this we paid the sum of \$2,500 to join a sewer line that was laid by Lee Kelley to cover a housing area just south of the fairgrounds. The sewer line went across the southwest corner of the park property and picked up the sewage from Dixie Cup and from there to the Arkansas River. This takes care of all sewage and manure from the hog barn. The remainder is hauled away after the show.

The commercial exhibit building is a very good building with a steel beam ceiling and is well lighted. It was built completely on credit. We obtained contracts for advertising spaces over a period of years and got signatures on these contracts. The First National Bank and Merchants National Bank furnished the money and financed the construction. The building was paid out from rental receipts for space rented at the annual show. The net return to the livestock show was approximately \$5,000 per year, which now is a big help in paying our premiums for the livestock show which runs about \$15,000 per year.

The large billboard facing Midland Boulevard, which carries the advertisement of the rodeo and livestock show sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, is owned by the park. The construction cost was approximately \$3,000 but it is a very outstanding billboard and well maintained.

In constructing the steel arena there were no provisions made for toilet facilities at that time and they had to be added later. The run-around space is about 900 feet long and was originally dirt. Through the cooperation of Joe Safreed, a contractor, this was covered entirely with a concrete slab at his actual cost. He did a splendid job which improved the appearance very much. We always had wet spots in the run-around. Ample toilet facilities have been provided for both the west side and the east side.

About 1951 or 1952 the Chamber of Commerce Board appointed a new livestock show committee. Many of them were new and didn't understand the operations too well. They were very much handicapped on revenue because they were getting nothing from the commercial exhibit building at that time and it was difficult for them to obtain the right kind of carnival. They had trouble with the carnival management in keeping gambling joints and flat joints straight. The ministerial alliance started to put pressure on them because of the flat joints. They also put pressure on the sheriff's department and the police department and with the publicity in the newspapers, the livestock show had to close in the middle of the week. Of course, they took a loss in operation that year. The livestock show had not been too profitable in the past and was operating at a loss. The rodeo funds were keeping up the grounds and the buildings. I am fairly sure the closing date of the livestock show was in the middle of the week in 1955 — the publicity was extremely unfavorable.



1956 Rodeo and Livestock Show Committee

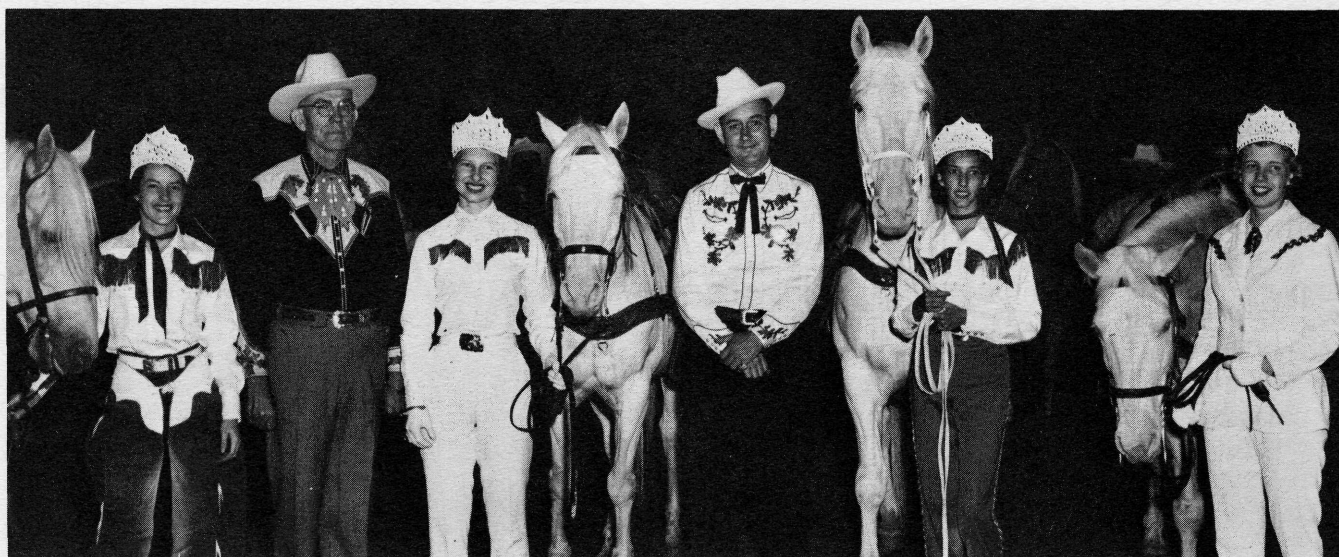
Top row, left to right: Homer Crain, Bill Horne, Paul Latture, C.F. Byrns, Harold Alter, Pat Garner, C.T. Hubbard.

Bottom row, left to right: Troy McNeill, George Packard, R.K. Rodgers, C.A. Lick and Morgan Wright.

The following year they could not get any committee to accept the responsibilities and take the leadership of putting on another livestock show. Charlie Hubbard, President of the Chamber of Commerce at that time, called a meeting of the rodeo committee and asked them if they would take on the show. It was agreed that the rodeo committee would take it on for one year. The committee immediately had a meeting with the ministerial alliance and worked out the difficulties. The right kind of contract was made with the carnival management at that time that there would be no flat joints operated on the grounds and this has been our policy since then. It still remains a problem to keep the flat joints out.

The livestock show was very successful that year and showed a profit of approximately \$5,000 or \$6,000, and since then, the rodeo and fair committee has operated both the rodeo and livestock show.

At this time the rodeo and fair committee has under construction the covering of all seats in the arena with aluminum. The cost of the material and installation will be in excess of \$90,000. This work has been supervised by Jack Bland, who has retired from the gas company. He, along with the engineers of the Reynolds Metal Company, drew all the plans for this seating which we believe will last many, many years without upkeep, outside of fire and windstorm.



1956 Rodeo Queens with R.K. Rodgers and Buddy Smith

Left to right: Carol Coan, Out of Town Queen; R.K. Rodgers; Joanie Mills, Cowboys' Sweetheart; Buddy Smith; Shuggie Ward and Diane Harder, City Queens. First time in the history of the 23-year event that there was a tie for the title of City Queen.



Rodeo Clowns in 1959

Left to right: Gene Clark, Buck LeGrand and Bobby Clark

Many years ago I was returning from a trip to Florida and came through Birmingham, Alabama. About 100 miles north of Birmingham I saw a Frisco locomotive in a park and this gave me the idea to ask for a locomotive from Frisco. They were happy to give one to the park and spotted it on a permanent track without charge. The engineering department of Frisco told me it cost them about \$15,000 to move the locomotive on tracks they had to lay from the Dixie Cup switch track to the present locomotive location. This is a very large locomotive and at one time was used on this division to handle coal trains over the mountain between here and Monett, Missouri. They advised us the locomotive would junk out for about \$15,000 so this was a very liberal gift. The attendance by children to see this locomotive increases year by year. An attendant is in charge at all hours during the livestock show.



Ruby Nance Rodeo Band, 1959

When Louis Cohn resigned from our committee he was replaced by Troy McNeill. Frank Youmans at that time was elected to succeed him as treasurer and later at the death of Frank Youmans, Troy McNeill was elected treasurer. Harry Robinson, with the *Southwest American*, took a position with a newspaper at Russellville as editor and moved to Russellville. He was replaced by Clarence Byrns, editor of the *Southwest Times Record*. Quint Hamilton replaced Frank Youmans as a member of the committee. Quint was then manager for the Magnolia Petroleum Company and was very active in civic work. He was a good member of the board and was very active in all departments, serving on the committee until his death.

All the original members of the committee, except myself, have passed on at this time. Some thought Pat Garner was one of the original members but he wasn't. He was employed for many years after the show started to put out news releases to the country newspapers in the Fort Smith trade area. He usually put out three news releases to each newspaper, normally two before the show started and the last one would be put out the first day of the show. He would send two tickets to the editors of these country newspapers — at one time about fifty. We paid him \$100 a year for this service. He was elected to the board about 1951 or 1952 and served until his death.

In the early days a contract was made for the rodeo with the Cowboys Turtle Association at a meeting held in Fort Worth during the livestock show in February of each year. Bert Harper and I would go down and spend a couple of days at Fort Worth and then drive on down to Houston to spend a day there as the show overlapped between Fort Worth and Houston. At that time the agreement was made for our prize money for the show that was to follow in May and June, as our show always covered Decoration Day, May 30. Usually we made this trip at our own expense. A few times Scott Hamilton, manager of the Chamber of Commerce, went with us.

This early history of the rodeo and livestock show is made up primarily from memory. I had to search through many files and I don't guarantee all of the dates to be correct. I do state that the rodeo and livestock show committee in its activities as set out is as nearly correct as I can make it from the records and my memory.

I was requested by some of the members of the livestock and rodeo committee to make this report so that it may be retained for future assistance in developing a better livestock show and rodeo.

After paying for the aluminum seats and the installation of about one-half the arena, our finances as of February 10, 1972, in banks and savings and reserve accounts covering rodeo and livestock funds, are \$64,681.10 — about \$6,000 of this balance will be needed on the balance due on building now under construction and labor for replacing about one-half of the aluminum seats.

In the year 1938 and each year thereafter we would put out a letter to some of our businessmen to underwrite our rodeo in the amount of \$100 in case of failure or rainout. This was discontinued about ten years ago. We were carrying some rain insurance of \$2,500. It had to rain one-fourth of an inch between 8:00 and 8:30 p.m. The premium was unreasonably high and in 1964 we started providing a reserve fund in the amount of \$40,000 to take care of rainouts or losses in the rodeo or livestock show and this reserve has been continued since that time and is still in effect.

FEBRUARY 10, 1972 - APRIL 1, 1975

The committee completed the aluminum seats in the arena and they were used in the first show in 1972. The material and labor and installation cost approximately \$92,000.

The rodeo and livestock show during the year 1972 were both successful and made a profit from both shows which added to our reserve, and the Legislature in 1973 appropriated \$30,000 for construction money for the rodeo and fairgrounds.

The committee started in early 1974 on construction and improvement of the grounds which consisted of the following:

Air conditioning and heating in the Superintendent's home which is located on the grounds at an expense of approximately \$1,250.

The lighting in the arena had been installed many years ago and it was decided to install additional lights and purchase the latest equipment for the arena lighting, which was done at a cost of approximately \$2,500. That increased our lighting about one-third.

Also our sound equipment had to be re-worked and new additions put in the system at a cost of approximately \$850.00.

Our blacktop roads had to be repaired and we furnished the materials which cost in excess of \$1,000.

With the assistance of the engineers from the Oklahoma Gas & Electric Company, we decided to change our wiring on the grounds and remove much of it from the trees and place the primary and secondary lines underground. New poles had to be purchased where they were used for the transformers. At this time we have about 70% of all our primary and secondary lines underground, and we increased the capacity on each of these lines as they were over-loaded, particularly during the Fair and Livestock Show.

We rebuilt the concession stands under the arena seats to comply with the Health Department. Metal chairs were purchased for box seats, replacing the old original folding chairs. New tables with steel framing and steel legs were built for the chuck wagon house and a new steel building was built for use in hog judging during the livestock show. The chicken barn was covered with steel and a modern milk barn was built to be used by the Dairy Department during the livestock show.

A large portion of the bucking chutes for the rodeo had to be re-built and many minor projects on the grounds were improved using the State Grant to the District Livestock Show for that purpose.

The Chamber of Commerce appointed 21 trustees to head the corporation, who were:

J.C. Alexander, Jr
301 Merchants Bank Building

Daman Bowersock
Merchants National Bank

Larry R. Clark
Brown-Hiller-Clark & Associates

Thomas C. Curtis, Jr.
Southern Steel & Wire Company

Charles Dawes
Duplex Manufacturing Company

George Eldridge
Weldon, Williams & Lick

Ned Harper
714 First National Bank Building

H.L. Hembree, III
Arkansas Best Corporation

Harold E. Henson, Jr.
City National Bank

T. Wayne Lanier, D.D.S.
5422 Euper Lane

C.A. Lick, Jr.
Weldon, Williams & Lick

J.D. McClary
Fort Smith 66 Marina, Inc.

David McMahon
Belle Point Beverages, Inc.

Ross Pendergraft
Donrey Media Group

Lewis Phillips, Jr.
New York Life Insurance

Larry Randall
Randall Ford, Inc.

David Reeder
Reeder-Simco GMC

R.K. Rodgers
300 First Federal Building

Sam Sicard
First National Bank

Speer Hardware Company
5400 North 6th Street

Morgan Wright
509 North 23rd Street

On the new list of trustees, there were only six of the original committee appointed as trustees; they were: Morgan Wright, C.A. Lick, Jr., Ned Harper, H.L. Hembree, III, J.D. McClary, and myself. H.L. Hembree was elected as General Chairman; Dr. T. Wayne Lanier as Vice-Chairman; Albert Edward (Ned) Harper as Treasurer; and Paul Latture, Secretary.

The Board of 21 Trustees separated the work into four divisions as follows:

PROMOTION — David McMahon, Trustee; David Reeder, Assistant; C.A. Lick, Jr., Assistant.

LIVESTOCK SHOW — Larry R. Clark, Trustee; Harold Alter, Assistant.

RODEO — J.D. McClary, Trustee; Reedy Buzbee, Arena Director.

GROUNDS AND IMPROVEMENTS — R.K. Rodgers, Trustee; B.G. Hendrix, Assistant; Morgan Wright, Assistant; Jack Bland, Engineer; Lewis Hope, Park Superintendent.

Morgan Wright, formerly Division Manager and Vice-President of OG&E, was elected to the original Board in 1947, and has served well for the last 28 years. I have always believed we would not have secured the old Electric Park property had it not been for his efforts.

C.A. Lick, Jr., was elected to the original Board in 1950. He has been a guidepost for the rodeo and the livestock show for 25 years, and when we added the Old McDonald Farm about 10 years ago, he wanted to keep the first four goats from one year to the next on his acreage on North 41st Street. This was greatly appreciated. He would never take any pay for the feed that was required, which was not a small item. He was Chairman of the "Days of '49" (building for old vehicles).

Homer Crain was the Chairman of the original committee and worked hard from one year to the next lining up for the rodeo and the livestock show, and always looked after the chuck wagon during the rodeo, which was always successful, with the exception of 1973, when the rain and stormy weather reduced the attendance. However, at the last rodeo that he was Chairman of, the chuck wagon had a net profit in excess of \$8,000. He relieved me as Chairman in 1953, serving 22 years. I had served the first 15 years as Chairman.

The Arena Director for the rodeo was a year-around job. Bert Harper, who passed on in 1950, was the first one to fill the position. Since that time Ed Pevehouse, Ned Harper, Bill Horne and J.B. (Jeep) Hanson have served as Arena Directors. "Jeep" has served for many years and has done a good job. I may also state his wife, Marjorie Hanson, served as Chairman of the Queens' Contest and spent many hours of her time seeing that everything was done to make it outstanding and successful. She deserves much credit.

I cannot overlook the work that "Jeep" did in the livestock show, helping with the livestock for Old McDonald Farm and assisting Victor Ebone, who was Chairman, and B.T. Blevins, Vice-Chairman. Much work is required to keep the Old McDonald Farm going and successful, and it requires a lot of free labor. However, the Old McDonald Farm has netted in profits from the operation enough to pay for the original cost. It was copied after the Old McDonald Farm that is in operation at the Knotts' Berry Farm in Anaheim, California; however, the one we have is much improved over that one in California.

E.J. Barber, who was Purchasing Agent at Arkansas Oklahoma Gas Corporation, and now retired, has been on the original committee for several years. He has had charge of the parking. His service has been outstanding for the rodeo and the livestock show.

Harold Alter, retired Business Manager of Sparks Hospital, I am sure put in more hours for the livestock show than anyone. He had charge of the rental for the independent midway, and it was a tough job trying to please everyone that wanted space for the concessions of various types. He usually started spending from two to four hours a day, two weeks before the livestock show opened, and from six to eight hours a day during the show, and he generally came up with eight or ten thousand dollars a year from his operation. I am pleased to see that he has been retained on the Livestock Show Committee.

Tom Futral has been on the original committee for several years. He has been retired from OG&E, and had charge of the space rental in the Commercial Building — no easy job — and he usually came up with \$5,000 or more from this department each year. He also handled the ushering at the rodeo for many years.

Jack Bland was on the original committee for many years. He is now retired from Arkansas Oklahoma Gas Corporation, as an engineer. He has been mentioned in the original History Book of the Rodeo and Livestock Show. His services have been many and also gratis.

B.G. Hendrix was on the original committee. He was very helpful as State Representative in getting appropriations for this District Livestock Show, and he and B.T. Blevins always work several days prior to the rodeo and escort our stars who are employed, to the various schools, hospitals and group meetings. They both work during the rodeo and livestock show.

Ned Harper, who was elected to the board after the death of his father, Bert Harper, in 1950, served as Arena Director of the rodeo, on the queens' committee and was in charge of the ushers; he also served as Treasurer for many years.

Press Kelly was on the original committee and took a big part in the livestock show. He served as head of the Dairy Group, and as head of the Horse Show, during the show.

Blake Berry was on the original committee. He was on the Building and Grounds Committee, and also filled many places when called on during the rodeo and livestock show.

"Dude" Crain was on the original committee, first serving as Chairman of the Parade. He did an outstanding job and it was not easy, along with the Grand Entry, which was a real undertaking. He was also assistant to the Arena Director.

J.D. McClary was on the original committee. He worked in many places in the rodeo, especially on the Grand Entry on handling the stock barns, and assisting the Arena Director. He is now Trustee over the rodeo, and his assistant and Arena Director is Reedy Buzbee. Reedy has a tough assignment. He served on the original Board as head of the Quadrille and did a splendid job. He wanted to serve on the original committee, and I presented his name on two occasions but he was never elected. This assignment of Arena Director is an important one, and I hope he will carry the heavy load.

There were many important jobs done by others who were not on the original Board and none of them received any pay for their services, such as: Chairman of the Queens' Committee, Ticket Taking, Ticket Selling, Concessions, Grounds and Improvements, Milking Barn and Superintendent of the various attractions at the livestock show (Beef, Dairy, Hogs, Sheep, Horticulture, Home Economics, Days of '49, Old McDonald Farm, Horse Show).

I should mention that Judge Strozier, County Judge (deceased), was the first to come forward and help to improve the grounds and lay out the roads in the park and oil them to keep down the dust.

Also Judge Ben Geren, County Judge (deceased), put down for us the first blacktop roads through the park.

And the present Judge Glenn Thames, County Judge, has maintained and repaired the blacktop roads and added additional roads where needed.

From the original committee in 1936, they have done a most splendid job. They have all contributed their time and other items of improvements — all for the future of the people of Fort Smith and surrounding area — and I say they are turning this property and improvements over to the new Non-Profit Corporation which could not be duplicated for a million dollars. The Chamber of Commerce has not invested a single dime in the project. They have been paid approximately \$4,000 a year for the service they render at the Chamber office.

In closing the record from 1936 to 1972, I want to express my thanks to all of the original Committee. They did a wonderful job and I am hoping the new trustees and their assistants will carry on the job that has been laid out for these many years, and fully complete the plans as

presented for a Non-Profit Corporation, to accept contributions to further the program of the property and improvements that so many people have worked to build up for the last 39 years, all for the enjoyment of the people in this area, where the charge for admittance for the rodeo has been reasonable — and free admittance to the livestock show, which is very unusual.

The new trustees and their assistants have a real test before them, and the job will not be easy as some may think. Many will take assignments without experience. I am hoping

for the best, with what has been done in the past with so little, that the new workers will continue to improve.

To keep the record straight, the Arkansas Oklahoma Rodeo has been one of the best in the United States, and also the Livestock Show even with free admission has been the most successful in Arkansas, and not leaving out the Arkansas State Livestock Show at Little Rock, where the charge for admission at the gate is \$1.00 for adults and 75¢ for children.

The new trustees have a challenge before them, after 39 years of success.

FOOTNOTES

1. Jimmie Barry has supplied the following information regarding Jack DeLysle and the people he chose to help him promote the 1934 rodeo in Fort Smith.

Jack DeLysle, publisher of Strip Maps, promoted the U.S. Highway 71 Association and the U.S. Highway 64 Association (to help sell his maps), with himself as Executive Director of each Association. These highways crossed in Fort Smith — 71 north and south and 64 east and west. He stayed at the Goldman Hotel when he was in Fort Smith. Because Highway 71 went to Canada and Mexico, and Highway 64 served the Atlantic and Pacific, he conceived the idea to hold an International Highway Convention in Fort Smith with a rodeo for entertainment. To help him with the tremendous amount of work involved in the project, he organized a team of helpers. The team members, with the duty of each, were:

Jack DeLysle — Association Director, general secretary of the Allied Highways Convention, and contact with Pawnee Bill and all other out-of-town affairs.

Harry Robinson, *Southwest Times Record* Business Manager — *Southwest Times Record* and out-of-town newspaper publicity.

Jimmie Barry — KFPW radio publicity and special assistant to Jack DeLysle.

John England, Goldman Hotel manager — Hotel accommodations and important guests.

(Editor's note — The following, written by Jack DeLysle, and printed in the program of the 1934 rodeo, shows the wide publicity the rodeo received:

"I would be remiss in my duty if I did not call special attention to the splendid co-operation that has been given me by the radio stations throughout the Southwest in this move to bring to Fort Smith, Arkansas, a successful series of conventions and entertainment features. The various radio stations have been invaluable in locating hundreds of the Old Timers who are with us today in the interest of the Old Settlers and Frontiersmen Association which is being premanently organized in Fort Smith, headed by KFPW. A partial list of the stations include: KGNO, Dodge City, Kans.; KDB, Santa Barbara, Cal.; KGIR, Butte, Mont.; KGBZ, York, Neb.; KNOW, Austin, Tex.; KFKA, Greeley, Colo.; KBTM, Paragould, Ark.; KFXR, Oklahoma City, Okla.; KUOA, Fayetteville, Ark.; KFJZ, Fort Worth, Tex.; KGBX, Springfield, Mo.; KJBS, San Francisco, Cal.; KWKH, Shreveport, La.; KWEA, Shreveport, La.; KIEM, Eureka, Cal.; KGNF, North Platte, Neb.; KTM, Los Angeles, Cal.; WIS, Columbia, S.C.; and KGKL, San Angelo, Tex."

2. Outstanding women rodeo stars who performed at the 1942 Arkansas-Oklahoma Rodeo were Tad Lucas of Fort Worth, Texas; Juanita Gray of Cheyenne, Wyoming; Juanita Howell of San Jose, California; Marge and Alice Greenough, Red Lodge, Montana; and Lorraine Bolton, Wichita Falls, Texas.

R.K. Rodgers

1895-1982

Autobiography Written in 1975

(Courtesy of Tommy Blevins, grandson of R.K. Rodgers)

I was born on my father's fruit farm three miles south of Cane Hill, December 21, 1895. I was named Kay after the Sheriff of Washington County, who happened to be at our home the day I was born. His mission at our home was to protect it from a large group of Indians who walked and rode in wagons from the Indian Territory to Bob Flat's Distillery located at Farmington, Arkansas, five miles west of Fayetteville, Arkansas. On their return trip a great many of the Indians were drunk and the Sheriff of Washington County would watch the houses along the route until they crossed the line into the Indian Territory.

This fruit farm, about 200 acres in apples, was purchased by my father, William Francis Rodgers, after he had married Mary Ellen Reed. He and my mother finished clearing and cleaning up the land and planted it in apple trees. He gave an old fiddle, a calf and \$20.00 for the land, and built a log house on it. I've heard my mother say they had been married two years before they had a cook stove. They had been doing all the cooking in the fireplace. They dug up the soil in the smokehouse after the war and boiled it to get salt.

I had five brothers, James W., Aud, Claud, William and Benjamin H., and one sister, Sarah.¹ Of course, my father had built a good home by the time I was born, but the old log cabin remained and was used as a place to salt down and cure his meat as he would usually kill as many as ten or twelve hogs each winter and smoke the meat in this log house, called the smokehouse.

It was the year of 1900 before he got a good crop of apples. He had built an apple dryer to dry the No. 2 and No. 3 apples. He also built what we called a wagon yard out 200 or 300 feet across the road from our house for workers to live in. He would have 10 or 12 families living in the wagon yard. Most of the women worked at the apple dryer and the men worked at picking apples and hauling them in and separating the good apples from the No. 2 and No. 3. They were packed in barrels which



R.K. Rodgers, 1929

held two bushels and three pecks. Wagons were used to haul the barrels to the Rambo Switch which was as far west as the railroad went at that time, which was about four miles west of Prairie Grove.

He sold the first crop of No. 1 apples to the Kansas City Fruit Company for \$1.50 a barrel and delivered them to Rambo Switch. He paid wages in the orchard and at the dryer of 50¢ a day and furnished the families meat and lard.

Most of the farm production around Cane Hill and Dutch Mills and Evansville was in wheat at that time. My father had two steam thrashers, one a J.I. Case and one a Russell. One of them would go down the Cane Hill

mountain and thrash the valley and over into the Indian Nation. The other one remained on top of the mountain. He took a crew of men where he went and received a toll of wheat for pay, and he kept two toll wagons running from each thrasher all the time, hauling wheat to the flour mills at Prairie Grove, Rhea Mill, north of Prairie Grove, two flour mills at Cane Hill, and one at Dutch Mills.

One of the mills at Cane Hill was water powered, the wheel was 40 feet from top to bottom. When it was purchased it came to Van Buren by rail and was moved to Cane Hill, 45 miles by wagon. As a boy, I would go with my father to collect at the mills for his toll that had been delivered. The mills could not pay for it until they had ground it into flour, and had sold the flour.

We moved from the farm to Fayetteville and he bought a hotel by the name of Southern, and a men's clothing store on Dixon Street, but he didn't like city life and moved back to Lincoln, 20 miles west of Fayetteville. The railroad had then been extended to Lincoln, and he started to build up the town. He was not a carpenter or a stonemason but he had ten business houses all built of stone, including the Bank of Lincoln, which was a State Bank incorporated for \$5,000.00. I had \$35.00 and I ran to the bank at the time of opening to be its first depositor — and now I'm 79 years old and have had a deposit there ever since. My nephew, Forrest Rodgers, remains on the Board of Directors, and my niece's husband, Jack Basden, has been President but is now retired.

My father was President of the bank in 1932 when Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected President, and banks were going broke every day. President Roosevelt ordered all banks closed until Congress could pass a bill and place all banks under the Federal Reserve Bank, with a \$5,000.00 guarantee to any depositor of funds. That very day he went to the bank and looked over the books and ordered the cashier to give every depositor his money if he wanted it. He went up the streets telling people to go get their money if they wanted it — that no Democrat would ever close his bank — that the money belonged to the people and not to the Government. Some went after their money and some didn't.

In my boyhood days while attending school I played baseball. I was a tall young man and was chosen to be the pitcher. I learned to throw curves, drops, inns and outs — that is what we called them then. We would choose up sides when the six months school term was out and

would play half a day at a time. I threw my arm away at that time which caused my right shoulder to be lower than the left shoulder, and at my age now, it has never grown back.

When I was eight years of age, I experienced something that has remained with me all these years. I was bitten by a mad dog and still have the scars on my leg. My father called our best doctor, T.H. Blackburn at Cane Hill, and he told my father to take me to Grandma Starr's home at Evansville and he would meet us there. There were no shots for this in those days. Grandma Starr was the mother of Henry Starr, who was killed while robbing the bank at Harrison, Arkansas. Her husband's brother was in the Sam Starr, Belle Starr and Pearl Starr family. She had a mad stone all the Indians used for a mad dog bite. It came from the center of a white deer's heart. She boiled milk and placed the mad stone in it and placed it on the wound and if it stuck tight the dog was mad. It stuck and she would place it back in the milk again and back on the wound and keep this up until the stone would not stick, which took about an hour. Another boy came in with the same thing while we were there and we watched the procedure but the stone did not stick. It was about the size of a pecan and was porous all over. In those days they said that was the only remedy. I guess it was — but I have been mad ever since! In those days every merchant had a large wire pen built back of the store to place chickens in until they had a shipment, and they had suspicioned this dog ten days before and had put him in this chicken pen. The owner had just unlocked the pen and let him out as I came along.

You might have in mind that Dr. Blackburn was a "quack" doctor, but he wasn't. He had the highest qualifications of any doctor in that area and later moved to Lincoln and bought a large two-story dwelling house and started a hospital. He was a surgeon and operated on people from many points. I remember a lady came in from Texas on the train on a stretcher and was operated on by Dr. Blackburn. Most of his surgical work was for appendicitis, gallstones and tonsils. He had the first automobile that came to Lincoln, it was a Stanley Steamer.

My brother Jim had the second large automobile, a large five passenger and it was a Cole-8. Later someone bought an E.M. Flanders; he was a traveling salesman for the Fort Smith Coffee Company. He lived here in Fort Smith but left the car in Lincoln to use when he came there. But it soon got out of order and no one could fix it.

Bessie's father owned the Livery Barn and had about 20 fine buggy teams, and believe me, when we were married we used one of the teams hitched to a surrey with the fringe on top. Elsie Smith and Bill Hanks went with us out in the country 1½ miles to the minister's home to be married. I have told people it was a "shotgun" wedding — but it wasn't!

Della and Lacy King live in Pico Rivera, California. He is about my age and retired from the Pacific Electric Streetcar Shops in Compton, California. He was foreman over the brake department of streetcars and buses. They were both related to Bessie and me, cousins. We have often visited them and they have come here and visited us. They were our early childhood friends and we have kept the friendship for all these years.

I only reached the sixth grade in school and started to work. The first business I ever had was when my father bought me a small mule and had the blacksmith make a large two-wheel cart. I was the City Drayman from the depot to the business houses. I did well in the dray business until I loaded the cart with 12 cases of eggs, and when I backed the cart up to the depot platform the shafts came loose from the harness in front and turned them loose. They flew up and the back end of the cart went down — and I delivered scrambled eggs and my dray business was bankrupt.

I then worked in the depot carrying the mail to the post office and back and putting the freight in the depot at the close of the day. I was also learning telegraphy at that time and railroad bookkeeping. I got \$10.00 a month salary. We had six months with no school.

I had a girl friend and had written her a letter in our school. The teacher got the letter and called me up and spanked me across his knees with the lid from a chalk box and this was in front of this girl — Bessie Howard; it was very embarrassing!

The next railroad job I had I was 15 years old and a man living in Fayetteville was on the Board of my father's bank and when he came out on the train he would always have lunch or dinner at our home. He was Vice-President of the Kansas City and Memphis Railway (KC&M) and he talked my father into letting me go to Rogers, Arkansas, and work in the general office as an office boy. The job paid \$35.00 a month. The KC&M was a very short line from Rogers to Siloam Springs and a branch off the line at Cave Springs went to Tontitown and Fayetteville and another branch to a summer resort at Monte Ne, which was owned by Coin

Harvey. A nationally known person, Mr. W.R. Felkner was President of the railroad and President of the National Bank. The KC&M general office was over the bank on the second floor and one of the first assignments to me was to go down the railroad tracks to his barn every morning and draw water from the well and water his white mule. I delivered telegrams and freight bills over to the Frisco Depot and made regular trips to the post office four times a day to deliver and get the U.S. mail.

In only a couple of weeks the Agent at Springtown died and they sent me there as Agent where I remained until school started back home and I returned home.

The next year I got a letter from the Superintendent of Missouri and North Arkansas Railway wanting me to come to Eureka Springs and be checked in as Agent at Grandview, Arkansas, as the Agent was sick with pneumonia. Grandview was five miles south of Eureka Springs, and at the south end of the railroad tunnel through the high mountain. It was a telegraph station. I had learned a little telegraphy and I was called a ham operator then but I made out until the Agent got well. This railroad was about 125 miles long and ran from Seligman, Missouri, through Berryville, Harrison, Eureka Springs, and wound up at Leslie, Arkansas, which was mostly a timber line when white oak timber was a No. 1 product over many states. Leslie, Arkansas, is near Heber Springs, or Clinton, Arkansas.

Before our marriage, Bessie worked extra running the telephone switchboard at Lincoln. The board was the old cord punch-in type. Bessie is an extra good Bible student and has read the Bible over many times and any time she wanted help she would call our Pastor, Dr. Hefner.

I was 17 years of age and Bessie was 14 years of age when we decided to get married. I had just gotten a job as Agent for the Frisco Railway at LeFlore, Oklahoma, 50 miles south of Fort Smith.

We lived in the Negro Waiting Room of the depot as no colored people lived in that area. The people there were mostly Choctaw Indians and many of them couldn't speak English. Everyone was good to us as we were both still children. I got a salary of \$45.00 a month and we saved about one-half of that. LeFlore County was a low area around the town and nearby a large river. They had no hog laws in the county seat and it was an unhealthy place to live, so malaria forced us back to Lincoln, Arkansas, after about a year there.

Since jobs were scarce in Lincoln, Bessie and I got jobs at the Canning Factory. Bessie ran the capping machine and I helped on the cooking boilers. My father built us a new home near our family home place, where we lived until I decided to finish learning telegraphy. Dad financed us and we moved to Topeka, Kansas, where I attended the Santa Fe Railway School. Bessie worked in the Woolworth ten cent store until I completed my railway work. The Santa Fe then sent us to Rowe, New Mexico, at the top of Glorieta Mountain where I was the third trick telegraph operator and worked from 10:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. All trains from both directions came to Rowe with two engines. They would take on coal and water there and return. The only place we could find to live there was in a two-story dobbie house. The sister of the Governor of New Mexico owned the house and she lived on the lower floor. She was Mexican.

The weather was extremely cold in Rowe and it snowed almost every night. Bessie came down with the flu — no doctor and 45 miles to one — and only three white families lived in Rowe. Bessie's doctor was our landlady, the Mexican widow. She made up the medicine for Bessie and it worked. Soon thereafter I resigned from the operator job and bought tickets back to Kansas City, Missouri, after my father wired me the money.

On our arrival in Kansas City I wired Mr. C.H. Baltzell, the Superintendent of the Frisco at Fort Smith, for a job and if he had one to wire a pass to Bessie and me. In less than an hour the pass was wired to me in care of the ticket office at Union Station. On my return here he sent us to Clayton, Oklahoma, temporarily, and we lived in a boxcar beside the railroad tracks, and after three or four months I was transferred to Boswell, Oklahoma, as Cashier and Operator.

I had seniority then and bid in the job for operator and agent at Arthur City, Texas. It was a busy railroad operation, lots of cotton and cottonseed moved out by rail and all freight and express for many inland towns moved into Arthur City.

In 1917 I volunteered in the U.S. Army Signal Corps and Bessie got a job as a clerk at the depot with me. She got \$165.00 a month and I was making about \$350.00 a month. We were putting \$400.00 a month into a savings account with 3% interest in the bank at Paris, Texas. This was hard to give up. We had bought a second hand Ford touring car, but we sold it and shipped our household goods back to Lincoln where Bessie was to remain until I returned from the Army.

I was sent to New Orleans, Louisiana, where I had training as a wireless operator and after I completed my training they used me as an instructor. I remained there until the war was over. Bessie came to New Orleans a few months before the war was over and we rented a room for her at a cost of \$100.00 a month. That was pretty high for us as my salary in the Army was only \$30.00 a month. On the 11th of November, five Army and Navy camps paraded down Canal Street — and I was one of them. I was discharged about a month after that.

When I returned to my home in Lincoln after the war, my father gave us a small fruit farm in the incorporation of Lincoln. We kept the farm until after his death.

I wired Mr. C.H. Baltzell, Superintendent of the Frisco, for a job. He sent a letter to my home town of Lincoln, Arkansas, and advised Bessie and me to return in 15 days to Arthur City where we would both have our jobs back. This was greatly appreciated and I never forgot the favor.

When Mr. Baltzell was retired at the age of 70, he came to me and asked that I watch out for some kind of a job for him, as he was tired of sitting around the house. The following week I called him to come to my office at 1206 Garrison Avenue, Fort Smith, that I wanted to talk to him. By that time I had an office fixed up for him with new furniture in it and his name painted on the door with the title "Safety Director." On his arrival I took him around to his office. He hugged my neck and tears came to his eyes. He remained on my payroll as Safety Director until his death.

I may state Mr. Baltzell in his early days was Train Master for Ringling Brothers Barnum Bailey Circus. This circus came to Fort Smith and the day it arrived he went to my home on South 22nd Street and made a date with Bessie to pick her and our two children up at 6:00 o'clock the following morning as the train was arriving early that morning and would be unloading out on North 6th Street near where Trusty School was. He knew all the actors, clowns, and the owners of the circus. He took them into the tents where the actors were, they knew him and hugged his neck. They all ate in the circus dining room tent. I got my family back that night after the show was over.

Our first child was born while we were at Arthur City. Bessie went into Paris and remained there in the home of our doctor's secretary for about ten days prior to the birth of Roberta Kaye, which was at St. Joseph Infirmary at Paris.

In 1923 I bid in the Agency of the Frisco at Bonanza, Arkansas, and we moved there. Our second child, Wilma Fay, was born at Bonanza. Dr. Bergold from Bonanza was the doctor. Later we moved to Fort Smith and lived on South 19th Street, about two blocks north of Dodson Avenue. When we moved to Fort Smith, Dr. C.S. Means was our family doctor until his death. We were close friends and we both were Elders in our Central Presbyterian Church.

I drove my Ford back and forth to Bonanza until I resigned and went into business for myself.

I had coal interests in the Jenny Lind coal field and opened my office as a Coal Jobber in the First National Bank Building. Later I went into the oil business as an independent jobber and wholesaler and built my bulk plant on the suburban railroad tracks on Midland Blvd. I handled Shell products and purchased all my products and sold them to filling stations throughout the area. When I sold out the oil business, I had the largest gallonage of any of the oil companies in Fort Smith. I sold to the Louisiana Oil Refining Company for \$165,000.00 plus inventory.



R.K. and Bessie Rodgers

In 1932 I went into the taxicab business at 1206 Garrison Avenue, Fort Smith, and had 28 Checkered Cabs. The fare was 10¢ for one to four people in a zone of 25 blocks, and 15¢ beyond to the city limits. Profits were almost nil, but we kept open day and night. We employed only high school boys as drivers. I remember during those hard times we had three University grads and two ministers driving cabs.

In 1933 the OG&E who owned the streetcars in Fort Smith gave notice they were pulling the streetcars out as they were losing \$15,000.00 a year. I filed an application with the City Commission for a franchise to run buses. I was the only applicant for the franchise and got a 15-year exclusive franchise. G.C. Hardin was my attorney. I started with 10 buses. The population then was about 20,000. I kept expanding the service and put new lines on in every direction. The fare was 8¢ or two tokens for 15¢, and a round trip ticket anywhere in the city for 10¢ between 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. During the war, we handled over 30,000 passengers in one single day from 5:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. We were running six large 40 passenger diesel buses on the Van Buren run and three on the South Fort Smith run, besides our other runs. When I sold out we had 30 buses and I sold for \$465,000.00.

In 1939 I bought five farms in Crawford County, 600 acres, eight miles from Fort Smith. We cleaned them up and fenced all of them. I built a fine stone residence, and built my daughter Fay a home in the same yard. They were modern with electricity, gas and sewer. We had around 400 head of cattle, built a cattle barn that was 300 feet long, and two silos, and a 32-acre lake that was well stocked with fish.

We had three milk cows for the use of the three families living on the Ranch, known as (R), and branded our cattle with this brand. We raised our own hogs, killed them and smoked our own meat. We had a big garden for all. We built a nice horse barn and had five riding horses. We had about 600 acres of land — and 260 acres near the Pump Station of Van Buren Water Department, between Lees Creek and the Arkansas River. We kept a farmer on this and raised 40 acres of alfalfa we used on our ranch. We had about 100 acres in green beans and spinach, and ran some cattle. We raised sugar cane and green corn to fill our silos with at the ranch.

Our home was on a hill and Lees Creek, which we and our many friends used as our swimming hole, was only a few hundred yards in front of our home. We always had company

on Saturday night and had our square dances on our front porch which was 20 feet wide and 43 feet long and had a tile floor. We would at times have 15 or 20 couples and would square dance until midnight. We always had a large Christmas tree and a big party for our friends.

In 1952, our granddaughter, Linda Blevins, was old enough to start to school and her mother and father were talking about moving to town, so we decided to sell the ranch and build our home in Fort Smith. I purchased six acres from Bill Echols on Park Avenue and built our home at 5601 Park Avenue. I built a home for my daughter, Fay, at 5403 Park Avenue. We all still live in these homes at this time — July 2, 1975.²

I sold the ranch and some of the cattle we had to Mrs. Montgomery from Springfield, Missouri. She was the mother of Nancy Orr. We didn't make any money on the deal, we sold it at a bargain. She was a fine lady and agreed to keep the ranch up. She passed away a year or two ago and the ranch went to her daughter, Nancy Orr, where she still lives and states she will live there forever.

In 1935 I organized the Checkered Transfer & Storage Company. It has grown from four trucks to 30 trucks. I am President of the company and Woody Rodgers, my nephew, who started with the company in 1939, is Vice-President and has done a good job. I gave him one-half of the stock in the company. He operates locally and long-distance in moving household furniture. We also have a moving job in Canada.

At the death of Herd Miller, who was on the board of First Federal Savings and Loan, they elected me to take his place. At the death of Oscar Fentress, who was President, the Board elected me as President and I served over 20 years. Then I was elected chairman of the Board and now remain in that position. Time has slipped away so fast — this is 1975 — and the Association has grown from \$10,000,000.00 to \$149,000,000.00.

After the death of "Mike" Sicard's father, I was elected to the Board of Directors of the First National Bank and have served continuously in that capacity for the last 20 years. It seems they can't get rid of me!

In 1945 Bert Harper and I purchased the Fort Smith Stockyards. Bert died in 1950 and I have been President of the Yards since that time. Bert was also President of the Arkansas Oklahoma Gas Company, and the Board elected me as Chairman of the Board. I remained until we sold it out in 1953, and I have remained as a Board member until this day. The

buyer was Witt Stephens and he insisted that I remain on the board. This is my 22nd year they have had to put up with me!

In 1936, I and my attorney, G.C. Hardin, went into the coal mining business at Bonanza, Arkansas, and had the best equipped line in the State of Arkansas, or Oklahoma, with a production of 1200 tons daily. We worked over 400 men at the mines. We had a steel tippie that was electric operated, and produced five different grades of coal. When St. Louis put in the smoke ordinance, we shipped the first train load of coal (40 cars) into St. Louis. The mine worked out and we sold the equipment to various mines. The shaft was 365 feet deep and the steel tippie which went to Colorado was 94 feet high and had two elevators.

Bert Harper and I started the first combined Rodeo and Livestock Show here in 1936. I was chairman and he was the Arena Director. The board consisted of: Frank Youmans, President of the Arkansas Valley Trust Company; Al Henderson, Dr. Pepper Company; John England, Owner, Goldman Hotel; Harry Robinson, Manager, *Southwest American* newspaper; Lewis Cohn, Fort Smith Office Supply. We had Collier Wenderoth head up the Arkansas Livestock Show; he did a splendid job. The first two Livestock Shows were held in the Mule Barn at the Stockyards, and the next three were held at Andrews Field, where we put on the Rodeo. We always made money with the Rodeo and spent money on the Livestock Show.

In 1947 Morgan Wright was made Manager of OG&E and he helped secure the 17 acres of the old Electric Park for a small sum of \$7,500.00 and we started the improvements of building cattle sheds, hog barn, dairy barn, chicken barn and the rodeo arena. Improvements have continued since that time. The property today could not be replaced for one million dollars.

In 1974 we started to incorporate the Rodeo and Livestock Show into a non-profit organization and I am one of the 21 Trustees of the Association. I have been honored by the group naming the park "Kay Rodgers Park." Our original group has done well and turned over to the new Trustee group \$94,000.00.

I have taken a lot of interest in Masonic work and the Masonic Temple. I have served twice as President of Masonic Home Association. When the Temple was built in 1928, I served during the hard times. From 1932 to 1942 we could not pay the interest on what we owed on the Temple. I was elected as President in 1946 or 1947, and remained until all debts were paid and the

Temple was clear. They have been good to me as I was elected to receive the Honorary Thirty-Third Degree — the highest degree in Masonry. I served seven years as Venerable Master of the Western Arkansas Scottish Rite Bodies in Fort Smith. We have a membership of 3700, and I remain as a member of the Executive Committee in charge of finances. They have in our local Bodies over a half million dollars and 17 acres of a beautiful site in this city worth over \$100,000.00.

I am a Presbyterian USA and have been from childhood, as a boy, in the Cane Hill Church. I served my church here as Elder, Vice-Moderator of the Board and a Delegate to the General Assembly at Columbus, Ohio, in 1940. I also served on the Board of The College of the Ozarks, Clarksville, Arkansas — a Presbyterian college — since 1942, was President of the Board of Trustees for over 20 years, and recently was elected a Lifetime member.

In 1942 I bought a 1/4 interest in the Alma Canning Plant for Bessie and in her name. Mr. G.C. Hardin had 1/4 interest, Clib Barton had 1/8 interest, Orval Hall had 1/8 interest and "Mike" Sicard had 1/4 interest. We bought the plant from Claud Alexander. Bessie cleared \$20,000.00 on this deal.

About 1945 Dr. Holt, Manager and Administrator of Sparks Hospital, came to me and wanted me to serve on the Board of Directors of Sparks Hospital. Dr. Holt was our family doctor then and I couldn't turn him down. I was elected and served about 11 years.

Sparks was then in the old building across the street and had 75 beds. Mr. W.H. Johnson, Vice-President of Merchants National Bank, was President of the Board. We learned of the Hill Burton Act passed by Congress, where they would furnish about 50% of the cost of a new hospital and its equipment. We filed an application for the new unit and it was approved. The old hospital had saved up about \$165,000.00 and we had a drive for more money and raised about \$200,000.00 but that was not enough. We had the plans drawn, but it was necessary to borrow about \$400,000.00 and we tried every place to find the loan. Dr. Holt and I went to Memphis, also to Little Rock, and talked with banks and insurance companies but had no luck.

About a month after that, I was talking with "Tiny" Gardner of the Arkansas Valley Trust Company and he told me to write to a certain man, who was Loan Officer for the Massachusetts Life Insurance Company at Kansas City, Missouri. I called him by phone instead of writing and he said he would come

down and look us over, which he did. Dr. Holt and I spent about two days with him and made out the application for the loan, with the assistance of Harry Warner, attorney, who was a member of the Board.

This man returned to Kansas City with all papers and blueprints of the new hospital stating they would be sent to their home office where the Board would have to make the decision. After a lapse of about three weeks, he called me and said the loan was approved. So we placed the job out for bids and J.K. Fraser & Sons was the low bidder. After breaking ground and the work got started, Mr. W.H. Johnson passed away and I was elected President of the Board, and during the construction period we had 11 strikes of different Unions that closed the job down. It seems like I was in arguments for a year with Union officials and the contractor. The last one was with Western Electric Company who installed all large operations and switchboards for Bell Telephone Company.

When the hospital was 90% completed and their electric men had come here to install the switchboard and other telephone equipment, I will never forget in the conference that Mr. Ramsey, Superintendent of our public schools and also a member of our Sparks Board, was with me on this committee, when the workers threatened to leave, with the job unfinished, and go to another job in Texas if we did not keep the building open for them on Sundays, and a man under our supervision to remain with them at each point where they were working. They refused to take a key to the building and proceed. After a two hour argument I told them to get their tools and get out — that we were going to open the hospital in about a week, and that we would keep someone in the switchboard room and tell everyone the Western Electric employees struck and left the hundreds of wires open in the switchboard room. Believe me, this put them back to work and it was completed for the opening.

We moved the patients across the street into our new unit, about 65 of them. Our top rate for a single room in the new unit was \$5.00 a day and \$3.00 for a double room and \$2.00 a day for a ward bed.

In 1951 we decided to build Sparks Manor and we got 60% of the cost from U.S. Hill Burton Act. I put on a drive and raised \$250,000.00. That was the largest amount of any drive that had ever been made at that time. We borrowed the rest from the Massachusetts Life Insurance Company. I made the deal with the City of Fort Smith for the land. They let us have it at their

cost, which was \$1500.00. Sparks Manor was completed and dedicated in 1953, with 75 beds.

Dr. Holt often visited me at my office. He directed the operation of the hospital and the rates. He had retired from practicing medicine but was always interested in the operation and its success. Dr. Krock and Dr. Crigler always for many years thanked me for helping to get the first unit built. Now it has increased to 550 beds.

I served on the Board of the Community Chest, both as Chairman and head of the annual drive on two separate occasions.

I belong to the Kiwanis Club and have for the last 15 or 20 years; also the Noon Civics Club and a member of the American Legion for the last 25 or 30 years.

I was honored by the Exchange Club with the "Golden Deeds" award, a beautiful plaque for my home. This high honor I may not have deserved.

The DeMolay Boys of America honored me with the Legion of Honor Degree, which is the highest degree. I served a three year term on the Fort Smith Boys Club.

I served on the Board of the Boy Scouts for three years as President and helped to locate Boy Scout Camp Orr and construct the facilities there.

I was appointed by Governor Carl Bailey as Chairman of the Arkansas State Mining Board in 1940 and served four years. Then Homer Adkins was elected and I resigned as I thought he was too fast and would make a sorry Governor — and he did — one of the worst.

In 1962 I was appointed to the Oil and Gas Commission by Governor Orval Faubus and served that board two terms, 10 years, and it was so hard on me at my age to get up at 3:00 a.m. and go to El Dorado or Magnolia for a 10:00 o'clock meeting and to return home at about 9:00 p.m. that night, so I gave it up. I did take a chauffeur to drive my car but I didn't file claims for travel expense. I felt I was doing something good for our State. I always represented the land owners' problems on the Board, as they always needed help and didn't understand the fine print on the lease agreements.

In 1941 I was appointed by the Governor as Chairman of the Draft Board, No. 2, in Sebastian County, which included everything except what was in the Fort Smith city limits. We had three people on our board and we employed Martha Hines as secretary. We would meet every Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. and I can remember sometimes our meetings would go until midnight. This was all gratis — no pay.

It was a hard problem when we started drafting married men who were 44 years of age and had three or four children.

I'll never forget when we made an error — a girl came in one morning to meet with the Draft Board from Greenwood. She was carrying a baby and she had a newspaper in her hand that stated married men with children would not be inducted in the Army until after January 1st the following year, and she said her husband had been drafted two weeks before and had left.

We immediately checked up and found on his registration papers that he had failed to list his children in the space provided — but he had placed the name of this child in another place in his papers. Of course, we overlooked it when going over his papers. I immediately contacted the Headquarters in Little Rock and told them about this mistake we had made and that I thought the boy should be returned. He stated he would call me back and did in about two hours. They found the boy had already been sworn in at an Army camp and given his uniform.

I demanded on account of the error I had made, that the boy be returned to his home until after January 1st on furlough, which was done, and the boy was given transportation back home. He was sent back to the camp after January 1st.

This is about the worst disappointment I had while serving on the Draft Board, except drafting men 44 years of age that had as many as four children — that was hard to do.

I well remember when I was seven or eight years old the Mayor of Lincoln, Mr. John Shannon, gave my brother, Aud, 10¢ a tree to go to Sugar Hill and dig up sugar maple trees and set them out in the park there which was in the center of the business district. I went along with him. The trees are now very large and most beautiful in the fall of the year when the leaves turn red. This was a real project 71 years ago, the result of which remains and they are so outstanding.

In the early days my father built the Lyric Theatre in Lincoln. He had a mill there that was run by gasoline engine, and the first electric lights in Lincoln were in this theatre. He placed a dynamo on a large engine to produce the electric power for the movie. I operated the movie machine and Bessie took up the tickets. The admission was 5¢ and 10¢ and Saturday night show only.

I think I should cover my father's life and my mother's life. Both of their parents and grandparents came to Arkansas from Tennessee and they homesteaded 260 acres of land about four or five miles south of Cane Hill, near the town of Morrow, which they called Fly Creek.

My mother's maiden name was Mary Ellen Reed. She passed away at our home in Lincoln at age 85. My father passed away at 90 years of age, after spending six months in the Prairie Grove Hospital. He lived with my brother, Claud, in his old home place until his death. He and Mother were rigid Republicans and he would have taken me out of his will if he had known I voted in the Democrat primary. He was considered one of the average wealthy men of Washington County in his day and time.

My father was an orphan child. His father, George D. Rodgers,¹ died before he was born and his mother, Caroline (Shannon) Rodgers, died at childbirth. He had no brothers or sisters and was raised by his grandmother, Jane (Robinson) Rodgers. She was the widow of Dr. William Rodgers³ and was considered wealthy. She had a large farm on Fly Creek and eight slaves. A colored slave girl looked after him. She evidently made it rough on him, as he never liked a Negro, and said he would never employ one to even clean the outdoor toilet.

When the war was on, the Army sent an Army wagon after Dad and his grandmother and took them to Fayetteville. They lived in two rooms in a home on the corner of Dixon Street and College Avenue. They would go over on the Hill where the University is now located and watch the battle of Prairie Grove. After the war was over they took them back home, and the road at that time went through the battle ground. Dad jumped off the wagon and picked up part of a rifle, the rifle stock was gone. He also got a cannon ball that had never been fired and threw both into the feed box of the wagon. He held on to the cannon ball until near death. My brother was fixing the fence around the back yard and dug it up. He carried it in the house to show it to Dad. He told him to get that thing out of the house — it was dangerous to keep around — and to bury it. I finally became the owner of the cannon ball and took it out to Camp Chaffee for inspection and unloading. They said the same thing — to get that thing out of there — that it was dangerous. I had Woody Rodgers go out on the Arkansas River bridge halfway across and drop it in the river and that was the last of the cannon ball. It weighed about 10 or 15 pounds. I hope it never shows up again.

My father, when he was only one year old, was kidnapped. His grandmother was a very religious Presbyterian and she would have a slave hook up a team to a surrey and she would take the slave girl and drive to church. The name of the church was Bethursby, where there is a cemetery and her husband (the doctor) was buried there. It was located just off Cane Hill-Dutch Mills Road about one-half mile. This church is not there anymore, but a large sign for the cemetery still remains on the Bush Valley Road. The colored girl while taking care of my father, kept him on a pallet out in the church yard under the shade of a tree, and two persons by the name of Shannon took him away into the Indian Territory. His grandmother went to Fayetteville and employed a lawyer by the name of Walker and he went to Washington, and the President worked through the Indian Agency and Court at Tahlequah and got him back in about six months.

I have a fine family. My wife, Bessie, has gone all the way to help me and raise our girls — Fay Blevins and Roberta Kaye Pevehouse. Fay had two children — Tommy Blevins, now married and has two children; and Linda Blackwell has three children, a boy and one pair of twins (a boy and a girl) five years of age and they look very much alike. Roberta Kaye has two children — Rodger and Bob Ed Pevehouse, and they each have a boy and a girl. So Bessie and I have been highly blessed with our family.



Rodgers Family - Christmas 1953. Left to right: Wilma Fay Blevins, Bessie, R.K. and Roberta Kaye Pevehouse.

Yes, I have been highly blessed and thankful for these 79 years. My wife, Bessie, had an accident 2½ years ago, breaking her leg, then she broke it again the second time. After four operations she is able to walk some but she is still crippled. This has been the most worry both of us have had in the last 62 years, but we have been fortunate at that.

We have traveled in every state except the New England states, and the State of Washington and Oregon. We made a trip to Mexico in 1947 and decided we did not want to see any more foreign countries. I am the only one left living in my family. Bessie has three sisters living: Hazel Wright and Virgie Lane of Fort Smith and Lucille Shannon of Corona del Mar, California.

This has been a long story. I might close by stating none of our family has been in jail. We may have over-parked or run a stoplight and been caught a time or two, but we have been very lucky. Bessie and I have many friends too numerous to mention, and some of our very close friends have passed on but they will never be forgotten.

I've written this history in longhand and my secretary, Ruth Sanders, is having trouble reading it to copy on the typewriter. She has been secretary for me and also Bessie for 19 years, and we both admire her for the patience she has had with us.

SUPPLEMENT AND FINAL ISSUE

After taking two weeks to put the History in place, I overlooked something not listed in the first issue and if you think it worthwhile, you might place it in the back of your first issue as page 28, 29, 30 and 31.

Back to The College of the Ozarks, I was awarded in 1959 an Honorary Doctor of Business degree. This, of course, is the highest degree one can receive and many of my close friends remarked that this was the first Doctor's degree anyone with a sixth grade education had received.

Woody Rodgers and I started in the furniture retail and wholesale business as partners in 1946 at 222 Garrison Avenue. When we were about ready to open for business, Mr. Woodrow Weathers came to us and wanted to operate the store. He had just been released from the Navy and he had served a long span in World War 2. He had some experience in the retail business at Coal Hill, Arkansas, where he was reared. We employed Woodrow and he has been on the job

now 29 years. A few weeks after we opened for business, a representative of the Veterans Administration called on us and stated he had a young man living at South Fort Smith, who before entering the Army worked at the South Fort Smith Smelter. He received a severe wound by being shot through the head while serving in the Army, and was given a year to live. It all happened in the Battle of the Bulge in Germany. He said he had two children and was very nervous on account of not having anything to do, and offered to pay a part of his wages over a six-months period, if we would take him on as Shipping Clerk. This boy was Clem O. Rockwood. We employed him and the doctors, as well as the Army, were fooled, as he is still on the job, and he and Mr. Weathers fully run and operate the Rodgers Furniture Store without any supervision of either Woody Rodgers or me.

I should have said more about the Stockyards — that I remain as President and my son-in-law, Bea T. Blevins, has worked there for the last 21 years, and has worked up to Manager, and is doing a good job. Bill Rodgers, ex-Chief of Police, was employed about two years ago as Assistant under Jess Merrill in the office — but he seemed to like hearing the cows “bawl” and when caught up with his office work, would go back in the Yards and help during the auction sales to pen cattle. We have imposed on him the last year — he has been remaining until the sale closed, many times until 3:00 a.m. the following day — and sometimes he didn't get away until 8:00 a.m. or 9:00 a.m. the following day getting all the shipments ready for the trucks to deliver to the final destination.

Bea T. Blevins has been doing the work for several years that Bill is now doing, and it is the roughest job I know of around a Stockyard. I only own one-half of the Stockyards; Ned Harper, Bert Harper's son, owns one-fourth interest, and Mrs O.C. Morgan of Montesano, Washington, owns one-eighth interest. She is Bert Harper's sister, and a widow and has five children. One-eighth of the stock has been placed in trust.

My assignment to clear Coke Hill in 1956, by the Board of the Chamber of Commerce, was a tough assignment. It has been discussed many times previously. I submitted to the Chamber of Commerce Board that my only plan for clearing the property was to buy the squatters out, as they had retained the area for many years and had squatters' rights. We agreed to make up

one-third of the money from business contributions, one-third from the City and one-third from the County.

There were about 30 families in all. Some of them were living in old bus bodies, some in cardboard huts, and almost any kind of material that could be put together. Five of the total had squatted on the Missouri Pacific R.R. right-of-way and they had been there so long the railroad company couldn't order them away. There was only one decent house in fair condition on the list and I bought that one first. They called the owner of it the "Mayor of Coke Hill."

The last purchase I made was for four houses, owned by Roy Estes, who lived on North 3rd Street. He couldn't read or write — neither could his wife. When it came to signing the deed, they had to make an "X" before the Notary Public, and when I gave Mr. Estes the check as payment, he asked my secretary, Ruth Sanders, if she would go with them to the bank and help him get the money. This job took over a period of about five months. The quit claim deeds were made to the City of Fort Smith, and the City gave the deed to the United States Park Service, along with the deed for the Judge Parker Courthouse and grounds around it.

Rough assignments seem to bless me! When the City decided to build the second lake for our water supply, known as Lake Shepherd Springs, the Mayor "Happy" Hestand talked me into taking the job of buying out the 27 property owners, and moving the cemetery, containing 486 graves, to a new location out of the lake area. This assignment lasted over six months

and buying a new location for the cemetery, to please the Cemetery Trustees, and the clearing of trees and bushes was no easy job. I assure you I was not present the days the contractor moved the graves, but I had bought small grave markers and distributed them in the area and with the Trustees. Most all of the graves were marked with the name on the cardboard which was on the small metal marker placed by the relatives of those graves to be moved. This assignment was gratis and with no expense. The City Commission in due time gave me a letter of appreciation.

My family insisted that I add this summary, so you can add it to the History you already have.

FOOTNOTES

1. Family lived in Cane Hill Twp. in 1900 Washington County, Arkansas, Census.
Rodgers, William, father b. December, 1854
Mary E., mother b. February, 1854
James W., son b. February 1873
Aud, son b. May 1881
Claud, son b. December 1884
William R., son b. May 1888
Sarah F., daughter b. July 1890
Benjamin H., son b. July 1893
Robert Kay, son b. December 1895
2. Bessie and R.K. Rodgers both deceased.
Death dates: Bessie, 17 June 1981; R.K., 16 July 1982.
3. 1860 Washington County, Arkansas, Census:
Rodgers, Jane, 58, b. NC
William, 26, b. TN
Rebecca, 19, b. AR
William (grandson), 5, b. AR

Annual Business Sponsors

✓ **Baldor Electric Company**
P.O. Box 2400
Fort Smith, AR 72902

✓ **City of Fort Smith**
623 Garrison
Fort Smith, AR 72901

✓ **City National Bank**
1222 Rogers Avenue
Fort Smith, AR 72901

✓ **Coca-Cola Bottling Co.**
3600 Phoenix
Fort Smith, AR 72903

✓ **Fort Smith Convention and Visitors Center**
2 North B Street
Fort Smith, AR 72901

✓ **Holt-Krock Clinic**
P.O. Box 2418
Fort Smith, AR 72902-2418

✓ **Spiro State Bank**
Spiro
Oklahoma 74959

✓ **Taliano's Restaurant**
201 North 14th Street
Fort Smith, AR 72901

The First Arkansas-Oklahoma State Fair

Sarah Fitzjarrald

The first Arkansas-Oklahoma State Fair was held in Fort Smith from October 16th through the 21st, 1911. This achievement was brought about in the same way that all great enterprises are accomplished. A group of very dedicated "movers and shakers" got together and then got to work.

On February 19th, according to the Fort Smith newspaper, *Southwest American* (from which this account is taken), an executive committee was chosen, as well as soliciting committees. These soliciting committees were chosen from Fort Smith; Barling; Lavaca; Central; Bloomer; Route 3, Fort Smith; Jenny Lind; Hackett; Greenwood; Charleston; Washburn; Milltown; Dayton; Huntington; Mansfield; Hartford; West Hartford; Peoria; Midland and a committee at large.

On February 22, the Fort Smith soliciting committee was named: Horace Rogers, chairman, Will Luce and Dr. J.N. Foster. The soliciting committees were formed to sell stock subscriptions in the Fair Association Enterprise. The first two days of selling stock were disappointing, but on February 26th the newspaper noted, "Interstate Fair Appears Certain."

On March 5th an appeal was made to potential stockholders in the form of an advertisement, asking for \$5,000, with shares to be sold at \$10 each — 50 percent upon organization of the Fair enterprise and the balance payable in six months, no doubt because the stock was not selling as well as expected.

Three days later, the newspaper reported that \$18,000 worth of shares had been sold, which was not quite enough. The agenda set forth was to buy the site, get out a premium list and make the necessary buildings' improvements.

On March 19th the Arkansas-Oklahoma Fair Association was organized. Officers elected were Robert Meek, president; H.C. Spaulding, first vice president; R.C. Cumbie, second vice president; James Grier, treasurer and Glen Fleming, secretary. The board of directors consisted of the foregoing officers plus W.P. Andrus, Will Luce and Sol C. Cohn.

The site was to be selected later. However, the newspaper, dated April 3rd, not only

published the dates of the fair, October 16th through the 21st, but also a premium list for livestock and agricultural products. Printed in large type, it read "Arkansas-Oklahoma Fair — The Great Agricultural and Live Stock Fair and INTER-STATE EXPOSITION."

The site selected was just two miles south and one-fourth mile east of the Goldman Hotel. Fronting on Jenny Lind (Macadamized) Road, and four blocks south of the city limits, the plot contained 54 acres and cost \$8,950, average price per acre was \$168.75, as cheap as farm land which was selling for \$200 and \$300 per acre in the same vicinity.

The site was made up of the south 40 acres of the J.W. Buscamp 80 and 14 acres off the Ayers and Company tract, the 14 acres adjoining the 40 acres on the east.¹

While negotiations had not yet been made with the Fort Smith Light and Traction Company to extend the streetcar line on 21st Street South to accommodate fair goers, there was the Fort Smith Suburban railroad that ran through the entire length of the site on the south, thus affording the necessary transportation facilities for materials, livestock, exhibits, etc.

Another advantage of the site was a water main which extended to within half a mile of the grounds, making it easy to get an adequate water supply at an expenditure of not more than \$500.

The best way to describe the beauty of the fair site is to quote from the newspaper:

"The great fair and exposition will be held on a beautiful stretch of comparatively level land, dotted over its entire scope with umbrageous elms and oaks and covered with a velvety carpet of virgin sod. The land has never been farmed and is most attractive to the eye. A creek of clear water winds its way across it on the south. This will be converted into a picturesque lake, which can be done at small cost, as the dirt will be needed for banking the race track. The fair site is easily accessible from all directions. A road connects the Jenny Lind and Texas roads near the tract. And there is the Cliff Drive, a short distance to the south and connecting with the Greenwood road and other country thoroughfares leading south and east from and to Fort Smith.

"There is to be a half mile race track of the best construction possible. The natural beauty of the place will be preserved as far as possible and only such of the shade trees as are necessary to the working out of details and placing the improvements will be destroyed. Outside the buildings there will be shade for all and plenty of velvety turf over which the children may romp and play and be content."

(For the benefit of those not acquainted with Fort Smith — the location of the fair site, so beautifully described by the early writer, is the present site of Ramsey Junior High School.) The following months were filled with preparation for the fair.

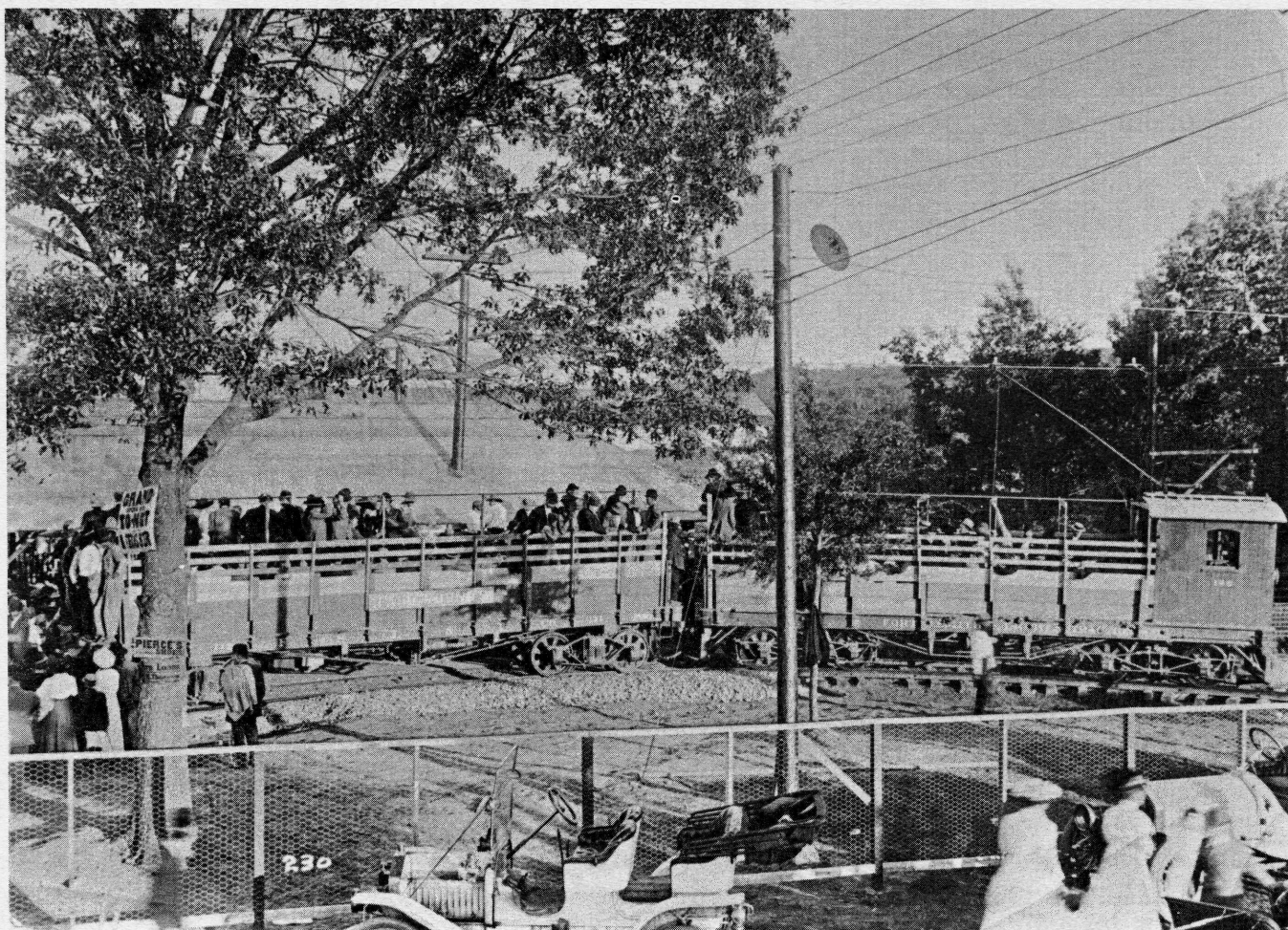
On August 22, a premium list for the womens' division was published in a half-page layout. Among the list of items were bedspreads, quilts, afghans, plain sewing, knitting, home-made drawn work, babies outfits, white embroidery, crocheting, lace, tatting, bead work, juvenile work and old ladies work. The department was open to ladies and girls living in the states of Louisiana, Arkansas, Texas, and Oklahoma.

Later, entry fees were published. There were no entry fees except for the winners, who would have 20% of their winning premiums deducted.

Season tickets were on sale at several places in the city at \$2.50, which entitled the holder to one admission into the fair grounds each day between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Night tickets were extra. Thirty-five special boxes in front of the grandstand were for sale at \$5.00 per day or \$25 for the full week. Each box would seat eight people and they could come and go at will.

There was plenty of drinking water distributed over the grounds. Carriages, automobiles and buggies were allowed on the infield of the race track during the races at a charge of 50 cents extra for each vehicle.

Running, pacing and trotting races were held each day commencing at 2:30 p.m. The Wortham-Allen shows furnished attractions for the Midway, plus 20 paid attractions, including a very fine Wild West Show.



Scene at First Arkansas-Oklahoma State Fair. Streetcar has banner, "Fairgrounds Grand Opening Tonight" barely discernible. Courtesy, Bernice Cole.

There were six big free attractions in front of the grandstand each day, and Pain's Great Fireworks Spectacle, "Battle in the Clouds," was a feature each night, commencing on the 17th.

The Fort Smith Light and Traction Company had worked feverishly to acquire the right-of-way and extend its tracks on Twenty-first Street to complete the line on time. Shortly after six o'clock on the 14th, the streetcar made its run on the new tracks. On Sunday morning, the 15th, regular service on the new line was begun. However, large crowds had already been going out to see the new fair grounds.

On the day before the fair opened (Sunday), the newspaper carried the following glowing report:

"With the first official opening of its portals Monday morning at 9 o'clock, followed by an interesting ceremonial that will doubtless mark an epoch in the annals of Fort Smith, the first annual exposition of the Arkansas-Oklahoma Fair Association will be formally inaugurated and dedicated to the educational interests of the community. All things will be in readiness. In the brief space of a few months a primeval forest has been felled and virgin sod destroyed to make way for commanding structures, attractive parkings and driveways and a standard half mile race track that holds out promise of being as modern and as fast as any in the southwest. With an expenditure of less than \$20,000 a wonderful transformation has resulted. It is said that few men could have brought about such a climax as has been accomplished by Secretary Glen Fleming whose arms have at all times been held up by President Robert Meek and a staunch board of directors."

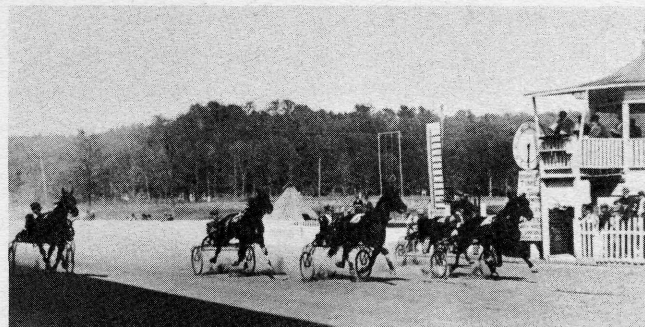
The first day of the fair was Children's Day, with school children attending from Fort Smith and all over western Arkansas. After the invocation by the Rev. F.F. Gibson of the First Baptist Church and the dedicatory address by former State Senator George Sengel of Fort Smith, there was a concert by Ewing's famous Zouave band of 25 pieces. Following that there was an address to the school children by Prof. J.M. Wilson, agricultural department, state university. Finally, there was the formal opening of all departments, including amusements.

At 1:00 p.m. there was a boys' bicycle race; at 1:30, a five mile motorcycle race and at 2:00

p.m. the horse racing began — pace, trot, eighth-mile dash, seven-eighth's mile dash and one-half mile dash.

The race program was interspersed with music and free attractions in front of the grand stand.

This schedule was generally followed during all days of the fair. Except that there was auto and harness racing. The Darby's Electric Park Orchestra performed daily in the Exposition Building while Ewing's famous Zouave band performed daily in the pagoda.



Harness Racing, First Arkansas-Oklahoma State Fair, 1911. Courtesy, Bernice Cole.

On Tuesday, the second day of the fair, J. Walter Gillette, general manager of the Fort Smith Light and Traction Company, won the silver cup in auto racing. There were two other entrants, Pink Dean of the fire department and Gus Boehmer of the Boehmer-Sheridan Auto Company. The cars were raced singly (against the clock). Gillette drove his Buick roadster; Dean drove Dr. Stevensons' Fal-Car; and Boehmer piloted an E.M.F.

Wednesday was declared as "Arkansas and Farmers Day," and drew a crowd of 20,000 enthusiastic fair goers.

Thursday was designated "Drummers and Woodmen's Day," with a great street pageant on Thursday morning in downtown Fort Smith. Later that day, Fair Association President Robert Meek was presented a beautiful bouquet by various officials for his untiring efforts to make the fair a success.

Even though fair attendance had been good during the first few days, Mayor Fagan Bourland proclaimed Friday, the 20th, as Fort Smith Day and asked that downtown businesses close so that the holiday would release working people and others so that they could attend the fair.

By Saturday night, when the fair closed, the citizens of Fort Smith and western Arkansas could rightfully claim that the First Arkansas-Oklahoma State Fair had been a stunning success. It had all the elements of any modern fair. Besides the amusements, exhibits, races, etc., it was most surely "modern." There was even a telephone service on the fair grounds with operators from the central Bell office. Each of the operators was given a day's vacation so they could attend the fair. There were also four pay stations on the grounds to accommodate long distance calls.

As might have been expected, there was rain. It occurred on the Sunday night before the fair opened. But the bright October sun shone on Monday and thereafter. The new race track, which might have suffered disaster from the rain, had an "eight inch clay surface." Whether the clay surface was by nature or design it proved fortunate indeed, as it served on its own as a race track for several years, with or without a fair.

In 1910, the year before the fair, Barney Oldfield broke the automobile speed record on March 16th by racing his Benz automobile at 131.724 miles per hour.² Julia Yadon wrote in her book, "Reflections of Fort Smith,"³ that Oldfield later came to Fort Smith and unofficially broke his world's record, but at the present time that information has yet to be verified. However, Fort Smith has been dotted all over with race tracks through the years and it is highly possible. "Race Tracks" might well become another story for the *Journal*.

Also, our town had begun hosting air shows as early as 1910. According to the *Southwest American* newspaper, J.C. Mars, the "World's Greatest Bird Man," brought his Curtiss Bi-Plane to the ball grounds at Electric Park. It was such an event that there were reduced rates on all the railroads coming into town so people could attend the event.

Mars gave two successful demonstrations in spite of bad weather. He traveled 75 feet in "midair" and made two circular flights in a half-mile circuit, giving him a world's record for making an accurate flight in a circuit of one-half mile as all previous flights had been made in not less than a one-mile circuit.

Mayor W.J. Johnston was master of ceremonies when Mars broke a bottle of wine on the engine of the machine, saying, "I christen the Skylark; may she fly long and high!"

Such was the climate of Fort Smith in those days. Of course, there had been other fairs, including the 1880 fair which was the first Sebastian County Fair. The "movers and shakers" of that era were such men as Judge Isaac Parker, J.S. Williamson, J.R. Kannady, Wm. M. Fishback (later elected as Arkansas Governor in 1892) and W.H. Rogers.

That fair was most likely held on the plot shown on an 1887 map⁴ as being owned by the Fair Association, containing 40 acres located behind the present Wal-Mart store on Midland Boulevard and including the plots of the old Streetcar Barn, the present Midland Bowl, etc. The same grounds were also used as circus and carnival grounds.⁵

However, the First Arkansas-Oklahoma State Fair in 1911 could well be regarded as "the jewel in the crown." There was an air of prosperity and the expectancy of better things to come. And it should come as no surprise that less than a month later, on the weekend of November 3rd, 4th and 5th, there was another air show in the vicinity of Electric Park. Lincoln Beachey brought in his plane, picked up sacks of postal cards, flew them to the post office on South Sixth Street, dropped them over the side to the ground below and gave us the honor of having one of the earliest air-mail flights in the United States. (See the April, 1983, issue of the *Journal* for the complete story.)

Speaking of prosperity and expectancy, when Robert Meek and his board of directors published the dates of the fair and the first premium list on April 3rd, even before the site had been selected, they most assuredly expected a success.

And have it they did!

SOURCE NOTES

1. Copies of warranty deeds, Guaranty Abstract Title Co., 1 North Sixth Street. Courtesy, Mary Joyce Campbell.
2. *The 1969 World Almanac and Book of Facts*, Newspaper Enterprise Association, Inc., Luman H. Long, Editor.
3. "Reflections of Fort Smith," Julia Etter Yadon, Sue Ross Cross and Randall Ross Viguet, Fort Smith Historical Press, 1976.
4. Courtesy, Fort Smith Public Library.
5. Conversations with Gordon Kelley and Florence Skaggs.

Charles Maynard Cooke, Sr.

Mayor of Fort Smith 1891-1892

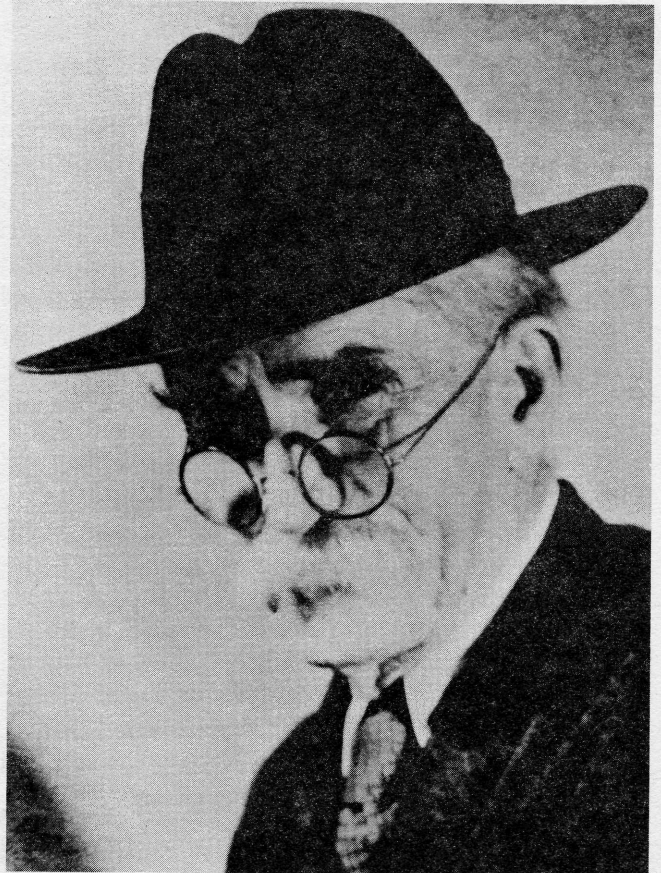
Bernice Cole

Prosperity, enjoyed by a nation as a whole in 1891, was never more evident than in the city of Fort Smith where newly-elected Mayor Charles Maynard Cooke, Sr., took over the helm. Glowing like a jewel in its setting at the juncture of the Poteau and Arkansas Rivers, Fort Smith was firmly entrenched as both an agricultural and manufacturing center. Buildings of brick and stone lined the wide main street, Garrison Avenue. Transportation in the busy river city included carriages, hacks, stage coaches, farm wagons, horseback, ferry boats, steamboats, trolleys and trains. People from both the North and the South, as well as immigrants just arriving in the United States, poured into town. New housing, everything from three room "shotgun" houses, pretty cottages, and stately mansions were built in a city that already had many fine, gracious homes. The population of the city grew from 3,000 residents in 1880 to 14,000 by 1890.

Mayor Cooke was born in Tennessee in July, 1856, and had not arrived in Fort Smith until June of 1882. He was on his way from his home in Sweetwater, Tennessee, to Colorado where he planned to hang up his shingle as a lawyer. At that time, Fort Smith was the terminal for a lone railroad, the St. Louis-San Francisco Ry. (Frisco). From Fort Smith, Cooke expected to catch a stage coach headed West.

Fate, however, ruled otherwise.

A heavy storm had washed out portions of the road and Cooke was forced to remain in town for a week or two. Cooke quickly became acquainted with local people who convinced him that he could find no better future than in Fort Smith. He took a room in a house located at 515 North Sixth (This house which later became the home of William H.H. Clayton has been restored.), and joined a law firm. After serving as City Attorney for several terms, he was appointed Assistant U.S. Attorney for the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Arkansas. This court, which had jurisdiction over counties in Western Arkansas and the



Charles Maynard Cooke, Sr., Mayor of Fort Smith

Indian Territory, was presided over by Judge Isaac C. Parker. Cooke worked long, hard hours, winning convictions in all his cases except one.

On June 2, 1884, Judge Parker adjourned his court early in the afternoon to lead a contingent of members of the bar to St. John's Episcopal Church on the corner of North Sixth and C Streets to join other guests for the wedding of Cooke to Sarah Bleecker Luce of Moore's Rocks Plantation (near present-day Lavaca). She was the daughter of Cornelia Luce and the late John Bleecker Luce, a noted attorney.

Cooke was elected Mayor of Fort Smith in 1891 and served one term. He threw himself into his new position as Mayor with enthusiasm.

A natural-born promoter, young (33) and vigorous, he sought ways to enhance the town's prestige. He was joined in this by his wife, who, along with Mrs. Luce, Mrs. Isaac C. Parker, and a few other friends, founded the Fortnightly Club which established the town's first lending library and the Fort Smith Public Library. Books were furnished by the ladies from their own private libraries.

The office of the Mayor was located in the handsome three-year-old red brick building on South Sixth Street that housed city offices on the ground floor and Sebastian County offices on the second floor. On South Sixth Street, directly across from the city hall, finishing touches were applied in 1890 to the new Federal Building. The city's Post Office was located downstairs. Judge Parker and his court moved in upstairs. Life in the river city was both busy and pleasant. The ladies held luncheons in the new Main Hotel; there were parties and balls, private dinner parties, and entertainments at the Opera House.

On May 27, 1891, the town's population temporarily doubled as people came from the surrounding towns and countryside to take part in the festivities marking the grand opening of the Gould Bridge. Located near the foot of Garrison Avenue, the Gould Bridge was on the line of the Kansas and Arkansas Valley Railway, part of the Missouri Railway System (Missouri Pacific). It was more than a railroad bridge, however. Wagons and other vehicles, as well as people on horseback or on foot, used the toll bridge. Twenty-seven feet wide, 2,370 feet long, it was considered the largest general highway bridge west of the Mississippi. Trains sometimes would wait to cross until a farmer's wagon cleared the bridge.

That evening Mayor Cooke, 42 members of the Chamber of Commerce, and 31 guests sat down to a feast that was surely equal to anything their special guest, New York financier Jay Gould, had ever enjoyed at famed Delmonico's. The menu included spiced round of beef, Whittaker ham, shrimp salad, queen olives, stuffed goose with chestnuts, barbecued spring lamb, smoked tongue, chicken salad, pate de foi gras, roast capon, salmon salad, mixed pickles, pickled beets, chow chow, and three kinds of imported wine. For dessert, the dinner featured vanilla ice cream, fresh strawberries, wine jelly, assorted cakes, fruit, nuts, cheese and brandy. Cigars and brandy followed. Speeches started at midnight and the party did not break up until three a.m.

In spite of the enormous crowds that had turned out for the occasion, it was reported that "not a clash, accident, or particle of friction marred the day."

One of Cooke's greatest assets was his power of persuasion, his ability to get others interested in the city and its projects. Born in Athens, Tennessee, in 1856, one of three children, he came from a long line of distinguished soldiers, educators, ministers, and lawyers. His father, Henry Grout Cooke, a graduate of Dartmouth College, entered the practice of law in New York. However, his love of music was so strong that he gave up his law practice to teach music in the South. He married Helen Margaret Smith in Selma, Alabama, in 1851. She, too, was well-educated and a teacher. The family later moved to Athens, Tennessee, and finally settled in Sweetwater, Tennessee. Professor Cooke and his wife separated (although there was never a divorce) in 1859 or 1860 and he left Sweetwater.

Helen Smith Cooke, described as bright and attractive, came from an unusual background. Her father, a graduate of Oxford University in England, became a Presbyterian Missionary. A biographical sketch of Helen Smith Cooke that appeared in the *Chattanooga Times* in 1915 states that she "was born in Malacca, lived for a time in Singapore, traversed two oceans, and lived in both Canada and New York before becoming a teacher in Selma." Loyal to her friends and neighbors during the Civil War, she and her children were forced to leave their home, taking with them only one small trunk. They were finally rescued by a cousin in Virginia who took them into her home. Always resourceful, Mrs. Cooke found a two-story log house nearby and converted the downstairs into a school. After the war, the family moved back to Sweetwater where Helen Cooke started another school.

Times being difficult, Charles was sent to live with an aunt and uncle in Sweetwater. His uncle, a successful businessman and a strong believer in hard work and economy, gave Charles a long list of chores to do each day. At the end of the week he received fifty cents. On his first Christmas he was given one dollar. This was doubled each Christmas until at the end of five years, he received ten dollars. He worked his way through college by holding down a number of jobs which included tutoring, serving as organist for chapel, working in the school store, and giving music lessons. After finishing his studies in law, he started for Colorado.



C.M. Cooke family, circa 1915

When Mayor Cooke's term ended in 1892, he was asked to run again for office. He declined. The position did not pay enough to properly support his growing family.

After returning to the practice of law, Cooke opened an office in Perry, Oklahoma, where he spent three years. He moved back to Fort Smith where he lived for some time before moving to Harrison, Arkansas. He also served as an attorney for a railroad company. The Cookes moved to San Pedro, California, in 1920 to care for two little granddaughters. Their mother had died and their father, Charles Maynard Cooke, Jr., a naval officer, was often at sea. Sarah Cooke died at San Pedro in 1936.

The Cookes were parents of six children: John Bleecker (1885), Charles M., Jr. (1886), Helen M. (1888), Cornelia Pricellia (1890), William Forester (1892), and Stephen Bland (1898).

Commander Stephen Cooke, a graduate of Annapolis and a naval pilot, was selected to head up a board of inquiry into an airplane crash in Texas. On June 4, 1941, the plane carrying him, members of the board, and the survivors of the original crash, were returning to California when their plane crashed and all aboard were killed.

John, a retired Navy officer and a member of the California State Legislature, was recalled to duty and sent to Hawaii in the summer of 1941. He wrote his father in August that he got to see his brother "Savvy" (Captain Charles M. Cooke, Jr.) quite often.

Captain Cooke (later, Admiral) was Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. *Pennsylvania* in dry dock at Pearl Harbor for repairs. Fortunately, neither he nor his brother, John, were injured when the Japanese bombed Hawaii. Recalled to Washington to serve as a military advisor to President F.D. Roosevelt and President H.S. Truman, Admiral Cooke was named the Commanding Officer of the Sixth Fleet after WWII.

William Cooke was an official with the Kansas City Southern Railroad until his retirement. Cornelia, a registered nurse and teacher, never married. Helen married Wilbur Johnson and was the only child of Charles and Sarah Cooke to remain in Fort Smith. Working hard to preserve the history of Fort Smith, she was one of the founders of the town's first museum, and became well-known as a local historian.

Charles M. Cooke, Sr., visited Fort Smith often through the years. On one of his visits to see his daughter, Helen, he became ill and died a few days later, on December 12, 1947, at the age of 91. His body was shipped to San Pedro, California, to lie next to that of his wife. He had lived to see the world change from horse and buggy to modern airplanes. Helen Cooke Johnson, who died a few years ago, was the last Cooke descendant living in Fort Smith. However, Cooke has not been forgotten. Fern Luce, widow of Cooke's nephew, John B. Luce, spoke of "Uncle Charley."

"He was the most charming man I have ever known," she said. "He really cared about people and he had a way of making you feel that you were important, that what you thought or said truly mattered."

To recall the days of 1891-92 when Charles M. Cooke, Sr., was Mayor of Fort Smith brings to mind a busy, bustling, bright city, filled with dreams and hopes, gaiety, and progress. Whist, croquet, ice skating in the winter time, picnics, watermelon feasts, visiting with friends, swimming in nearby creeks or ponds, these were the entertainments of the people of that era. Gracious manners, dignity, and laughter . . . Cooke and the city were well suited.

Memories of Exilda Josephine Marguerite St. Pierre Von Braun

Oral History Given to Lorna Dickson Schultis
January - March, 1993

I was born in Chicago, Illinois, on November 11, 1909, to Adolphe and Margaret Menard St. Pierre, the tenth of eleven children. We lived at 5708 Loomis in a house my father built. We lived there until I was two, then moved to 62nd and Green Street. My brother, the eleventh child, was just a baby.

We attended public and parochial schools. One morning, when I was three, I decided to follow my sisters to school. I was playing on the back porch and called to my mother, who was in the kitchen, that I was going to school. She thought I said I was going to "play" school! I put on my sister's cape and started walking. Before long I was lost! I was lost from nine that morning until eleven that night. As I walked, I picked up all the gum I saw on the sidewalk and chewed it. Late in the day I met a friend of my sisters' and asked her how to get home. I still couldn't find the way! When it got dark I laid down in an alley because I was so tired and hungry. A rag man found me and took me to his house for some cookies and milk. I remember putting my gum under their table. He contacted the police to tell them about me. They knew of my disappearance. My mother came to get me at the police station and said "I don't know whether to whip you or love you!" All I wanted to do was go back to the ragpickers to get my gum.

A couple of years later we moved back to the house on Loomis. Dad had remodeled this house and now we moved back. We lived there until I was eighteen or nineteen. My grandparents died and since my father had to care for their property we moved to St. Eustache, Quebec, Canada. There were just my parents, me and my brother, Joe.

The land was an acre wide and a mile long. The house was a three story wood and stone structure my grandfather had built while he was working in Montreal. Each Friday he walked the thirty miles from Montreal to St. Eustache to work on the house on Saturday then back to Montreal on Sunday to be ready for work the next day. My grandparents moved to St. Eustache after the house was finished



**Exilda, Our Twenty-four Year Treasure
Weaver at Old Fort Museum 1975-1990**

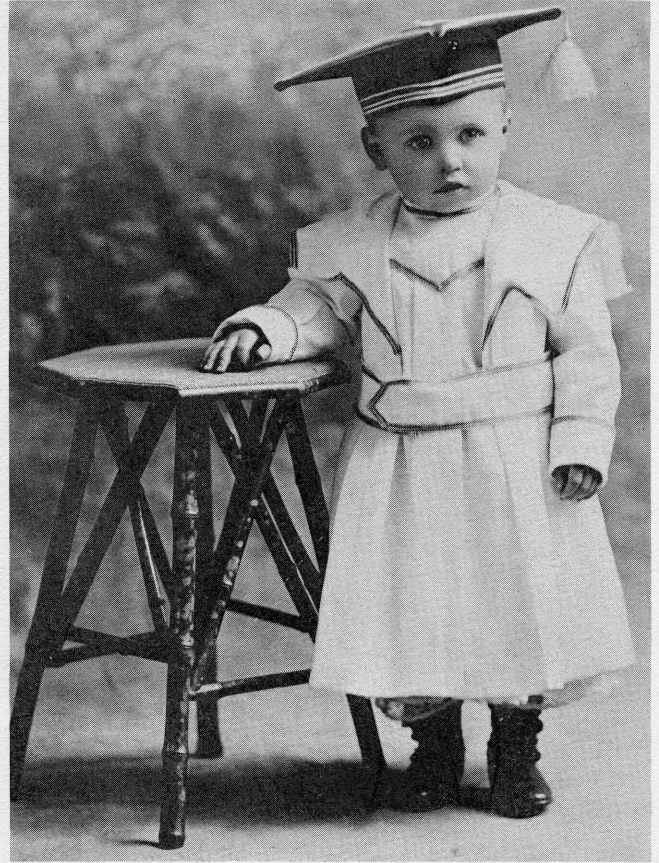
and stayed there for my grandfather to work as a carpenter. My father and grandfather were both carpenters.

They had lived for a time in Chicago when my father was eight years old. He had one older brother, Charles. My father was ten at the time of the Chicago fire of 1871. They lived near the fire and my grandmother had a fit because he was chasing after the fire engines all night!

My mother was born that same year (1871) in Kalamazoo, Michigan. She had four sisters and one brother. Her father, Grandfather Menard, was a stonemason. He helped build the Chicago



Exilda at the age of 4 years



Lorenz as a little boy, Easter, 1892

watertower on Michigan Avenue. The waterworks is not there any more but the building still stands. They sometimes show it on WGN (local cable channel). My mother worked in a book binding shop. She didn't have a lot of schooling, but she could hold three different conversations with three different people at once. She was really something! She also was a wonderful dressmaker and made all our clothes.

My father and his parents moved to St. Eustache when he was still quite young. He left when he was about 29 to head for the Klondike to pan for gold. On his way he stopped in Chicago to visit a cousin and was introduced to my mother. He decided not to go to the Klondike but to stay and marry my mother. She was 19 at the time.

An uncle of my mother's, Pierre Menard, was Lt. Governor of Illinois from 1818 to 1822. However, my mother called him a horse thief! He was an Indian trader before he became Lt. Governor. He lost a leg in the Indian Wars. He died in 1845.

My siblings were: George and Ernest, who both died as infants, and Ervin, who died in 1981

in Florida at the age of 89. He and his wife had two boys and a girl. The next was Corrine "Sis". She lives in Florida and is 98 years old. Her husband was Burgess Walker, a dentist. They had no children. The next was Alfred "Babe". He and his wife had five children, two girls and three boys. He died in 1974 at 70 years of age. The next was Georgette Marie (nicknamed "Tune" from the French word of endearment "petune"). Now they call her Toni. She was born in Montreal but now lives in North Carolina and is 93. She and her husband, Andy Scholar, had two boys and a girl. Then there's Eileen "Lynn". She had one child, Lois, who died last year from Lou Gehrig's Disease. Lynn is 90 and lives in Florida. Her husband Clarence died in 1992 at 94 years of age. Florence "Bit" would have been 88 this year. She died eight years ago. She and husband Bill Thuesen had four boys and a girl. After Florence, Lillian was born. She died when she was two years old from what they called "old folks' anemia". I was born next. Then Joseph "Joeboy" who was 69 when he died in 1982. His wife Edith still lives in Florida. They had one adopted son, Marc.



Exilda with her Parents and Siblings
Back row: Ervin, Mother, Father, Alfred
Second row: Georgette, Corrine, Eileen
Front row: Florence, Joe, Exilda "Zildie"



Exilda in costume for dances she did in the 1930's.
Costume was gold and her skin was painted gold.

I started dancing lessons when I was eleven. By the time I was fifteen, I was helping the teacher teach the little children. When we moved to St. Eustache I got a job in a dance studio in Montreal. I was head teacher of ballet, acrobatic, tap, character, and ballroom dancing. It was a great experience for me. Some of the students could not speak English and I could not speak French. We communicated through the wonderful world of dance. But I did have a nervous collapse from working so hard with my students. The doctor told me I would have to stop teaching. Since I didn't want to do that, I moved to Chicago to teach there.

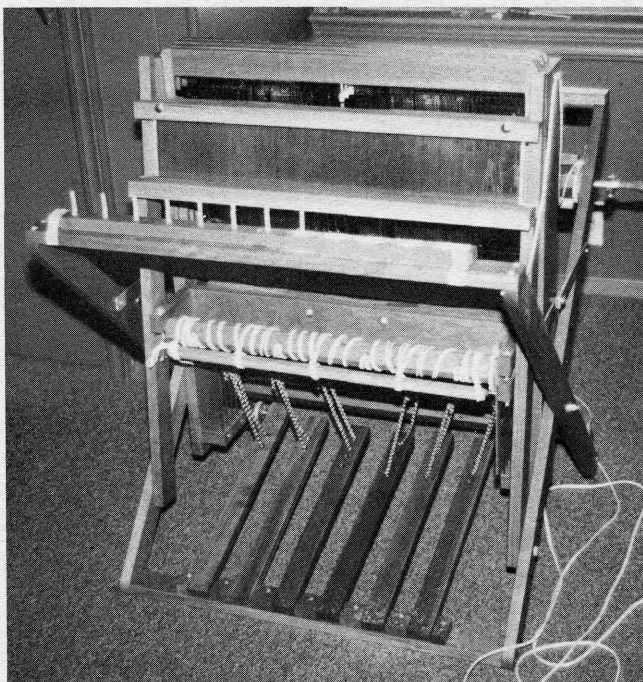
In 1937, when I was 28 years old, I went to the doctor with a terrible pain in my right side. The doctor sent a uterine biopsy to the lab and it came back as a malignancy. I also had a bleeding ulcer. I was hospitalized for eleven weeks for x-ray and radiation therapy. I continued to teach after my discharge but returned to St. Eustache to care for my parents after about a year. My father died suddenly in 1946, and my mother followed him in death a month and a half later. My mother had Addison's Disease and died from the shock of my father's death. My brother Joe was Wing Commander of the Allouette Bomber Squadron overseas at this time (1941-1946). So I sold the house and returned to Chicago to live with my sister "Tune" and her family for about a year. When I returned to the doctor who had treated me for cancer, he exclaimed, "Will miracles never cease!" He was amazed I was still alive. Then I got my own apartment and went to work for National Fire Insurance Company as a book-keeper.

I had been interested in weaving since a friend from Montreal brought three of her friends who were weavers to St. Eustache for a visit. I was so excited to see what they could do! My father made me a small loom, just wide enough to make belts. I still have the very first belt I made on that little loom. Then in 1948 I finally found a teacher, Gladys Grophill, who gave me ten lessons. Her husband made the Norwood looms and I bought one of their 36" looms. The one I have now is my second (a 50" double-warp beam) Brophill loom bought in 1953. I also have a small Norwood for weaving small items and tapestries. The company is in Freemont, Michigan, now.

I met my husband, Lorenz, in May of 1952. I was 42; he was 62. We dated several times, going to dinners, movies, and plays together. On July 4th, while we were walking to Chicago's



Lorenz as 20 year old in WWI. (He joined at 15 but told them he was 17.) Lorenz was wounded by a bayonet and lay on the battlefield for three days before he was found. The bayonet was embedded in his side. A block and tackle was used to get it out. He spent two years at Johns Hopkins recuperating from the wound. He had a huge scar on his side from the wound.



Exilda's small loom which she uses for weaving tapestries.

great amusement park called Riverview, Lorenz proposed to me. Of course, I said YES! We were married on August 29, 1952, and had a very happy life together. After retiring from business and office work, we moved to Arkansas in October of 1969. We came here on vacation after retirement and liked it so much we sold our house in Chicago and bought a house in Mulberry. In 1973 we bought a house on 6th Street that once belonged to former Mayor Johnston. After two years we moved to a house on the corner of 17th and M. In 1979 we moved to Hackett where Lorenz died in 1981. I moved from there in 1990 to my duplex at 8th and C.

Lorenz was an artist of great talent with a superb sense of color. Since I kept on with my weaving, I would often depend on him for color combinations. He would also draw large cartoons for me for tapestries. Lorenz passed away on February 26, 1981. He would have been 91 that June.

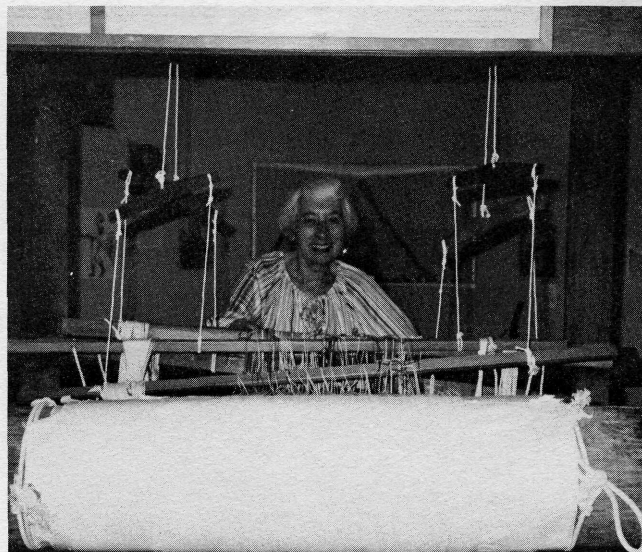
I wove on the Old Fort Museum loom, built in 1818, from 1975 to 1990. When I started with it I had to convert it from a two harness to a four harness loom. That way I could do more patterns. With a two harness loom you are limited to basket weave, plain or lace weave. The four harness allowed for more varied patterns to be woven. I only worked there two days a week but usually produced sixteen table mats a month to be sold in the Gift Shop. I also wove handbags, table runners, and scarves with lace weaves for the Museum. That loom was very difficult to manage. I probably worked on it longer than I should have, considering its age and mine!



Pictured is one of Exilda's wall hangings. On table at right is a skating lantern which she used as a girl.

I started weaving coverlets for others in 1973. The first one I did was for Frances Martin. It was the old "Whig Rose" pattern, in indigo blue and white, originated in 1778 to commemorate the beginning of the Whig party. The yarn cost \$50 and I charged \$25 for my labor. Now the yarn costs \$200 for that size, but I still charge an average of \$2 an hour for my labor. In the past two years, I've produced seven coverlets from twin to larger than king-size, fifty Christmas cards, five table runners, one banquet size pure linen tablecloth with a dozen napkins, three afghans, ten transparencies, twelve baby blankets, two wallhangings, two regular tablecloths, sixteen linen towels, and dozens of placemats.

I am now 83 years old. Although I have some health problems, I don't let them stop me from weaving and enjoying life!



Exilda at her loom

Book Notes

THE NINE GREENE SISTERS OF BENTON COUNTY, ARKANSAS

by Jack McNeil

Published in 1992. Softbound, indexed. \$23.75 postpaid. Order from Jack McNeil, P.O. Box 707, Parkin, AR 72373. Phone 501-755-2862.

"Bad blood" between the Greenberry Greene family in Hancock County, Tennessee, and their neighbors, the Jones family, erupted into an all-out Greene/Jones war when a hog belonging to the Greene family ate the mash from the Jones' whiskey still and the Jones family decided to keep the hog to pay for damages. This feud was second only to the famous Hatfield/McCoy Feud in Kentucky.

Joab Buttry, whose daughter was married to Jesse Greene, decided to do something about the situation — he moved his family 800 miles away to Benton County, Arkansas.

This is the story of that family, written by Jack McNeil, a Fort Smith native and the grandson of Jesse and Catherine Buttry Greene. Jesse and Catherine had nine children, all girls — and it is to the nine Greene sisters the book is dedicated.

Well illustrated and documented with photographs, documents, newspaper articles and family group sheets, the book, after an interesting general narrative history of the families and the feud, is divided into sections, one for each daughter and her family.

Jesse Greene died in Fort Smith, and at one time or another most of the nine daughters lived in Fort Smith. Three of them raised their families in Fort Smith. They were: Alice Minerva (Mrs. Fred Bryon Kellar), Daisy Jodie (Mrs. Florenz C. Godt), and Minnie Jesse (Mrs. John Edward McNeil who as a widow married Justin O. Edmunds).

That the history of the family might be preserved and made available to other family researchers, Mr. McNeil has placed copies of the book in the public libraries in Bentonville, Rogers and Fort Smith, in the Arkansas Historical Society Library in Little Rock, and the library in Sneedville, Hancock County, Tennessee.

Reviewed by Amelia Martin

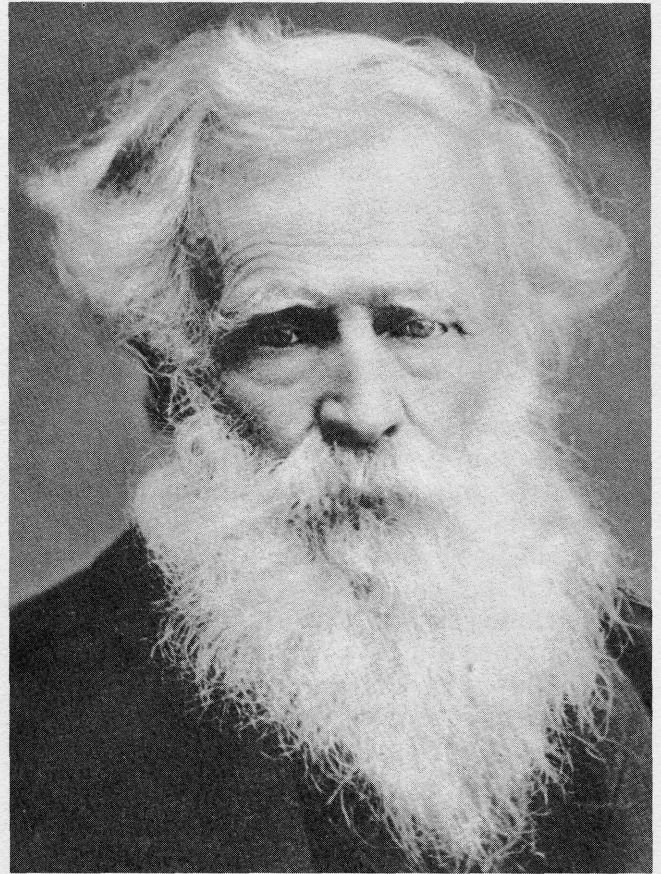
The Bailey Family

James Bailey Parker

What were the thoughts of Mary Read Bailey, a genteel lady fresh from New York's Hudson Valley, when on a winter night in 1839 in the Cherokee Nation she saw her infant son, William, being inducted into the Cherokee tribe in a frightening ceremony by the light of a great campfire? She must surely have asked herself, "How did I get into this?" when she witnessed her baby being tossed from brave to brave in full regalia. Shortly before, the baby's father, Joseph Howard Bailey, M.D., Captain, U.S. Army, had delivered the Cherokee Chief's son, and the Chief resolved to render the honor of adopting baby William into the tribe (William and the Chief's son were to remain friends throughout their lives.) How did the Hudson Valley Baileys get to this part of the world, described as "a wilderness frequented by bears, wolves and panthers"? This is the story.

Joseph Howard Bailey was born in 1803 to a well-established family in Dutchess County (now Putnam County) in New York's Hudson Valley, roughly 60 miles north and east of New York City. His mother, Abigail Dusenberry, was of an old Hudson Valley Dutch family, and his father, Rowland, was descended from John Howland, the last surviving member of the Mayflower Company, from the Massachusetts Saltonstalls, and from the New England Divine, the Rev. John Cotton — described as the "father and glory of Boston".

The Bailey family's "trade", then and later, was medicine. Not only were J.H. Bailey's father and grandfather physicians, but also four of his sons. He practiced medicine in New York before becoming a surgeon in the Regular Army — the military being the family's secondary calling. The translation of the Bailey family from New York to the Indian Territory and Fort Smith was due to orders given to Captain Bailey in 1834, to proceed by sea to the mouth of the Mississippi to join as surgeon the expedition of Cherokees — the so-called Trail of Tears — to the lands allocated to them in the Indian Territory. On arrival there he was assigned as surgeon at the newly established Fort Gibson, at that time the farthest west outpost of the U.S.



Dr. Joseph Howard Bailey in old age. Captain, U.S. Army surgeon with the Cherokee Migration. Stationed in Fort Gibson and Fort Smith.

The writer admits to ambivalent feelings about a forebearer's participation in the deplorable and sad episode in American history which the "Trail of Tears" represented. However, in mitigation of his great-great grandfather's role the following is quoted from Grant Foreman's study, *Indian Removal* (1932):

"A conspicuous saving grace of this sorrowful story is the fidelity and skill with which the regular army officers and soldiers in the field discharged their unwelcome duties in connection with the removal. In nearly all instances they devoted themselves indefatigably and sympathetically to the sad task of removing the Indians with as much expedition and comfort as possible within the provisions made by their superiors in Washington. In this they contrasted sharply with the volunteer soldiers and a large class

of political, civilian employees and especially those of local attachments and prejudices, and the contractors whose purpose was to realize as much profit as possible from their contracts, thereby excluding considerations of comfort for the emigrants."

And, of course, the above mentioned adoption by the Cherokees of Capt. Bailey's son into their tribe would seem to establish the nature of the Indians' feelings toward the doctor as those of affection and respect.

Joseph Bailey's tour of duty at Fort Gibson was interrupted by several brief assignments to Fort Smith. He was formally posted there in 1846, and that year marks the first establishment of the Baileys in Fort Smith. Capt. Bailey saw service in three wars: the Florida (Seminole) War, 1840-42; Vera Cruz in the Mexican War, 1848; and Missouri during the Civil War in 1861-62. He retired from the Army in 1862, and resumed the practice of medicine first in Putnam County, New York, and later in Fort Smith where he established his permanent home. He died in Putnam County in 1883, and is buried there.

J.H. Bailey's wife, Mary Aikman Read, was from another old New York and Connecticut family. Redding, Connecticut, was named for her family. Her grandfather, Charles Peter Beaujean, of French Huguenot stock, was a Revolutionary War veteran. Joseph and Mary had twelve children, at least three of whom were named after Western military figures:

Ann De Bonneville Bailey, named, of course, for General Benjamin L.E. (de) Bonneville, still famous in Fort Smith.

Matthew Arbuckle Bailey, named for the redoubtable General Matthew Arbuckle, founder and first Commander of Fort Gibson, second Commander of Fort Smith, a lifelong champion of the Indians and a name to be reckoned with in the military of the West in the last century. General Arbuckle spent his last years and died in the Bailey home in Fort Smith.

William Worth Bailey, the writer's great grandfather and a principal of this essay. He was named for the famous General William Jenkins Worth, hero of the Indian and Mexican Wars and for whom Fort Worth is named. (Adjacent to New York's Madison Square and near to the writer's residence is the monumental tomb of General Worth. It and Grant's tomb are the only public monuments in New York City containing their subjects' remains.)

Four of their sons were, as mentioned, physicians and carried on their father's tradition of service in the U.S. Army. Little is known of

Dr. Thomas Hendrickson Bailey. Dr. John Read Bailey was a frontier physician and pharmacist in Michigan. The other two, M.A. and W.W. Bailey, are dealt with in extenso below.

Matthew Arbuckle Bailey, the progenitor of most of the Baileys living today, was unquestionably one of the most interesting personalities in the annals of this family. In both his appearance and his careers he could have stepped direct from an Anthony Trollope novel, combining in his short life the Army, medicine, and the Church. Born in Fort Smith in 1844, he was like his father and brothers a staunch Unionist, and served in the Army of the Potomac as a Staff Officer for General Grant. When the War ended he was a Captain and only 21 years old. He obtained his M.D. from Bellevue Hospital in New York City, and served there for some years.

At age 33, Matthew took Holy Orders and was ordained an Episcopal priest by Bishop Horatio Potter of New York. Thereafter he returned to Putnam County where he practiced medicine and served the Church for about nine years as Rector of St. John the Baptist, a small parish, now extinct, near Kent Cliffs which was established largely by gifts of the Bailey family.

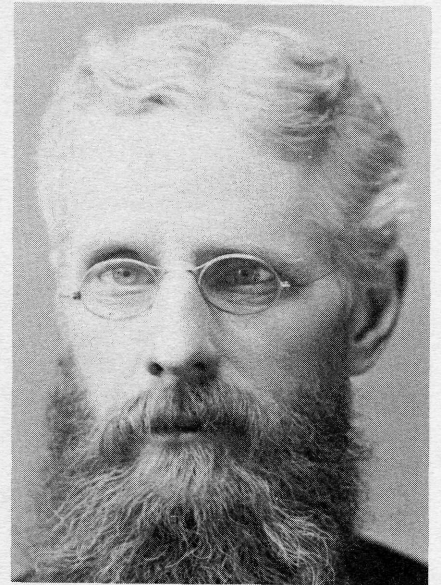
In 1888, Matthew, his wife Agnes Sinclair Bettelle and their numerous and increasing progeny, migrated to New Jersey where he became Rector of the Church of the Mediator in Edgewater, just across the Hudson from uptown New York City. On New Year's Day, 1890, Matthew, aged only 45 and father of 13 children, dropped dead of apoplexy in the pulpit while delivering a sermon. It was a family joke at the time that "if Matthew shook his pants at Agnes she would get pregnant". January, 1890, must have been a harrowing month for her, losing her husband on the first day, a 14-month old daughter later that month, and giving birth on the 20th to her last child, Matthew Arbuckle Bailey, Jr.

A man of handsome and dignified mien, The Rev. Dr. Matthew Arbuckle Bailey seems to have been a favorite of his brothers and sisters and of many in Fort Smith where he was a familiar and frequent visitor.

William Worth Bailey, born 1839, the fourth child of Joseph Howard Bailey and the writer's great grandfather, was the most prominent of Fort Smith Baileys and had more lasting effects on that city than any other member of the family, before or after. Born in Fort Gibson in the Cherokee Nation and adopted into that tribe (see above), he received his M.D. from the University of Michigan. An officer and surgeon



Dr. Thomas Hendrickson Bailey



Matthew Arbuckle Bailey



Dr. John Read Bailey



Dr. William Worth Bailey and his grandson, Joseph Bailey Parker



William Worth Bailey, Jr.

in the Union Army (First Missouri Cavalry) during the Civil War, he settled permanently in Fort Smith at the close of that conflict. One of Fort Smith's most prominent physicians, he was a principal organizer of St. John's (now Sparks) Hospital. He was also owner of Fort Smith's first "cut rate drug store," and was co-owner with Dr. J.H.T. Main, his father-in-law, of the Main Hotel on Garrison Avenue. He was a Republican in politics and an Episcopalian in religion. The large "empty tomb" window in the north transept of St. John's Episcopal Church was given by Dr. Bailey in memory of his wife.

In 1868, two leading Fort Smith families, both prominent in medicine, business and civic affairs, were joined in the marriage of William Bailey and Lelia Main, the lovely daughter of Dr. J.H.T. Main (see following page). She was often called "the Lily of the South." They had four children: William Worth, Jr. (see following page), Kate Thibault, the writer's grandmother, John Mayne and Isabella (the latter did her part in carrying on the family "medical tradition" — she married two physicians, Dr. Ewell Black and, after his death, his best friend, Dr. Gant). William Worth Bailey, Sr., died in 1913.

Lelia Main Bailey's father, John Hanson Thomas Main, M.D. (1813-1891), came to Fort Smith in 1838. (When used as a given name it is spelled "Mayne" — the doctor's father married his cousin, a "Mayne".) A civilian, he was assigned to attend the men building the second fort. There are several "firsts" in Dr. Main's record: he was the first civilian physician to settle in Fort Smith and he delivered the first child born there (there is some dispute about this); and he organized the first Sunday school. He owned extensive real estate in the city, including, with his son-in-law, the Main Hotel, long the city's prime hostelry. First a Whig and later a Republican, he strongly opposed Arkansas' secession.

As a wedding present for his much loved daughter, Lelia, Dr. Main built an imposing Greek revival house on Dodson Avenue (then farm land), sometimes known as the Main-Bailey-Parker house, long a Fort Smith landmark. It is interesting to note that in all the years it stood, in one way or another the house was connected with the medical profession. After Dr. Bailey's death, the home passed to Kate Bailey Parker who, in 1929, sold it to the Colonial Hospital which, in turn, sold it to the Holt-Krock Clinic. Gradually, with remodeling and expansion of Holt-Krock, the architecture of the house became less and less discernible, and it was finally demolished some years ago.

However, a vestige of the house remains — and still is connected with the medical profession: Fort Smith dentist Dr. and Mrs. Ted Skokos incorporated some of the house's original Corinthian columns in the portico of their neo-classical home on South "S" Street.

The Bailey and Main families were united with another Fort Smith "name" family when in 1898 Dr. Bailey's daughter, Kate Thibault Bailey (the writer's grandmother) married James Joseph Parker, the younger son of Judge I.C. Parker. After her father's death, Kate Bailey moved into the "big house" as it was known in the family, and her children spent most of their formative years there. On its periodic visits to Fort Smith, Ringling Brothers Circus "set up" on the extensive property (60 acres), which accounts for the Parker boys becoming circus buffs. Kate and James Parker had five children: Joseph Bailey (the writer's father), Lillie Main (Mrs. Sy Selvidge), Mary Lelia (Mrs. James Clendening), Isaac Charles, and James Mayne (whose widow is now Judge Bernice Kizer).

An interesting "religious footnote" concerns Kate Bailey Parker and her offspring. It is not generally known in Fort Smith that Judge Parker's wife was a devout Roman Catholic and that on his deathbed he was baptised by a Roman Catholic priest and was buried as a Catholic. Kate and James were likewise married in the rites of that church. On their marriage the two agreed that any sons would be baptised into his religion, any daughters into hers. But the bride added a condition: "If you do not take the boys to your church, they're going with me." The result was that the three Parker boys were baptised as Roman Catholics but brought up along with the girls as Episcopalians.

The Mains, Baileys, and Parkers were all strong Republicans — a tradition not always comfortable in the once Democratic "Solid South." One Bailey was a Presidential elector for Fremont, the first Republican candidate for the highest office. The writer recalls that his rather strong-minded grandmother once advised him that, "Whatever happens, I hope you'll always be two things: a Republican and an Episcopalian." Upon being asked whether she thought that only Republican Episcopalians went to Heaven, Grandmother Parker, after a pause, replied, "Well, not really. But it's the only way for *you* to get there."

The Bailey who achieved the greatest renown was the one who had to overcome the highest hurdle. William Worth Bailey, Jr., the first son of Dr. and Mrs. Bailey, was in 1877 born blind. Although he never saw the light of day, he had



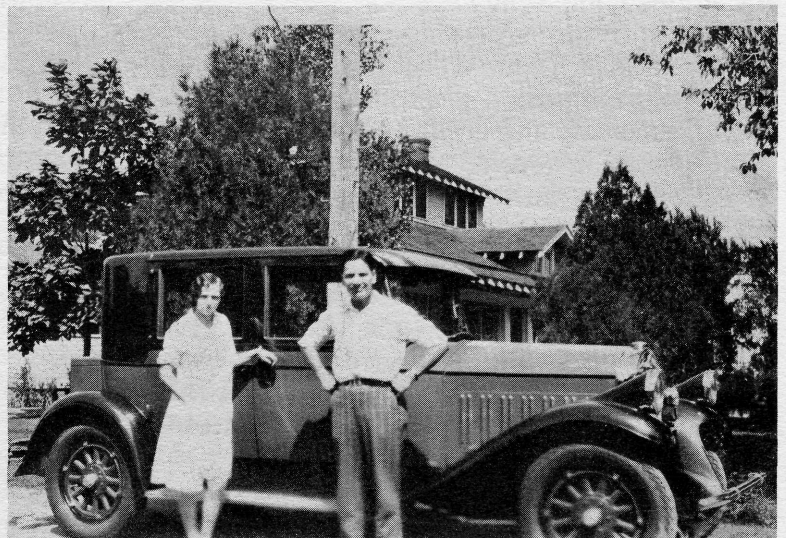
Lelia Main Bailey
Daughter of Dr. J.H.T. Main
Wife of Dr. William Worth Bailey



Main-Bailey-Parker House



Kate Thibault Bailey Parker
and three of her children:
Mary, Bailey and Lillie



Lillie Parker and her husband, Sy Selvidge

an exceptional musical talent and gained some fame in this art. He also made a lasting contribution to music in Fort Smith. From early childhood this sightless boy showed a remarkable talent for music, and his family recognized and fostered it. In 1900 his mother took him to Liege, Belgium, where Willie, as he was known to family and friends, studied under European masters for some two years. Although his specialty was the violin, he could play almost any instrument. Shortly after his return from Europe, he made concert tours throughout the U.S., including, reportedly, Carnegie Hall. In one review, his violin teacher, the noted Ovid Musin, said:

"I do not believe there is another human being on earth like William Worth Bailey. He has a brain like a cylinder in a phonograph and yet his playing is not mechanical. His every tone shows that he must know coloring in spite of the fact that he has never seen the light of day. We have put to him the most severe tests... Think of it, this young genius has already a repertoire of 150 pieces..."

Octavus Cohn, the prominent New York drama and music critic, wrote another encomium to Willie's success:

"... blind from birth and only 19 years of age, yet William Worth Bailey, of Ft. Smith, Ark., is declared to be one of the greatest violinists of the day. This remarkable young musician has already earned the title of 'American Paganini'..."

Here we encounter a mystery. At the peak of his national success Will Bailey, this "young genius" and "American Paganini," cut his nation-wide career short, stopped the tours and concerts, and returned to Fort Smith for a quiet, albeit busy, life. Why?

Although the writer has no independent recollection of "Uncle Willie," he comes through — via the memories of other relatives, newspaper accounts and copies of old correspondence — as a warm, sensitive, gentle, and affectionate person. The writer was a small boy when his great uncle Willie died, but he still remembers the distress and grief felt and shown by all members of the Parker family at the sudden and untimely (age 54) death of this beloved relative. Of course, one cannot know for sure, but in all probability Willie cut his career short because he did not want to be a "wunderkind" blind musician; he did not wish to exploit — or seem to exploit — his handicap. He did not want to call attention to his blindness but wished to live as normal a life as possible.

Although his concert manager might declare that it was not his intention "to exploit Willie as a child wonder," it was nevertheless his blindness which inevitably defined him in the public eye. Therefore, Will opted for a quiet, balanced, and productive existence in his home town where he could indulge his musical talent and still enjoy as nearly normal a life as possible under the circumstances — where his friends and family would increasingly disregard and overlook his "difference." That he succeeded in this is evidenced by the fact that, as he would have wanted it, his very fullsome and detailed obituary in the Fort Smith press never once mentioned his blindness, probably because it was assumed that everyone knew it anyway, that they had long disregarded it, and that it had not affected his work. Also, one recalls that whenever Uncle Willie came up in *en famille* talk, his blindness would be mentioned *en passant*, if at all. One may fairly conclude that it was a measure of the man not only that he succeeded in preventing his disability from becoming the central fact of his existence but he overcame this terrible handicap to the extent that it was overlooked by everyone much as though it were nothing more than a wooden leg. A family anecdote has it that on one occasion Will was late to catch a train, and when he got to the station the train was already in motion. He ran alongside putting his hand on the side of the car, and when he touched the handrail by the steps he grabbed it and swung himself aboard.

In 1910, Will Bailey married Katherine Price, herself a talented musician. They constituted a remarkable musical partnership until his early death in 1932 — together founding the Southwestern Studio of Musical Art and the Fort Smith Symphony Orchestra. Both were leaders in many local and State musical and voice organizations, and each at separate times was Choir Director of St. John's Episcopal Church. Katherine Price Bailey continued her musical career for many years, and there are many in Fort Smith today who remember her as a loved and respected teacher who brought out their artistic talents and inspired in them an appreciation for fine music. In 1985, at age 104, she and her dear Will were reunited, in the words of the poet John Donne, "in that house where there is no darkness nor dazzling, but one equal light."

(For their help, the writer is greatly indebted to *Journal* editor Amelia Martin and to Matthew A. Bailey of Dutch Flat, California — a distant cousin and grandson of Matthew Arbuckle Bailey.)

Judge Parker Must Have Led a Charmed Life

Sarah Fitzjarrald

In April of this year (1993), judges and attorneys gathered in Fort Smith for a Spring Judicial College. While they were here the local newspaper, *Southwest Times Record*, carried the story (April 23), "Parker honored by mural."

According to the article, the judicial representatives met in a downtown cafe where a mural of Judge Isaac Parker went on display. A local attorney addressed the group and there was this, "During his time on the bench he netted the nickname 'Hanging Judge,' when his ruling stood without opportunity for appeal."

Further in the article there was, "Above Parker an inscription taken from Scripture (?) reads, 'Whoso(e)ver shall come to power, and abuse it, a breath shall cause his downfall.'"

The story finished with, "Jack Holt, Chief Justice of the Arkansas Supreme Court, led judges in signing below the mural."

Members of the Fort Smith Historical Society who have read previous *Journals* know of our admiration and respect for Judge Parker. Unfortunately, Parker "bashing" began while he was still Judge in the Federal District Court in Fort Smith and continues to the present.

Judge Parker did not "net" the nickname "Hanging Judge" when "his ruling stood without opportunity for appeal." The epithet was imposed upon him by eastern newspapers when he opposed opening the Indian Territory to the railroads and land speculators because he did not believe the Indians were ready for that kind of "civilization."

For a complete explanation of Parker's opposition to the schemes of the railroaders and speculators, we recommend you read, "Judge Isaac Parker, Myths and Legends Aside," written by park rangers Guy Nichols, Tom Crowson and Leo Allison. The paper is fully researched and is on sale at the National Park Service for 35 cents per copy.

The phrase, "without opportunity for appeal," never fails to appeal to the "bashers" and is used frequently. Actually, documented records prove that there was never one case tried in Judge Parker's court without recourse to appeal. Before 1889, when the U.S. Supreme

Court began hearing criminal cases, there were two appeals open. The first and most often used was to the President of the United States. The second was to the Federal Circuit Court in which Judge Parker also presided. In 1883, two murder cases were heard in the Circuit Court, and in both cases the individuals were found not guilty and discharged. Of course, after 1889 there were three appeals.

It does not require a law degree to research the cases on file at the National Historic Site and read the final dispositions of said cases. Glenn Shirley, who wrote, "Law West of Fort Smith," proceeded to do just that and outlined the criminal cases heard in Judge Parker's court and their final dispositions.¹

Shirley documented that there was a total of 160 persons sentenced to hang by Judge Parker, but only 79 were actually hanged. Does it take a degree in accounting to ask that if there was NO APPEAL what happened to the other 81 lucky individuals? Are we supposed to believe that there was perhaps a Good Fairy who made midnight visits to the jail, opened their cells and gave 81 people their freedom?

The inscription above the mural alluding to "power" sounds more like an accusation than an honor. Parker detractors like to say that he was the most powerful judge in U.S. history. There is no denying Parker's power, but at least three other judges in his era had exactly the same power, due to the unusual make-up of the federal courts. (For a more complete story see "Judge Parker on Trial," in the April, 1988, issue of the *Journal*.)

But let us suppose for the sake of argument that he WAS a power-hungry judge who ruled his court with an iron hand from daylight to dark; who had a heart of stone, passing sentences and then watching from his office window when the hangings were carried out. (It was impossible to see the gallows from his office window.)

And then let us read some of the newspapers of his day. (The *Journal* has carried excerpts from the local papers, which are on microfilm at the public library, since 1977, when the first *Journal* was published.)

The Judge Parker who emerges from those early papers has little resemblance to the Parker we are led to believe. He was a well-liked, respected member of his community. He led parades, attended baseball games and horse races. He was the president of the school board, as well as president of the first Sebastian County Fair Association. He made speeches and awarded high school graduating diplomas. He officiated at the wedding of a friend's daughter in their residence. And those are only the beginning of his various activities.

His daily habit was strolling up and down Garrison Avenue, chatting with young and old

alike. In short, he was a very visible, accessible individual. In the rootin'-tootin' frontier town of that day, guns were just as easily obtained as they are now. And if he was really the mythical scoundrel we are supposed to believe, then we must ask, "How did he escape an assassin's bullet?" Because with that assumption, we must conclude that Judge Isaac Parker lived a charmed life, very charmed.

RESOURCE NOTES

1. Shirley, Glenn. "Law West of Fort Smith," University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln. Bison Book Edition, 1980.

Poets and Poetry

ZELLA M. MURPHY

Zella M. Murphy was born in Brownington (Henry County), Missouri. Her parents were John H. and Bessie Mae (Davis) Smith. The family moved to Fort Dodge, Iowa, when she was an infant and where she remained for the first 21 years of her life. She graduated from Fort Dodge High School in 1927.

She married C. Eugene Murphy in 1928 and spent the next 30 years of her life as a farmer in Missouri, not far from where she was born. They have four children, twelve grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

Murphy moved to Tyler, Texas, in 1965; four years later (1969) she graduated from Tyler Junior College, receiving an A.A. degree. She also attended one year at Uvalde (Texas) Junior College.

She moved to Denton, Texas, later in 1969, and attended Texas Women's University, graduating in 1971 with a B.A. degree. She then received her Master's degree there in Child Development and Pre-School in 1972.

She served as teacher and superintendent of Lover's Lane Lutheran Church School from 1972-1976, in Denton.

Zella moved to Fort Smith in 1979, where she enrolled in Adult Education classes at Westark Community College, studying Bible, art, music and writing. She became a member of the Poets' Roundtable of Arkansas, and the Fort



Zella M. Murphy

Smith Branch in 1986, and continues as a contributing poet. She has only recently moved to Texarkana, Texas.

THE OVERTURE

The rumble and buzz filled the hall
As friends, family and foes
Gathered for the great occasion.
The first rendition, centuries ago,
Was written and performed in simplicity
to entertain the "modest class."
As generations pass values change —
Each age finds new meanings.

Now, as the lights gradually dim
The rumble and buzz are subdued.
The choir, soloists, orchestra attentive.
The maestro raises his baton,
Calling forth the mighty sounds of the overture
As each one listens with mind and heart
To the proclamations, exaltations and amens
Of the "Hallelujah Chorus!"

ROBBY VAUGHN

Robby Vaughn was born January 4, 1915, near the small town of Buckner, Missouri. Her family moved to Fort Smith in 1923 and she has spent most of her life in Arkansas. Her parents were R.C. and Zella (Pickett) McCallen. She was educated in the Fort Smith public schools, where she graduated from Fort Smith High School in 1931.

She married Floyd B. Vaughn in 1934. They have one son and two grandsons.

She worked as secretary and bookkeeper for the Fort Smith School District for 24 years. Robby joined the Poets' Roundtable of Arkansas and the Fort Smith Branch of PRA in 1968. She is a prize-winning poet and has been published in the PRA annual anthology as well as various trade magazines. Her forte is humorous poetry. Her following poems are examples.



Robby Vaughn and husband Floyd

CHRISTMAS GIFT

Santa came to our house when I was only four,
We didn't have a chimney, he came in through
the door.

He handed me a little doll for my very own
And told me if I'd love her, I'd never be alone.
Binky's hair was golden, her eyes were baby
blue,
And miracle of miracles, she could say, "Mama"
too.

Every day I rocked her, she slept with me at
night,
Cuddled there together everything was right.

But time has passed so quickly and suddenly
I'm grown,
Have a little house with picket fence and babies
of my own.

Long since I kissed Binky and placed her in a
chest,
She had been a good companion and well
deserved her rest.

But sometimes when I'm dreaming I see Santa
at the door,
He is handing me my Binky doll the year I just
turned four.

This story has no moral, doesn't even have an
end,
It only shows you never know what can be a
child's best friend.

DILEMMA

Sometimes you spurn affection
And nearly break my heart.
It doesn't seem to bother you
When we are far apart.
I listen for your footsteps
From the time the sun goes down.
But all the time I seem to know
You're painting up the town.
Then suddenly I see you
Approaching my front door.
And I wrap my arms around you
Just like I've done before.
I hope that you'll have patience
And please remember that
I am only human,
But you're a Calico cat.

News and Opportunities

EXCEPT FOR LIFE MEMBERS, IT IS TIME TO RENEW YOUR FORT SMITH HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP, SO:

**Forgot to pay the rent...
A credit card or two?
Mail those checks,
Shake the blues,
And don't forget to pay
your membership dues.**

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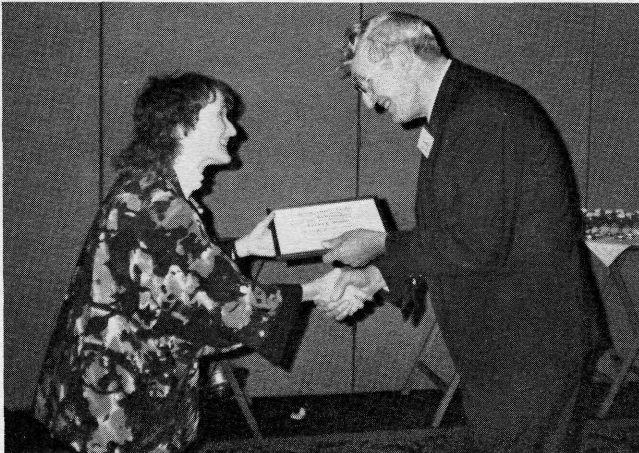
If you have a story, an article or photographs that you think would be interesting and suitable for publication in *The Journal*, please contact one of the editors, Amelia Martin or Sarah McCullough: c/o Fort Smith Public Library, 61 South 8th Street, Fort Smith, AR 72901, or telephone 783-1237 or 646-9542.

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If you do not have a copy of the Cumulative Index for Volumes I thru IX of *The Journal*, copies are still available at the Fort Smith Public Library, price \$20.00. For mail orders, add \$2.00 for mailing.

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JOURNAL ARTICLE WINS AWARD



Charles E. Winters, who has previously won two other awards for articles published in *The Journal of the Fort Smith Historical Society*, accepts the Arkansas Historical Association Award for his article, "The Fort Smith & Western Railway," which was published in April 1992 issue of *The Journal*. The award, presented at the April 1993 annual meeting of the AHA, named the article the best history of a business

published in an Arkansas local history publication in 1992. Winters is presently preparing for publication a book-length history of the Fort Smith & Western Railway.

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GIFTS

The Fort Smith Historical Society has received a gift of \$1,000 from the estate of Margaret Ann Barber. She was our faithful supporter to the end, and through her gift, her support continues on, though she is gone. Thank you, Margaret Ann.

The Society has also received a gift of 50 shares of Allergan stock from Elmo Carruthers. We appreciate this contribution.

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TAX TIP

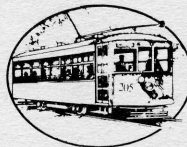
Consider a gift of appreciated property.

The tax law allows you to deduct an amount equal to the value of your contributions. One way to support the Fort Smith Historical Society while reducing your tax bill is to donate appreciated securities instead of cash.

By donating appreciated stock, you can obtain a deduction for the current fair market value, plus you avoid paying taxes on capital gain you would have realized if you had sold the stock.

Specific questions on taxes as they relate to your situation should be directed to your tax advisor.

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FORT SMITH TROLLEY MUSEUM ACTIVITIES

Car #224 began its third year of operation May 19, 1993. Car #10, a 1902 Fort Smith streetcar, has been purchased and moved to the carbarn for restoration. Car #50, a Hot Springs double track car like the large cars that went to Van Buren, has been moved to the carbarn and restoration begun.

The Old Fort River Festival moved this year to the area of Judge Parker's Court and the Old Fort Museum on Rogers Avenue for the first time. The trolley operated in the center of the fest very successfully. 1040 people, the largest daily ridership, rode the trolley on June 15 at the fest. Over 35,000 have ridden since operation began two years ago.

A 1600 sq. ft. building at 65 North Third has been purchased to house the overflow of historic transportation equipment.

Hours of operation: Summer 10 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. daily, 1:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. Sunday; winter 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Saturday, 1:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. Sunday. Adults \$1.00. Children \$.50.

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NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

The National Historic Site has acquired and framed reproductions of 40 black and white photographs of the Old West. The photographs are divided into two sets, one of American Indians and pioneers, and one of lawmen and outlaws. One set is currently on display in the Visitor Center, and the second set is available for loan to schools and other local organizations.

Furnishings have been put into the Old Commissary Building which is open to the public for tours.

Located at 3rd and Rogers Avenue, the Historic Site is open daily from 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Entrance fees are \$2.00 per person. Persons under 16 and over 62 years of age are admitted free.

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FORT SMITH SYMPHONY 1993-1994 SEASON SCHEDULE

"Premier Concert" October 2, 1993
featuring A COMMISSIONED WORK
BY DR. JAMES SELLARS

A Fort Smith native, Dr. Sellers has written music in every genre, from rock to opera. His music has been performed in America, Europe and Japan. This piece for this concert has been composed expressly for Fort Smith Symphony Orchestra and will be conducted by Dr. Sellers.

"Melodies of Christmas" .. December 4, 1993
featuring LAWRENCE ODOM, HARP

"Winter Classic" February 26, 1994
featuring TOM FLOCKS, CLARINET

"Sounds of Spring" April 9, 1994
featuring ELEVENTH ANNUAL
YOUNG ARTIST COMPETITION WINNER

"A Night in New Orleans" May 14, 1994
featuring DUKES OF DIXIELAND

RENEWAL DEADLINE FOR SEATS
IS MAY 12, 1993!!!!

* * * * *

OLD FORT MUSEUM

Nicholas Neylon of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, assumed the duties of director of the Old Fort Museum on March 1, 1993. Since 1991, Neylon has been assistant curator of research collections at the Milwaukee County Historical Society. Neylon holds a master's degree in American History and Museum Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

— • —

NEW ATTRACTION

To enjoy the thrill of an Old West Hayride along a trail by the Arkansas River in a horsedrawn wagon... the delicious aroma of a campfire supper... the danger of riding the trails among enemy desperadoes, authentic Indian War Dance and a special Chuckwagon Supper, call Tommy Blevins at 674-2865.

* * * * *

THE LINCOLN ECHO, FORT SMITH'S AFRICAN-AMERICAN NEWSPAPER

Volume 1, Issue 1 of *The Lincoln Echo* is dated June 1993. The purpose of the newspaper is to present a positive image to the public and to highlight Black achievement. The objectives of the newspaper, which will contain current events, national and local news items of interest to the community, are to inform, motivate, inspire and entertain the readers. It will be published monthly and all information and/or articles submitted for publication must be turned in by the 20th of the preceding month.

News articles will be accepted on the following topics:

1. Current Events
2. Local Black History
3. School News/Sports
4. Church Announcements
5. Social/Club News
6. Birthdays
7. Comics/Poetry
8. Obituaries
9. Ads/Articles
10. Weddings/Anniversaries

LINCOLN ECHO STAFF

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Gail L. Freemon, Historian
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David White, Jr., Photographer
Rashad McGill, Computer Tech

Subscriptions: One year \$20.00. Six months \$11.00. Address: *The Lincoln Echo*, P.O. Box 771, Fort Smith, AR 72901. Please make checks payable to *The Lincoln Echo*.

* * * * *

CENTENARIANS

Mrs. Olive Fife, a resident of Covington Court Nursing Home in Fort Smith, celebrated her 100th birthday March 17. She was born on a cotton plantation near Gold Dust, LA, where her father was in charge of the plantation store and her mother taught school. She was a professional seamstress and had four children: twin sons Floyd and Lloyd who live in California, and Blanche DeLong and Isaac Fife who are deceased. She has 17 grandchildren, 48 great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

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Elise Bauer of Fort Smith celebrated her 100th birthday April 10. She was born April 8, 1893, in Sindelfingen, Germany. She was married to the late John Bauer and they had three children, Eugenia Decker, Tillie Cordell and Armin Bauer, all of Fort Smith. She has five grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

— • —

Vesta Sutton Berry of Fort Smith celebrated her 100th birthday on June 7. She was born June 7, 1893, in Lewisburg, TN, and has lived in Fort Smith since 1897. She and her husband, the late Fred S. Berry, have one daughter, Isla Rhea McGuire of Coronado, CA, and two great-grandsons.

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NEWS CHRONOLOGY DECEMBER 1992-JULY 1993

Sources for the compilation are the Fort Smith *Southwest Times-Record*, *Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce*, and *Window on Westark*.

DECEMBER 1992

INDIAN COUNCIL HOUSE

Restoration of Hub Pawn Shop at 822 Garrison Avenue to its original state revealed Indian swastikas underneath a fake front. The building was formerly used as an Indian Council House. Owner of the building, Bud Cowan and his daughter Cindie Kelcey, are doing further research on the building.

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MASONIC TEMPLE

The Fort Smith Masonic Temple at 200 North 11th has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the country's official list of historically significant properties.

* * * * *

JANUARY 1993

FSBC HALL OF FAME

1993 Fort Smith Boys Club Hall of Fame inductees were Jim Alexander, Jerry Kerwin and Carnall "Tiny" Gardner. Gardner was awarded the honor posthumously. Hall of Fame inductees will be honored on a wall in the new Goldtrap-Gardner Boys Club on South Dallas.

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WINNERS

Chaffin Junior High School's Knowledge Master Open team took first-place honors in Arkansas and advanced to eighth nationally this year. The academic quiz competitors responded to computer-programmed questions, which were then compared to other schools statewide and nationwide. The Chaffin team answered 197 of 200 such questions in the national competition.

The Southside High School football team took top honors this year, winning the Class AAAA state championship for the second consecutive year.

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OG&E has made an investment of \$100,000 in Westark Community College. Westark and OG&E have been partners for years: one of the corporation's earlier gifts helped build the Gardner Building. OG&E has been a major user of Westark's electronics graduates over the years, and the college has provided upgrade training to its employees. Also, OG&E matches employees' gifts to Westark and other colleges.

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HAROLD HILE MEMORIAL

Harold Hile's death last year saw the end of his 29-year association with Westark. Now the Harold Hile Memorial, established by his widow, Brenda, and his family, allows other friends and colleagues to honor this man who was dedicated to education. Funds from the memorial are being used for the Boreham Library, as Harold valued the library as the heart of Westark.

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FEBRUARY 1993

Holt-Krock Clinic announced the completion of a \$7 million, 90,000 square foot addition to the 14-acre campus at the main clinic located at 1500 Dodson Avenue.

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Fort Smith's new water supply is completed, and as promised, the sales tax to fund it was dropped effective midnight February 23.

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MARCH 1993

The Fort Smith School District unveiled anti-drug and gun street signs to be posted outside the city's six secondary schools, and school and law enforcement officials announced their participation in the Federal Drug-Free Gun-Free School Zone Program intended to discourage illicit drug use and student gun possession near schools.

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Fort Smith Chapter 467 of Vietnam Veterans of America was chosen Arkansas VVA Chapter of the Year for 1993-94; and John Thompson, its president, was named Arkansas Vietnam Veteran of the Year.

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It was announced on March 8 that the Fort Smith YWCA chapter, known locally for its Crisis Center for Battered Women, has broken from the national organization.

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World's smallest St. Patrick's Day Parade was held in Fort Smith on March 17 as Donny Anderson played the bagpipes and Daniel Weidman and Terry Weidman took turns riding an antique Irish bicycle, while John Patterson and Dawn Fairclough carried a festive sign. All were decked out in appropriate costumes.

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On March 18, by a vote of 62 to 159, hourly workers at Fort Smith's Mac Steel plant voted to remain union-free.

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GO-CART RACING

March 21 *Southwest Times Record* printed race schedule on go-cart racetrack near the airport built by Paul Walker and Ronald Rouse of the Western Arkansas Cart Racing Association in June, 1992. Races scheduled March 24 through October 2.

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Hourly employees at the Trane Company's Fort Smith plant, members of the United Auto Workers Local 716, approved a 3-year labor contract with the company's management. The company is one of the world's largest manufacturers of heating, ventilation, air conditioning and building management systems.

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On March 25, the city of Fort Smith saluted 1993 Fort Smith Civic Center honorees Marjorie Johnston, Stacey Jones, Polly Crews and Baldor Electric with a reception at the Civic Center.

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Irish writer Jim Rees of County Wicklow, Ireland, who is writing a book about Irish families who immigrated from Ireland to the United States with Catholic Father Hore in 1850, was in Fort Smith researching families from this group who settle in Fort Smith.

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White Dairy Co. of Fort Smith is 65 years old. For the first 60 years the majority of its business revolved around its 150-mile distribution area, and in the past five years has grown to worldwide military sales and foreign countries.

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APRIL 1993

Chamber of Commerce reports 481 new jobs, and the list is not complete.

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Dennis Hunt, assistant city administrator for nearly nine years, resigned to accept employment with Stephens Inc., a Little Rock-based investment banking firm.

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A plan to spend nearly \$50 million on Fort Smith streets and drainageways was approved April 6 by the city's Board of Directors. The decision sets the stage for city street repairs through 1997.

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Average salaries for Fort Smith teachers ranked third highest in the state in 1992-1993, according to new statistics released by the Arkansas Department of Education.

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FRONTIER ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

In a joint meeting with the Arkansas Historical Association during the AHA annual convention which was held in Fort Smith, the Fort Smith Secondary Social Studies Educators Frontier Awards were presented to National Historic Site park ranger Guy Nichols, Darby Junior High School instructor Waldo Fisher, and the Fort Smith Art Center. Special awards went to retired teacher Nick McKown and Ann Horne, director of secondary education in Fort Smith.

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Westark Community College's new Math-Science/University Center was dedicated Friday, April 16.

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Seven *Times Record* writers and photographers were recognized in Tulsa for professional journalistic excellence in competition with daily newspapers in Oklahoma, Texas, Missouri and Arkansas. They were: Jack Moseley, Shaun Schaefer, Linda Seubold, Carrol Copeland, Kelly Kerr, Donna Payne and Bruce Staton.

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Fort Smith's Public Library's northside branch was closed permanently on April 23.

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The latest craze to strike the country hit Fort Smith this month. With the expansion of Bailey's Coffee and Kitchenware, the specialty shop added Fort Smith's first cappuccino bar.

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The National Weather Service has new Doppler radar systems in Tulsa and Little Rock on line and radiating. The NWS office in Tulsa and Little Rock will eventually take over all the services now provided by the facilities in Fort Smith.

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LUCI ARNAZ

Luci Arnaz performed in Fort Smith with the Westark Jazz Band. Arnaz, daughter of Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz, is the wife of actor Laurence "Larry" Luckinbill, Fort Smith native.

MAY 1993

Gas well drilled across street from tennis courts on south side of Creekmore Park.

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Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce held Honor Student Recognition Dinner on May 3, 1993. Guests of honor were highly motivated seniors from Northside, Southside and Fort Smith Christian schools. The two top seniors (by rank) from each high school were: Tripper Briggs and Shawn Moore, Southside High School; Jenni Files and Shelby Smith, Fort Smith Christian School; and Diana Hua and Josephine Huong Ta, Northside High School.

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Southside High School gymnastics team, The Confederettes, won their sixth consecutive state title in Russellville. Members of the team were Claire Morris, Melinda Pugh, Natalie Morreale, Sarah Fisk, Kasey Kennemer, Nikki Galloway and Kerry Cole.

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AREA LEGISLATORS PRAISED

The *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* newspaper's top political reporters named their picks for the Top 10 legislators of the session. Representatives Ed Thicksten, D-Alma, and Carolyn Pollan, R-Fort Smith, were among those named. Senator Morril Harriman, D-Van Buren, received an honorable mention.

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FINAL JRTC EXERCISE AT CHAFFEE

About 1,700 United States and Latin American soldiers and airmen participated in the last Joint Readiness Training Center exercise at Fort Chaffee May 17-25. Most exercise activities took place here and at Fort Polk, LA, the new permanent home of the JRTC. Some activities also took place at Camp Robinson, North Little Rock.

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H.C. "Dude" Crain, Jr. is Rodeo Chairman this year. The Old Fort Days Barrel Race Futurity, Derby and Maturity ran May 27-29 at Harper Stadium in Fort Smith. The Old Fort Days Rodeo ran May 31-June 5. H.C. "Homer" Crain, Sr. was rodeo chairman for over 20 years.

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Women's Southern Amateur Golf Tournament was hosted by Hardscrabble Country Club May 24th through the 28th.

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WESTARK COMMUNITY COLLEGE MALL

The Donald W. Reynolds Foundation, Inc. has committed up to \$1.5 million to Westark Community College to build an east-west, cross-campus mall and a campus green featuring a carillon, clock and a fountain plaza. The foundation's grant is the largest private gift in the 65-year history of the college.

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DEDICATION OF BUILDERS WALL

On May 30, following memorial services at the National Cemetery, a dedication ceremony was held for the Builders Wall at the cemetery. The Builders Wall is a five-panel granite structure honoring those who donated money to fund the cemetery's 6.9 acre expansion. Among the other events leading up to Memorial Day were wreath laying ceremonies sponsored by Chapter 467 of the Vietnam Veterans of America on the courthouse lawns in Crawford and Sebastian County Sunday morning and afternoon. Three names were added to the Fort Smith memorial, which were unveiled during the courthouse ceremony.

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The alumni of Leadership Fort Smith selected David Olive, assistant general counsel of the Donrey Media Group, recipient of their 1993 Outstanding Leadership Award.

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Carrol Copeland, senior photographer for the *Southwest Times Record*, received the Carolyn Wagner Award for his service to Fulfill A Dream and the children it serves. Copeland helped found the organization in 1981.

* * * * *

JUNE 1993

COUNTY SALES TAX REJECTED

Sebastian County voters narrowly rejected a one-cent sales tax for community improvements for the entire county. With all 52 precincts reporting, voters countywide downed the measure 5,067 votes to 4,692 votes.

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QUIZ BOWL TEAM NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

Fort Smith's Northside High School's Quiz Bowl Team of Jon Cooper, Sheila Czech, Michael Harris, Gary Russell and Greg Kennedy won the "Quiz Bowl Tournament of Champions" June 1 at Lake Forest College in Urbana, Illinois. Northside defeated Henry Ford High School of Detroit, Michigan, 350 to 330 in overtime to take the championship. Larry Jones is coach of the Quiz Bowl Team. All five team members are expected to return for a bid at the next state and national championships.

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STUDENTS REDUCE NATIONAL DEBT

Students at Fort Smith's Carnall Elementary School incorporated words such as "income", "deficit", and "profit" into a children's chorus about the United States' economy and recorded the chorus on a cassette titled "Budget Woes." The students sent a copy of the tape to President Bill Clinton, and sold the cassettes for \$3.00 each to help reduce the national debt and other projects. Most of the \$665 proceeds funded a new marquee for the school and a new camera for the classroom. \$66.50 was mailed to the U.S. Department of the Treasury to reduce the debt. That amount was enough to pay the interest accrued on the national debt for nearly one one-hundredth of one second.

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The Sebastian County Bar Association was named the Outstanding Local Bar Association for 1993 by the Arkansas Bar Association.

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NEW HAMPTON INN

Officials of Hospitality Services, Inc. broke ground this month in preparation for the construction of a new Hampton Inn at the northside corner of Rogers Avenue and Interstate 540 behind Luby's Cafeteria. The new hotel, scheduled to open in December of this year, will be built according to a four-story interior corridor prototype design.

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SKILLS TRAINING CENTER

Ground was broken this month for the new Marilyn Foster Vocational Training Complex which will house the Fort Smith Skills Training Center, Bost's vocational training division, which is currently located at 320 South 9th Street. The groundbreaking ceremony was held at the Center's new site, 7701 South Zero Street. The 3.81-acre parcel where the new building will stand is located immediately across from the east entrance to Ben Geren Regional Park. Construction is expected to take approximately nine months with occupancy expected by April 1994.

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Fort Smith's street fund received unexpected revenue on reports that sales tax collections climbed 18 percent, \$153,122 to \$983,645 for May. Overall funding for the general fund is expected to be about \$500,000 to \$750,000 short this year. Ad valorem property tax, state turnback funds, and gasoline tax revenue all fell.

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GOVERNOR APPOINTS FORT SMITH RESIDENTS

Jim Guy Tucker, Governor of Arkansas, announced the appointment of four local Fort Smithians to state boards. Appointed were: Chick Boren, Plant Manager at Planters Peanuts to the Arkansas Industrial Development Commission; Carl D. Corley, Chairman and CEO of Carco Capital Corporation, Arkansas Development Finance Authority; George Fisher, Director of Budgeting and Manufacturing Accounting for Arkansas Best Corporation, and Margaret Moseley to the Commission on Arkansas' Future.

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The 1993 Old Fort Days Rodeo and Futurity had \$6 million plus economic impact on the Fort Smith area.

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City Board of Directors approved regulations limiting the number of cars parked in public view on residential lots to six. Additional vehicles will have to be parked behind a fence and on a concrete, asphalt or gravel surface.

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SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The Sebastian County Sheriff's Office officially celebrated their new location this month with a Ribbon Cutting. The office is now located at 800 South "A" Street. The new jail construction should be completed by early 1994.

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COOKIE DAY IN FORT SMITH

At a media conference to unveil the Old Fort Biscuit Company's newest cookie, "Good 'Ol Bill's Arkansas Skillet Cookies," Mayor Ray Baker proclaimed the day "Cookie Day" in Fort Smith. Among the other speakers were Barbara O'Dell of the Arkansas Industrial Development Commission; Herb Brock, who read a poem about the skillet cookies; and Billy Dooley, President of the Fort Smith Chamber. A UPS truck was on hand to deliver the first boxes of cookies to President Bill Clinton, Senator David Pryor, and Senator Dale Bumpers. The cookies will be sold nationwide.

Facts and folklore about Arkansas adorn each box of cookies. Phil White, president of Fort Biscuit Company, claims some of the information is true and some is just old tall tales. Each box has an outline of the state of Arkansas with a star pointing to where Fort Smith is located.

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RIVERFEST MOVES DOWNTOWN

The 1993 Old Fort River Festival, held for the first time in the downtown historical area, raised approximately \$90,000 for Fort Smith area non-profit organizations that participated. The downtown area has so much to offer and room to expand — it looks like the Old Fort River Festival has found a new home. The site is adjacent to the Old Fort Museum, National Historic Site and the Fort Smith Trolley Museum, which all brought the rich history of our area to those attending the festival. The OFRF was voted the best family entertainment by the readers of the *Times Record*.

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WHEELCHAIR TENNIS CLINIC

A wheelchair tennis clinic has been started by the Fort Smith Racquet Club. The clinic is held every Monday night at 7:00 P.M. at the Racquet Club. Rules for the wheelchair tennis are the same except the players get two bounces to return the ball instead of one.

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ARMY TRANSFERS 400 ACRES TO FORT SMITH

About 400 acres of Fort Chaffee land is to be transferred to Fort Smith for a new landfill in exchange for about \$4.03 million in cash and utility services for the garrison over the next 20 years.

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MAYOR TRIPLE WINNER

In the *Times Record* popularity poll, Mayor Ray Baker was a triple winner: favorite male Fort Smithian, most effective public official and Fort Smithian you'd like to know more about.

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SEBASTIAN COUNTY COURTHOUSE

The Sebastian County Courthouse/Fort Smith City Hall has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Located at 100 South Sixth Street, it is a four-story, cut-stone and cast-concrete structure built in 1937 and designed in a stripped-down version of the Art Deco style of architecture. It was constructed under the auspices of the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works, a Depression-era federal agency. The National Register nomination says, "The significance of its rich original design is only enhanced by its remarkable state of preservation and the obvious care with which both the city and county maintain the structure."

* * * * *

JULY 1993

GOLDTRAP-GARDNER BOYS CLUB

The Fort Smith Boys Club has installed the front entry of the old Wheeler Boys Club on the front of the new Goldtrap-Gardner facility at 8800 South Dallas which will open for operation August 23.

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Fort Smith Riverfront Blues Festival Ltd. incorporated as a not-for-profit organization. Sources of funding for the festival which will be September this year are a downtown blues festival fund-raising party at Rooster's Blues Club on Garrison Avenue, \$10 lifetime memberships, corporate sponsorships and memberships, admission fees, annual "Blues Cruise" on Van Buren's Frontier Belle Arkansas River excursion boat the night before the festival, and Blues Festival T-shirts and food sold at the festival.

Genealogy

MAJOR NEW SOURCE FOR BLACK GENEALOGY

The Arkansas History Commission, One Capitol Mall, Little Rock, Arkansas 72201, now has copies of the microfilmed index to the compiled service records of the volunteer Union soldiers who served with the United States colored (Black) troops. Each of the index cards on the 98 rolls of film give the name of the soldier, his rank and the unit in which he served. There are cross-references for names that appear in the records under more than one spelling and for service in more than one unit or organization.

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AMERICAN INDIAN RESEARCH By Russell P. Baker, Deputy Director of the Arkansas History Commission

Research into American Indian family history is very complex. Therefore, I suggest that the following steps be followed when researching individuals who were members of the five civilized tribes of Oklahoma.

1. **Establish Tribal Membership.** The History Commission has few records other than those for the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek and Seminole tribes.
2. **Locate the family/individual on the 1900 and 1910 U.S. Census.** If the family/individual was living in Indian Territory in 1900 or in Oklahoma in 1910, these censuses will contain additional information on native Americans and will give such information as "tribe," "percent Indian," etc. Individuals living in other states, even though they may be Indian, will usually be listed as "white". There is a soundex index to 1900 Indian Territory and a soundex index to 1910 Oklahoma.
3. **Locate the family/individual on the Index to the Final Rolls of Citizens and Freedmen of the Five Civilized Tribes.** The Index is divided first by tribe, then by category within the tribe. Be sure to note both the Dawes number and the Census Card Number for each individual as well as the category into which they were placed.

4. **Locate the appropriate Census Card.** These cards, which were filled out between 1895 and 1907, contain the individual's name and the names of both of his parents. It is a good idea to locate all of the members of a particular family on these rolls. To be placed upon these rolls, individuals had to be living in Oklahoma during the enrollment period, i.e., before 1907.
5. **Search Tribal Census.** The History Commission has a partial 1890 Cherokee National Census and an 1896 Choctaw National Census. Try locating the family/individual on these enrollments.
6. See our brochure for additional help.
Books that will help:
E99 — C5 — 1979 — *Cherokee Ancestor Research*
E78 — K635 — 1980/1984 — *Our Native Americans* Vol. 1 & 2
7. Other Records on Microfilm:
Census of Creek Indians by Parsons and Abbott: 1832
Census roll, Cherokee Indians east of the Mississippi and index to roll, 1835
Old Settler Cherokee census roll: 1895
Index to payment roll, Old Settler Cherokees: 1896

(Editor's note: The Fort Smith Public Library has numerous Indian records on microfilm and in books. The librarian can also order records on loan that are not in the library's current collection.)

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CRAWFORD COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Address for the Crawford County Genealogical Society, publishers of "Panning For Nuggets of Old", is P.O. Box 276, Alma, Arkansas 72921. Membership dues are \$10.00 per year. Membership in the society includes a subscription to "Panning For Nuggets of Old" which is published semi-annually. Membership runs from January 1 to December 31, and members receive both issues for the year regardless of when dues are paid.

The society's Genealogical Library, located at 825 Fayetteville Avenue, Alma, is open to the public 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday. Phone 501-632-2321 or 501-632-4773.

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INDEX OF DEATHS RECORDED BY
THE FORT SMITH ELEVATOR FOR 1900

By Patty S. Davis, 2325 North 46th Circle, Fort Smith, AR 72904, published 1992 by Research Services, same address. 42 pp. softbound \$10.00.

In 1900 this newspaper reported over 2200 deaths occurring not only in this city, but in the state of Arkansas, Indian Territory, elsewhere in the United States and the world. This index should be helpful to researchers searching for deaths, particularly in this part of the state in 1900.

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OZARKS GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY'S
13th FALL CONFERENCE

Featuring Desmond Walls Allen

October 1-2, 1993

Holiday Inn

University Plaza Hotel

333 John Q. Hammons Parkway

Springfield, Missouri

Registration: \$23.00 if postmarked by Sept. 20; \$28 thereafter. Includes Friday night session, Saturday sessions, lunch and 40 page source book. Registration before Sept. 20 assures registrants an opportunity to have research surnames included in the source book. Make check payable to Ozarks Genealogical Society, Inc. Mail to same in care of Conference Registrar, P.O. Box 3494, Springfield, MO 65808. Phone 417-862-0850 or 417-881-6498.

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ALFORD AMERICAN FAMILY
ASSOCIATION REUNION

The Alford American Family Association, a nationwide non-profit corporation, will hold its annual meeting and national ALFORD family reunion in St. Francisville, Louisiana, October 8-10, 1993.

The association, which has members in most states and England, is for all branches of the family and includes over 100 spelling variations such as ALVORD, HALFORD, OLFORD, ALFRED, etc. For more information, write AAFA, P.O. Box 1586, Florissant, MO 63031.

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United States
Genealogical and Historical Sources

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ARKANSAS RECORDS

Compiled by

Richard Carlton Fulcher

Linda Carolyn Allen Suber

County-by-county guide to the research sources available for each county in Arkansas. Includes county creation, county seat, libraries, historical and genealogical societies with addresses. Records are catalogued for each county including city or township, county, state and federal source, WPA church record inventories, church registers, references, periodical topics, secondary published sources, and manuscript material. 390 pages, wrappers. \$29.95. Postage paid. Fulcher Research & Publishing Company, P.O. Box 21, Brentwood, TN 37024-0021. Telephone 615-794-7137.

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Phillips Family News, \$10.00 per year. Annual fee includes single copy subscription to *News* and permits member to run genealogy articles, queries, book sales, etc. Send remittance to: *Phillips Family News*, c/o Donald B. Bright, RR#5, Box 67B, Emporia, KS 66801. Phone 316-279-4434.

* * * * *

FINDING DATE OF BIRTH

(From Newsletter of the Parke Society)

So you've finally found your ancestor's gravestone. It may frustrate you if you were hoping to find his or her date of birth etched thereon. You may find it says something like: "Here lies John Smith, died May 6, 1889, 74 years, 7 months and 9 days old."

Here's a tip called "The 8870 Formula". From the year-month-day of death, subtract the year—month—days that the person lived; from the result subtract 8870, and your answer is the year—month—day of birth.

Example:

Died 1889 May 6	18890506
71 yr 7 mo 9 days	— 710709
	18179797
Subtract 8870	— 8870
	18170927

Birthdate: September 27, 1817

Inquiries and Letters

Inquiries and letters are printed free as space allows, but must have some connection to Fort Smith or be submitted by a member of the Fort Smith Historical Society. Effective inquiries must contain full names, dates, places and submitter's name and address. Don't laugh! Some people do fail to give an address where they hope to receive an answer to their communication.

HARMAR: I am looking for the Dr. J.W. HARMAR family. I believe he was a veterinarian. 1910 census shows them living in Fort Smith and shows Dr. J.W. age 52; wife Magrete age 48; children: William K. 31, Mollie 28, Lillie 25, Martha 22, Johnnie 17, and Arthur 9. 1920 census shows J.W., Margaret, John W. and Arthur living in Van Buren, AR, Crawford Co. I believe my great-grandmother was J.W.'s sister. Any information, please write: Diane Pepper, 7501 N.W. 9 Hwy, Kansas City, MO 64151. Phone 816-741-0506.

SHELTON: Seeking information about John Burton SHELTON, b. 27 Oct. 1862 in Dyersburg, TN; m. in Dyersburg 10 Nov. 1880; died in Fort Smith January 10, 1892. My grandmother, Mary Jane LEGGETT SHELTON, lived in Fort Smith for some time after her husband's death. My mother lived in Fort Smith until she married in 1909. Grandmother later married John NESBITT and later in life moved to Florida where my parents lived and I was born in 1917.

TUNNELS: Can anyone document rumor of underground tunnels in Fort Smith? I was born in Fort Smith in 1910. I remember the old fort very well. There was a lot of the old fort still standing when I was a boy, which is not the case now. The old timers (1919-1920's) told me when I was a small boy that the railroads destroyed the fort. We moved from Fort Smith in 1927. J.K. McFaggen, 5801 N. Oakwood, Apt. #C309, Enid, OK 73703.

DAUGHTRY-GREGGORY-STEVENS-DAVIS: Need information on William H. DAUGHTRY who married Melissa Evelyn GREGGORY. Want proof she had a twin sister and was Cherokee Indian. Their son, my grandfather, was born 24 July 1866 in Fort Smith, m. Margaret Narcissus Daughtry, b. 12 Nov. 1871,

in Arkansas, dau. of William and Melissa. Joseph's parents were William STEVENS and Mary M. DAVIS. Retha Allensworth, Rt. 1, Box 108-B, Richland, OR 97870.

REDING/REDDING/REDEN/REDIN: Who were parents of William REDING b. 1789 in NC, Joseph Reding b. 1812 in NC, Joseph Reding b. 1817 in TN, Isaac Reding b. 1815 in NC, Lemuel Reding b. 1815 in NC and Caleb Julian Reding b. 1820 in TN? Could be sons of William and Millie Reding or Samuel or Isaac Reding of Hardin Co., TN.

FLETCHER-REYNOLDS: Am researching family of Robert and Rebecca FLETCHER. James Edward Fletcher, reported to be their son, had daughter Opal Millie Fletcher b. 1 Jan. 1917 in Marion Co., AR. She married Walter Herbert REYNOLDS in 1936. Anita K. East, Rt. 2, Box 190, Harrisonville, MO 64701.

CIVIL WAR LETTERS OR DIARIES: Would like to buy book or photocopies of book called "Hard Trails and Tribulations of an Old Confederate Soldier" by George T. Maddox. Also searching for other Civil War letters or diaries that tell about northwest Arkansas. Roger Carter, 999 North Silver Springs Blvd., Wichita, KS 67212.

SHELLENBERGER: Will correspond with anyone with SHELLENBERGER family information. 1870 census for Fayetteville, AR shows: Shellenberger, Isaac 49; Rebecca 46; Matthew 20; John 14; Rebecca 5; and Isaac 6. 1926 obituary for J.K. Shellenberger, Fayetteville, listed daughter Madge of Fort Smith. Irene Frelin, 7914 East Pipeline Road, Tacoma, WA 98443.

GRIMMETT: Need parents of my grandfather, James Porter GRIMMETT, reported to have been born in Pine Bluff, AR, on 16 July 1876. His siblings and their birthdates are: Elizabeth Agnes 6 Oct. 1866, Theodosia 9 Nov. 1867, Margaret Catherine 1870, William Warren 18 Aug. 1873, James Porter 16 July 1876, Robert Thomas 25 Feb. 1879, Lee Joshua 9 March 1885 and John Harvey 25 March 1892. Birthplace of siblings not known. Kathleen Cline, 10343 Kaywood, El Paso, TX 79925.

MALONEY-EVANS: My mother, Bertie MALONEY EVANS, was born near Hartford, AR. Her grandfather, Wm. Henry MALONEY, is buried some place in the area. Also, my third great-grandfather, Burnett P. EVANS, moved to Sebastian Co. in the 1850's. He had 200 acres in the Greenwood area. Can anyone help with the location of the graves of these two men? I am enclosing check for membership and 1992 issues of *The Journal*. Joyce Evans, 306 Patricia Lane, Modesto, CA 95354.

(Welcome to the FSHS family. Good luck with your research. — Amelia Martin)

CASSIDY-SMITH: Need proof that Patrick and Catherine "Kate" CASSIDY SMITH, who moved from Pennsylvania in 1876-77, moved to Fort Smith. Their children's names were: Margaret Smith (Drysdale), Kate Smith (King), Patrick Smith and John Smith. The mother, Kate (Cassidy) Smith, was born in PA in the early 1840's. Bernard J. Coleman, 216 South Railroad Street, Tamaqua, PA 18252-2424.

McCAFFERTY-VARNER-ELDER-POTEET-McGEE: Need place of burial of Roena Elizabeth VARNER McCAFFERTY, b. 30 May 1861, d. 30 June 1917, Hackett, AR; who were parents of John M. ELDER, b. 1836 (AL?, where), need date and place of death (ca. 1909 in Arkansas); need burial place of Fredonia A. POTEET ELDER, b. 1831 in MS, d. 1908 in AR, was father Elias?; need parents of Miles Franklin "Bud" McGEE b. 4-12-1863 (ILL?), who were his parents, did he marry in ILL, AR or OK on 6-8-1890 to ADALINE COVENTON of Mt. Home, who was his first wife? He d. 2-25-1918, bu. in OK. Where did Edna Maebell GARNER (HARRIS) marry John W. OLLER on 24 Dec. 1890? She was born 10 Feb. 1865 (MS?), the daughter of Thomas (middle initial/name?) GARNER who was born 10 Aug. 1830, and Margaret Louise SHAW, b. (AL?) 12 Sept. 1834, m. in MS, d. when/where?

Both of my McGee grandparents, Dollie Mae (Oller) McGee and Floyd F. McGee, lived and died in Fort Smith. Other grandfather was born in Morrilton, AR, and married in Conway, AR (HOLTON-ELDER). Any assistance appreciated. Patricia (Halton) Engst, P.O. Box 2904, Huntsville, AL 35804-2904.

PELHAM: Attempting to track my great-great-grandfather, William PELHAM, and his parents prior to 1825. He is not the same man as a more famous person by the same name that married a daughter of Governor Conway. My William Pelham was in the Arkansas Territory prior to

1820 and had a daughter born there in 1822. His younger brother was also born there prior to 1820. H.H. Cunningham, 9132 East 37th Court, Tulsa, OK 74145.

I had an opportunity to visit your city last week and was impressed with the restoration work going on ... Everything I saw was good and it may turn out that I will become a local member.

I primarily joined your society as a Sebastian descendent. It was something of a novelty having a county named for one of my family. I have found William King Sebastian's father's will. It was filed over in Lincoln County, Tennessee, so that William's uncle and first cousin could serve as executors. It seems likely that William was the great-grandson of Stephen Sebastian who was George Washington's chain carrier when Washington worked as a surveyor as a young man. I hope eventually to piece together the Sebastian family which might make a good article for your journal. Douglas G. Shelton, 69 Crawford #7A, Oxford, MI 48371.

(An article on the Sebastian family would be wonderful for THE JOURNAL. Good luck with your research. — Amelia Martin)

BEARD/BARD: ... I want to become a member of your historical society. I have learned through my family history research in northwest Arkansas that some of my earlier relatives lived in Fort Smith. There is always the hope that another person may be searching for the same early family and we might be able to share notes and other information. At least one family (BEARD/BARD), to my present knowledge, lived in Fort Smith in the mid 1880's. Mrs. Charles G. Bowen, 4885 Academy Street, San Diego, CA 92109.

I saw the excellent write-up you did on the 1846-48 Mexican War in the *Journal*... At the bottom of the page I saw the inquiry of the Descendents of Mexican War Veterans. I sent them all the information I had on my great-grandfather, John Rainey Leard. Enclosed is the same for you.

I'm about 1/3 finished on the Leard history for you... Edwin Leard Mechem of Albuquerque and George C. Faucette of Fayetteville, AR, are my first cousins. Wallace E. Leard.

(Thank you, Wallace, for your note. I also sent information to Descendents of Mexican War Veterans on my Mexican War ancestor, George Washington Nance, Jr. We appreciate you and all other FSHS members for your support and help. — Amelia Martin)

In Loving Memory

The following death notices of residents or former residents of Fort Smith are abstracted from the Fort Smith *Southwest Times Record*. *SWTR* publishes obituaries from other areas also, but those are not included in this list. The complete obituaries are on microfilm at the Fort Smith Public Library. Each listing will show name, age, date of death, place of burial and funeral home in charge of arrangements if shown in obituary. All dates are 1992 unless otherwise noted. Abbreviations other than day and month are: F.H., Funeral Home; M., Mortuary; Cem., Cemetery.

- John Joseph Udouj, 85, Feb. 7. Holy Cross Cem. Edwards F.H.
- Daryl Dickson, 47, Feb. 6. Vinita Cem., Hackett. Edwards F.H.
- Kenneth Stewart Ray, 73, Feb. 10. Liberty Cem. near Greenwood. Edwards F.H.
- Bernadine Lee Gryder, 50, Feb. 9. New Cem. in Mulberry. Lewis F.H.
- Leo Geren, 90, Feb. 9. Woodlawn Memorial Park Cem. Edwards F.H.
- Bertie E. Furr, 79, Feb. 11. Forest Park Cem. Edwards F.H.
- Opal Irene Dudley, 86, Feb. 10. Oak Cem. Fentress M.
- Lema Coleman, 79, Feb. 11. Woodlawn Memorial Park Cem. Edwards F.H.
- Nathaniel Sloan, Jr., 53. Crown Hill Cem., Van Buren. Rowell-Parish M.
- Howard Berch, 76, Feb. 12. U.S. National Cem. Edwards F.H.
- Velma Barber, 89, Feb. 14. Former board member of the Fort Smith Historical Society. Roselawn Cem. Lewis F.H.
- Deola Williams, 76, Feb. 26. Liberty Cem., Greenwood. Edwards F.H.
- Garland Duncan, 91. Oak Cem. Lewis F.H.
- Flossie Blevins, 79, Feb. 28. Drippings Springs Cem. Ocker F.H.
- Dollie Mott, 89, Feb. 28. Forest Park Cem. Edwards F.H.
- Thelma Bates, 78, Feb. 29. U.S. National Cem. Fentress M.
- Hazel Looper Mathis, 71, Feb. 28. Dayton Cem., Dayton. Edwards F.H.
- Eunice Callan, 92, Feb. 28. Brearley Cem. Dardanelle. Edwards F.H.
- Opal Woodward, 87, Feb. 29. Memorial Park, Heavener, Dowden F.H., Heavener.
- Merle C. Pachi, 82, Feb. 29. Forrest Park Cem. Fentress M.
- O.J. Falleur, 87, March 1. Holy Cross Cem. Fentress M.
- Mary Scarbrough, 80, Feb. 29. U.S. National Cem. Edwards F.H.
- Leo Framel, Sr., 85, March 1. Holy Cross Cem. Fentress M.
- Trilba Vann, 48, Feb. 27. U.S. National Cem. Rowell-Parish M.
- Flora Wheeler of Arlington, TX, formerly of Fort Smith, funeral in Dallas, graveside service in Fort Smith.
- Murlene Walker, 72, Fayetteville, formerly of Fort Smith, March 2. Arrangements by Moore's Chapel, Fayetteville.
- Arlene Terry, 77, Feb. 27. No services. Rowell-Parish F.H.
- Lila Ruth Chumley, 82, Tulsa, formerly of Fort Smith, March 4. Floral Haven Memorial Gardens Cem., Tulsa. Floral Haven F.H.
- Sister Mary Alice Janesko, 77, Hot Springs, formerly of Fort Smith, March 2. Catholic Nun, taught at Immaculate Conception School in Fort Smith. Calvary Cem. Gross F.H., Hot Springs.
- Rubye M. Davis, 69, March 2. U.S. National Cem. Edwards F.H.
- Doris J. Harrison, 70, March 4. Forest Park Cem. Edwards F.H.
- Kathryn Rachelle Barnard, infant daughter of Bruce and Tamela Barnard, March 4. Caulksville Cem. Edwards F.H.
- Bryce Landon Redwine, infant son of Kirk and Stephanie Redwine, March 4. Woodlawn Memorial Cem. Putman F.H.
- Joyce Kenner, 66, March 5. Roselawn Cem. Edwards F.H.
- Zola Lee, 79, March 2. Eubanks Cem. Edwards Van-Alma F.H.
- Blanche "Pat" Adams, 75, March 2. U.S. National Cem. Rowell-Parish M.
- Margie McMahan Baker, 86, March 6. Brent Cem., Sallisaw. Lewis F.H.
- Helen L. Clark, 77, March 7. Roselawn Memorial Park Cem. Putman F.H.
- Willie Mae Ferguson, 81, March 5. Washington Cem. Rowell-Parish M.

Lucille Lucas, 76, Fort Worth, TX, formerly Fort Smith and Arkoma. Lucas F.H., Hurst, TX.

Mildred Euper Dick, 79, March 8. Roselawn Cem. Edwards F.H.

Estella Rickman, 90, March 10. Retired teacher in Van Buren public schools. Gracelawn Cem. Ocker F.H.

Jacqueline Rose O'Day, 65, March 10. Edwards F.H.

Ruby Herbert, 98, Pasadena, TX, formerly Fort Smith, March 10. Roselawn Cem. Edwards F.H.

Barbara Hughes Waldron, 48, March 12. No services, body cremated.

Jacqueline "Jackie" Jackson, 63, Tulsa, formerly Fort Smith, March 11. Oak Cem. Lewis F.H.

Harold Murphy, 73, March 12. Woodlawn Memorial Park Cem. Putman F.H.

Eddie Shoates, 52, March 11. Washington Cem. Wheeler F.H., Sallisaw.

Johney J. Nelke, Jr., 66, March 14. No services, body cremated. Putman F.H.

James H. "Jimmy" McDaniel, 74, March 13. Roselawn Cem. Lewis F.H.

Frank C. Pirker, 79, March 12. Calvary Cem. Edwards F.H.

Jim Robinson, 82, March 12. Roselawn Cem. Edwards F.H.

Harold Murphy, 73, March 12. Woodlawn Memorial Park Cem. Putman F.H.

John Liberto, March 13. Fort Smith National Cem. Fentress M.

Ada Merchant, 85, March 13. New Hope Cem. Fisher F.H., Spiro.

Rufus Spessard, 77, March 14. White Rock Cem. Edwards F.H.

Ollie "Ollie Baby" Brown, 56, March 13. U.S. National Cem. Rowell-Parish M.

Wood D. Knight, 68, March 16. Edwards F.H.

Jeanne Faye Ozurovich, 44, Palos Verdes Estates, CA, formerly Fort Smith and Midland, Feb. 17. Funeral and burial were in California.

Edgar Yancey, 83, March 15. Coop Prairie Cem., Mansfield. McConnell F.H., Greenwood.

Lillian Culver, 80, Kingsport, TN, formerly Fort Smith, March 14. Burial in Kingsport, Hamlett-Dobson F.H.

Dr. Earl Moreland, 65, retired Lt. Col. Air Force, March 17. U.S. National Cem. with full military honors. Edwards F.H.

Coy Barnett, 95, March 16. County Line Cem., Glenwood. Davis-Smith F.H. and Westbrook Burial Association, Glenwood.

Luther Tharpe, 83, Fayetteville, formerly Fort Smith, former Sanitation Superintendent for City of Fort Smith and Sebastian Co. Deputy Sheriff, March 16. Fairview Memorial Gardens. Moore's F.H., Fayetteville.

Carl Kenneth Keeton, 65, March 17. U.S. National Cem. Edwards F.H.

Johnie J. Rackley, 58, March 17. U.S. National Cem. with full military honors. Putman F.H.

Will Bray, 90, March 14. Oak Cem. Rowell-Parish M.

Eugene Remes, 70, March 18. Gracelawn Cem. Ocker F.H.

Lee Roy Gillett, 65, March 18. Forest Park Cem. Edwards F.H.

Bertha Cannon, 88, March 17. McGehee Cem. Griffin Funeral Service of McGehee and Edwards F.H.

Virginia Barron, 87, March 18. Forest Park Cem. Fentress M.

Leon Williams, Sr., 68, March 14. Bethel Baptist Church Cem., Frierson, LA. Rowell-Parish M.

Geraldine Williams, 81, March 17. Nixon Cem., Charleston. Rowell-Parish M.

Opal Newton, 69, March 19. Hall Cem., Natural Dam. Edwards F.H.

Mrs. H.F. "Nellie" Gothauer, 90, March 21. Forest Park Cem. Edwards F.H.

Doyle Sutton, 69, March 19. Oakwood Cem. Edwards F.H.

Bertha Mae Brown, 74, March 13. Bloomer Cem. Putman F.H.

Jacob A. "Jake" McGee, 91, March 23.

Lucy Waddy, 77, March 23. Oak Cem. Edwards F.H.

Ruth Robinson, 90, Memphis, TN, formerly Fort Smith. Havana, AR, Cem.

Gladys Sprouse, 85, Portland, OR, formerly Fort Smith. Graveside services in Portland.

Lucille Cargile, Liberty, MO, formerly Fort Smith, March 23. Forest Park Cem. Fentress M.

Emma Ewing, 91, March 24. Forest Park Cem. Lewis F.H.

Ruth H. Wills, 88, March 24. Oak Hill Cem. Edwards F.H.

James P. Neal, Sr., 55, Austin, TX, formerly Fort Smith. Memorial service at First Baptist Church, Hackett.

William O. Boone, 70, March 23. Private funeral service.

Edmund Earl Preddy, 77, Springdale, March 25. Forest Park Cem., Fort Smith. Backstrom-Pyeatte F.H., Springdale.

1893 - 1894 Newspapers

FORT SMITH ELEVATOR

December 1, 1893 - February 9, 1894

Abstracted by Mary Lou Jacobsen from
microfilm at the Fort Smith Public Library.

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December 1, 1893

A cranky woman who calls herself Princess Anne, niece of Queen Victoria, tried to make President Cleveland a visit last week. She didn't get to see him. The president is just a little shy of cranks at the present time.

— • —

CITY BAKERY

Wholesale and retail
Fresh Breads, Pies, Cakes, Cookies
All orders promptly filled
912 Garrison Ave
Fort Smith, Ark.

— • —

WHY

You should use Bruton's Snuff
It is the Standard Brand
It is the Popular Brand
It is without rankness
It is free from dirt and grit
It is made of the best tobacco
It has full natural tobacco flavor
It preserves the teeth and gums

Don't let the merchant push cheap snuff on you because he makes more profit on it. Ask for Bruton's Scotch Snuff, and take no other.

— • —

BURIETTA

Those of our people who heard Robt. J. Burietta at the Grand Opera House last Saturday night were delighted at the clean cut, almost pure humor which fell from the lips of America's greatest living humorist. Every word uttered by the cultured speaker tended to lift his hearers to a greater plane of right living. And the wealth of dry humor which pervaded it kept the audience in best of spirits, and every one present regretted to hear the last word spoken. Should Burietta visit Fort Smith again he will have a packed house to hear him.

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December 15, 1893

THE FORTNIGHTLY LIBRARY

The Fortnightly Public Library Association held its annual election at the circuit court room on the evening of the 7th. The reports of the

officers showed the affairs of the association to be in good condition. The election of officers for the coming year are listed as follows: Mrs. J. Stone, president; Mr. J.M. Finny, vice president; Mrs. Geo. H. Lyman, secretary; Miss Maidie Johnson, treasurer; Mrs. Thomas H. Boles, Librarian. After the election the members of the association were treated to a lecture by Judge E.E. Bryant. The subect was, "Women in the Nineteenth Century". The lecture was delivered in Judge Bryant's usual happy style and was enthusiastically received.

— • —

The first legal hanging in Oklahoma will take place on January 8, when John Doanott (could be Doanett), murderer of Sherman Long, will be suspended by the neck until dead. There is a romance connected with the murder, of course. The men were rivals for the hand of Clementine Driogs, an Osage Indian Maiden. They met last January at the girl's home, and Long was taken off by the extremely dramatic means of poison, administered by his rival in a drink of whiskey.

— • —

The Calderera Fruit Co. is the only house in Fort Smith that handles fruit only. You can always save money by ordering direct from them.

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December 12, 1893

SAD ACCIDENT

We regret to chronicle the sad death of Miss Antoinette Edenhern of St. Louis which occurred last Saturday evening. She was riding a horse alongside an electric car when the animal became frightened and jumped in front of the car. She was thrown off and instantly killed. Col. Edenhern, her father, is well known in this city and has many friends here who will sympathize with him in his great misfortune.

— • —

Mr. T.H. (name illegible) has filed a motion in the Federal Court to disbar J. Warren Reed from practice alleging unprofessional conduct. Mr. Reed denies that his conduct in the case specified has been in the least unprofessional.

— • —

Albert Schnitzer and T.B. Hammond both report arrivals of diminutive specimens of the masculine gender at their homes.

— • —

A pint flask holds a peck of trouble.

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January 26, 1894

INDIAN CITIZENSHIP CLAIMS

All persons desiring to establish their right to Indian Citizenship in the Indian Territory should at once call to see or address

Joseph P. Hynes, Atty. at Law
Fort Smith, Ark.

— • —

A BAD GANG BROKE UP

Monday night Deputy Marshal W.C. Smith, Heck Beuher, and their posse broke into the Rogers gang not far from Vinita and captured three of them, killing one and wounding another. Turner, Alias Kiowa, was the name of the man killed. He was shot and died instantly. John Brown, another of the crowd, was shot in the back and lies in the hospital of the C.S. Jail in desperate condition. A man by the name of Turner, who sails under the appellation of Dynamite Jack, was captured, also Bob Rogers from whom the gang took its name. These are supposed to be the parties who robbed the K & A V train at Seminole on the 24th of December. The capture took place at the home of Bob Rogers' father.

— • —

Ferrol, Clayton, and Louis, young daughters of Mr. George Tilles, came near being smothered Monday at Little Rock, by a folding bed. They were playing on the bed when it suddenly closed. One of the children got out and rescued the younger of the three, but the other was only saved by the efforts of Mrs. Tilles, who hearing the screams of the little ones, came to their rescue.

— • —

The *Fort Smith Republican* has changed hands, Mr. Frank H. Hand, late of Harley, Wisconsin, having purchased it and assumed publication. Mr. Hand will find a cordial welcome in his new home. To Capt. R.A. Caldwell, the retiring editor, we extend wishes for good luck in whatever line he may choose to embark.

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February 9, 1894

DEATH OF MRS. E. HARRISON

The intelligence of the death of Mrs. E.M. Harrison, which reached this city Tuesday, was a great shock to the relatives and many friends of that lady. She had left Fort Smith only a short

time ago to take up her residence with her husband in Chicago and none of her friends had any indication that she was so ill. Her remains were interred at Lebanon, Mo., to which place Mr. and Mrs. Carl Miller and the two younger children of Dr. Harrison went upon hearing of their mother's death. The *Elevator* extends its deepest sympathy to the bereaved husband and children.

— • —

The fireman's ball at the Casino Monday night was largely attended, as it should have been, and those who were there are loud in their praises of their enjoyment and pleasure. The walls of the building were handsomely decorated. The doors and windows were festooned with evergreens and the walls covered with streamers and flags. The music was superb and the supper incomparable, and what more could be wished.

— • —

HENRY STARR'S MONEY

Last Wednesday Judge Parker settled the question of what should be done with the money Henry Starr had with him when he was captured. Several persons had brought suit for this money, among them Mrs. Floyd Wilson, the attorneys of the Bentonville Bank, and Joe Johnson. The latter suit Mr. Johnson brought to recover the fee promised by the bank when he attached the money in their behalf. The amount of money was \$1940. It was apportioned as follows: Marshall Crump \$5.00, cost of suit paid by bank \$105.; costs of court by Geo. Wheeler, \$30.; rider for stenographic work \$15.; Joe Johnson attorney's fees \$200.; Chief of Police Colorado Springs \$850. The remainder is divided between the bank and Starr's attorneys, the former getting about \$350.

— • —

The students of the high school rendered "A Box of Monkeys" for a large and appreciative audience at the Grand Opera House last Friday night.

— • —

Mr. J.B. Inman of New York has been in the city several days looking over the proposed routes of the Van Buren and Fort Smith Electric Railway line. Mr. Inman has the contract to do the construction work of both the road and bridge and begin preparations as soon as the charter asked for the bridge is granted by Congress. The money needed for the enterprise has been received and only the consent of Congress is needed to put it to use. Mr. M.N. Beatty, the projector of this enterprise, will remain here for a while and then go to Washington to urge action in the matter.

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NOTES: il - some sort of graphic is used, other than a portrait.
 por - a portrait of the person(s) named is on page indicated.
 (----) - for such as title, marital status, degree, etc.
 "----" - for nickname or special emphasis.
 (-) - dash between page numbers indicates the name of the person, place, etc. is carried throughout the story.

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