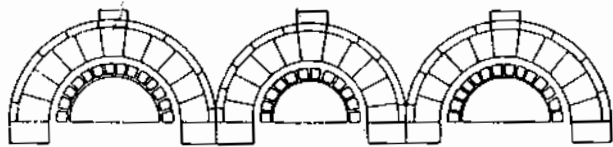


PAYNE COUNTY

Historical Review

Remembering Early Days in Payne County



PAYNE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME XIII

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PAYNE COUNTY

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Remembering Early Days in Payne County



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FALL & WINTER 1993

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

Membership in the Payne County Historical Society is open to anyone interested in the collection and preservation of Payne County history. Membership dues are: \$12.00 for Individual Membership \$17.00 for Family Membership; \$20.00 for Institutional Membership; Life Membership is for those paying \$100.00 in one year. Membership applications and dues should be sent to the treasurer.

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

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

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MY FATHER

By

Elizabeth Eaton Wise

My Father's name was Francis Boardman Eaton. He was better known as Frank "Pistol Pete" Eaton. He was born October 26, 1860, in Connecticut, and his family moved to Kansas in 1867. The Civil War was over then, but feelings of animosity between the north and south states were still strong. There were two groups who were striving for control. The Vigilantes were made up of Union men, led by Mose Beaman, who organized to protect the citizens from the lawless element. The Regulators, a group of southerners, were led by Si Dotter, and were trying to rid the state of Yankees. They carried on their activities mostly at night, riding up to a man's house, calling him out, and shooting him down. This is the manner in which Dad's father was killed, when Dad was eight years old.

Dad's life was one of hard work. He and his lifelong friend, Rolla Goodnight, worked as cowboys on the ranch of Col. Goodnight, who was Rolla's uncle. Later Dad worked for the Cattlemen's Association, and still later he became a deputy United States marshal, and later in life he came to Oklahoma.

In Bartlesville, he married Orpha Pearl Miller, and they moved to a homestead west of Perkins. They had two daughters, Ethel Florence and Faye Etta. Orpha died when the girls were small. Dad worked the homestead to "prove up" his claim. When William T. Sillix moved to a homestead west of Perkins, with his three daughters, Dad met and married the oldest daughter, Anna Rosetta. They had four sons and four daughters.

I was born in Perkins, the youngest child of Frank "Pistol Pete" and Anna (Sillix) Eaton. Dad had moved his family into town from the homestead of Perkins, and had a blacksmith shop there.

Perkins was a small town then, just like a big family. Everyone knew everyone else, and they all worked together for each other and for the good

of the town.

Warren Chantry had a sawmill and the men of Perkins cut logs, made lumber of them and built a bridge across the Cimarron River south of town.

The railroad depot was south of the river, and freight lines were made with teams and wagons. Sam Clifton had a livery stable, also Henderson Framehad a livery stable, and there was a hardware store, two dry goods stores, and two grocery stores that I remember.

Bill "Cap" Knipe lived just south of town. He was the one who was instrumental in establishing Perkins as a town.

Perkins had two cotton gins at one time. They were busy. "Rassie Hert" had a Ford car agency. I remember a song that was sung when the Model A Ford came out, "Henry Made a Lady out of Lizzy".

My Dad had a threshing machine, and wheat was a principle crop. The men and boys worked in the fields, bundling the grain and hauling it to the thresher, and the women and girls did the cooking for the whole crew.

Sometimes the women made mattresses stuffed with straw, for the straw stack was high after the threshing. The cattle ate from the straw stacks all winter.

I had a playhouse in the back room of Dad's blacksmith shop. There was a wooden bench in it, some small blocks of wood, a big round grindstone in a frame that had pedals, and some odds and ends of stuff. I liked to watch Dad take a red hot plowshare out of the forge, hammer it to a sharp edge on the anvil, then plunge it into the big wooden tub which was full of water. Sometimes Dad would let me turn the handle on the forge, which would kindle the coals. He wore a leather apron when he was horse shoeing. The apron was split so the legs were better protected.

Dad's feet had been frost bitten when he was younger, and he could rub a red hot plowshare across the bottom of his foot without feeling any pain. Florence (Baker) Holbrook told me that once, when she was passing by the blacksmith shop, she saw Dad standing with a foot on a hot coal, and smoke was curling out from under his foot. I have been told by a few people that they had seen Dad walk across a red hot boiler without hurting his feet.

My brother, Frank, has a cavalry type sword that Dad made for him in 1928, when Frank was in the fifth grade. Dad also had made another sword just like it for Bill Knipe III, a classmate of Frank's. Dad also made knives and spurs in his shop. He could do many things. I helped him make a lariat once. He made bows and arrows for any child that wanted one.

He was a Scoutmaster and took the boys hiking and camping. I have often thanked God for giving me the parents he did. It is of such as these that history is made.

Recollections of Frances Rice Gray

As told to her by her father
L. C. Rice

Lewis Cass Rice, Sr., a veteran of the Civil War, was born in 1845 in Indiana. Viola A. Burt was born in 1860 in Wisconsin. They were married in 1884 in Kansas City and came to Indian Territory. They settled in the bend of the Cimarron River about two miles west of Perkins on north side of the river. They made several trips back east in horse drawn wagons. They had two sons and raised a daughter. The youngest son was my father Lewis Cass "Babe" Rice.

My father Babe Rice married Faye Eaton the second daughter of Frank "Pistol Pete" Eaton. After the "Run" the settlers had to improve their homesteads. My father tells of very little cleared ground, so they cut trees for wood and posts and used the straight logs for cabins to live in. Their first house was a log cabin, two rooms and a loft. Dad said one of his earliest jobs was pulling stumps with oxen and plowing or what they called "breaking the ground." Dad spoke highly of the oxen, they wore a wooden yoke on their necks. They worked as a team with commands and a long whip which Dad could crack over their heads.

In early 1900's L. C. Rice, Sr. freighted lumber from Arkansas to build an eight room house which still is a lovely home located nine miles from Stillwater where Hiway 33 and 177 meet.

One of our main crops was cotton. We also planted grain for stock. Rice Sr. would notify a black man in Tulsa every fall and this man would bring 15 or 20 black people to pick cotton in the fall. They would stay together in a building and pick all the crops. There was at one time three cotton gins in Perkins and one in Vinco. In good weather Dad said the cotton wagons would be backed up for blocks. It was the crop that helped the people most.

During Dad's teen years the Cimarron river had very high banks and ran very swiftly, since there wasn't any dams or lakes holding back the water.

Dad used to cross or ford the river to go to the Chrystals' on Sundays and to parties. Dad had raised a horse from a colt which was his special riding horse. One night after a party at Chrystals' he was going to ford the river but "Clapp," his horse, refused to go down the bank. After a few minutes Dad dismounted and lighted some matches. The river was bank full. Dad went back to Chrystals' and slept in the hay loft.

Dad courted in a buggy and "Clapp" was his horse so when he left a girls' home, he would wrap the reins around the whip stock and sleep until the buggy stopped and they would be home at the corral gate. Dad never parted with his horse. He kept him all of his life.

Dad tells of a time when there was a large tent church meeting or revival. It was something that everyone went to. Being a know-it-all teenager, his crowd always stayed at the back. On the last night the preacher was asking and begging for donations. All the people were going up and putting money in the basket by the pulpit and preacher. One of Dad's friends gave him two pennies and dared him to walk up the aisle and put them in the basket. He took the dare and walked up to the preacher and put his two cents in the basket and as he turned to walk out the preacher said, "Thank you, young fellow, for your two cents and bless you."

Another enjoyment in those days were the medicine shows that came when the weather was warm. Everyone came to them and the shows sold bottled tonic. Dad said everyone said it was very good but Dad thought it was the entertainment which gave everyone a hopeful spirit after Winters troubles.

Watermelon stealing was another one of their pranks. One time three of them decided to steal a melon each and go to the river and have a feast. They went to this patch, one rider dismounted and was supposed to hand the melons to the other two. As he stooped over, the owner of the patch fired two shotgun blasts, the horses bolted and Dad said as they were running away at a fast clip he heard a noise and the one who had been in the patch was actually out-running the horses. He was so frightened.

Halloween was a great favorite time for Dad. It was always fun for them to fool the town's police. They would shoot guns off in one part of town

and while that was being taken care of, another group would be carrying out their development elsewhere.

One time they put a four wheeled wagon on top of the General Store. Dad said it was there for some time.

In Dad's young years the General Store sold everything. His mother took cream, butter, eggs and chickens and traded them for their needs. No money was exchanged, but if the store owed his mother, the store gave written receipts for so much more merchandise.

Young Jack McGinty's Trip Through the West

By

Carla and Dale Chlouber

In 1917, when O. W. (Jack) McGinty of Ripley, Oklahoma, was ten years old going on eleven, he was the driver for an elderly couple on their second honeymoon. They left in their Model T Ford for what was to be a two-week trip to Kansas. Three months later, after driving on to Nebraska, Wyoming, and through the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, the honeymooning couple and their now eleven-year-old driver returned home.

Jack McGinty was born on August 6, 1906, and he had learned to drive by the time he was nine. He says that his two brothers, D.G. and Clarence, also learned to drive by that age, often practicing on the road through Ghost Hollow along the Cimarron River.

Their father, Billy McGinty, was among the first in the area to adopt the new form of transportation. A pioneer in other ways, as well, Billy had taken part in the Run of '89 that opened the central part of Oklahoma to settlement and was among the country's first bronc-riding champions, performing with Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Show.

Billy McGinty was also a Rough Rider with Theodore Roosevelt in the Spanish-American War. President Roosevelt had told his father, Jack says, that the automobile would be the "transportation of the future." Billy wholeheartedly agreed, and in 1917 he was a partner in the Bevins & McGinty Ford Agency in Ripley, Oklahoma.

One of his customers was W. R. Bridwell, a 65-year-old farmer from the Ripley area. Mr. Bridwell had never driven a car before, so ten-year-old Jack drove him and his wife home in their new Model T. Jack stayed with the Bridwells for a week, serving as their chauffeur as they discovered the delights of touring in their new automobile.

At the end of the week, they asked Jack's parents if he could drive them to Kansas for a two-week trip that would be a second honeymoon for the couple. Jack's parents agreed. After all, Billy McGinty had survived riding

with Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders in the Spanish-American War and breaking wild horses in No Man's Land as a young cowboy. So a short jaunt to neighboring Kansas shouldn't be much of a challenge for his ten-year-old son.

After two weeks in Kansas, the Bridwells were convinced of the reliability of their car—and their driver—so they decided to continue on to visit relatives near Holdrege, Nebraska. They sent a post card to Jack's parents to let them know about the change in plans.

After spending ten days in Nebraska, they sent Jack's parents another post card, telling them that they were "headed west to Colorado." They did travel to Sterling, Colorado, but then turned northwest towards Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming.

Outside of Sterling, Jack says, Mr. Bridwell "loaded up on Brown Mule chewing tobacco." When he spit out the tobacco, it hit Mrs. Bridwell. A usually quiet and unassuming woman, she said loudly, "W. R., you spit right in my eye!" Her husband answered, "Nancy, you were on the wrong side of the car."

The Bridwells had written to Jack's parents that they were coming home after the trip to Yellowstone, but instead they made a detour through the Rocky Mountains of Colorado. Another post card brought the news to Jack's mother in Ripley.

A policeman in Denver told the Bridwells that it was all right if Jack drove, if he could "drive right." At that time there were no laws concerning drivers or age requirements for driving. By now Jack was an experienced driver, so he took the Bridwells sightseeing all around Denver, including to Lookout Mountain, where his father's old friend and employer Buffalo Bill Cody had recently been buried.

They traveled on to Colorado Springs, where they spent a couple of days "taking in places of interest." Then, traveling on a country road south of Colorado Springs, Jack says they "met up with a bison that was taking up what little road that was available."

The animal turned around and started towards the car. Says Jack,

"There was nothing for me to do but start backing up without disturbing him, and he soon lost interest in the little old Ford."

The bison started grazing again, leaving part of the road open. The young driver then sped his "little old Ford" past the bison as fast as he could, not looking back until they were well on their way down the narrow road.

The travelers stopped in Pueblo, Colorado, to visit some of Mrs. Bridwells' relatives and then headed back west towards the Continental Divide. They stopped at the bottom of Wolf Creek Pass to help a motorist who was having car trouble and they began the long ascent to the top of the pass.

With hairpin curves and roads that look straight down over thousands of feet of mountainside, 10,850 foot high Wolf Creek Pass is not for the timid even today. In 1917 it was a one-lane trail with no guard rails, and the pass was still being built with teams of horses. A ten-year-old boy was going to take Mr. and Mrs. Bridwell over one of the highest mountain passes in the country.

Then, when they were part of the way up the 28-mile road to the top of the pass, they met another car. There was room for only one car and there was no place to pull over.

The travelers discussed their dilemma and finally decided that the only thing to do was build an extension of the road so that it would be wide enough for the two vehicles to pass. They used pieces of rock to build up the side of the road enough so that the other car could pull over on it.

They still couldn't pass, but when they lowered the car tops, the two vehicles could just squeeze by each other. If Mrs. Bridwell was frightened, Jack says, "she didn't ever show it."

They reached the top of the pass after dark and were able to stay in a tent at a "road camp." They met no cars on their way down the next day and soon arrived safely at Pagosa Springs. They continued on to Durando and then Cortez, visiting more of the Bridwells' relatives and looking at cliff dwellings and Indian ruins. It was at this time that the ten-year-old driver became a ten-year-old mechanic. Near Cortez, Colorado, the car broke down, and Jack had to remove the transmission cover and install new bands. He says that after he put in the last bolt he went to sleep under the car. He remembers is that the

Bridwells pulled him out and put him on the car seat to finish sleeping.

The travelers then drove to Grand Junction, Colorado, where they stayed with more of the Bridwells' relatives. On the way back from Grand Junction, they drove along the Gunnison River.

Jack says of this part of their journey, "Many places along the river the road was deep sand. Where the sheep crossed the road, we had to make a new trail and with the thirty-inch by three-inch tires, the sand couldn't hold the car up sometimes. We would break off pine limbs and place them in front of the wheels to get started."

It took them six hours to cover five miles of the sandy road along the river.

Finally, they headed back towards Oklahoma, driving through northern New Mexico. Near Taos, they visited Kit Carson's grave and talked to his sister, who was living in the famed Indian scout's home.

After spending another two weeks with Mrs. Bridwell's brother in Springer, New Mexico, they took a round-about route home, going through Fort Worth and Wichita Falls, Texas, before reaching Guthrie, Oklahoma, where Jack's aunt (his mother's sister) lived.

For the first time during their trip, they telephoned Jack's parents in Ripley to tell them where they were. Jack recalls that when his mother answered the phone the train was "whistling into Ripley." His mother put the phone down immediately, caught the train, and walked into her sister's home in Guthrie as Jack and the others were all sitting down to eat.

Was Jack's mother worried about him during his absence? He answers, "Well, she was here, and I was there."

The ten-year-old boy had left for a short two-week trip to Kansas. Three months and 3,000 miles later, his mother was able to talk to him herself for the first time and see that he was all right and that he had returned safely.

Jack says that Mr. Bridwell never did learn to drive on the trip. "When we crossed the prairie country, we seldom met a car or even saw one. Under those conditions Mr. Bridwell would take the wheel with the great feeling that he could drive his Ford, but soon he would get confused and say that if he

could only see the front wheels like he could on his buggy he could really drive the car."

Jack says that today he probably couldn't trace many of the roads they took, since they didn't have any road maps at that time. He says, "Wherever the Bridwells took a notion to go, that's where we went. When we stopped along the way, we talked to people. If they told us about something that we should see, that's the way we went, unless relatives were in another direction."

As for fuel, there were country stores every few miles that had gasoline in a barrel, and if gasoline wasn't available, they used coal oil as fuel for the Model T.

Since that long-ago trip, Jack McGinty has maintained a lifelong interest in cars and driving. He still praises the reliability of the Model T that he drove across the prairies and through the Rocky Mountains when he was ten.

During his career with an oil pipeline company, he developed and patented the McGinty Low Water Warning System, which warned drivers if the coolant in their car's engine was getting low. McGinty feels that if the system had been adopted as a standard device for automobiles much of the damage caused by overheated engines could have been avoided.

Although he's been retired for many years and he and his wife don't travel as they used to, he's still interested in cars, and he still drives.

It's been over 75 years since Jack McGinty drove the Bridwells on their second honeymoon, but the quick and resourceful mind that enabled a ten-year-old boy to serve as driver and mechanic on a 3,000 mile trip through the American West is still active. He enjoys talking about his father and his father's famous friends Teddy Roosevelt and Buffalo Bill, but he also likes to discuss recent events.

And he still doesn't see anything unusual about his behavior as a boy. In response to a question about whether he was ever scared on that long journey in 1917, he says, "Why, I don't know why I should've been!"



Jack McGinty's father, Billy McGinty, was among the first in the Ripley area to take advantage of the new form of transportation--the automobile. Billy McGinty is in the drivers seat in this picture. This is the type of Model T that Jack drove on the trip with the Bridwells.

My Mother's Story

By

By Jamie Alyce Dunn

With the Help of My Aunt Iris Albright Shupac

My mother's name was Gay Ione Albright.

Her father was Horace Greely (Harry) Albright. Her mother was Lucita Samantha (Dolly) Davis.

Gay's grandmother, on her father's side, descended from a slave holding family that owned a plantation in Virginia. Her grandfather, on her mother's side, was a circuit-riding Christian minister.

Dolly's family came from Ohio. Harry's family came from Missouri. In 1889, when Oklahoma opened up for settlement. These families made the run to homestead in Payne County.

Francis Chase Davis, as a circuit minister, performed marriages and presided at funerals. Later he established a Church of Christ in Agra, and moved there with his family.

In 1890 the territorial legislature made provisions for school districts. Dolly Davis was among the first school teachers. She taught the same school my mother later taught.

Harry Albright and Dolly Davis were married on April 26, 1892. To this union was born Vachel, who died in infancy, Gay Ione, Massie Leone, Mark, Arnold and Edwin.

They had a second family, two daughters, Geneva and Iris, after the others were grown.

Gay Ione, as the eldest, assumed much of the responsibility of the other children. This roll was a factor in her later success as a teacher.

In those early years Gay watched her father become Clerk of Clayton Township, and president of the School Board. This school was built on land donated by his brother Frank, and known as Albright School District No.55

The family attended Eden Chapel Church, the first United Brethern Church in Payne County, and one of the oldest in the State. This church had

earlier been established by Vachel Albright, Harry's father, and several neighbors. Vachel Albright had donated an acre of land for the site.

To this church the Albright family had devoted a great share of their time, devotion, energy and resources. Gay's father became the first trustee. For thirty years he was Superintendent, a position his grandson, Don now holds.

My mother recalls attending many camp meetings and prayer meetings. Their transportation was horse-drawn buggies, and later a surrey with fringe on top. On the way home from these meetings, the family joined together in hymn singing.

Even though the early pioneering days were difficult, with bare necessities hard work, and many inconveniences, mother's father exhibited a great spirit of adventure. He never allowed his family to complain that they were making a terrible sacrifice.

My mother's childhood country home was the one and only home the family knew. She was born there, and married from there. The house however, did grow as the family grew.

On the ground floor of the two-story was a living room (Parlor) where guests were entertained. There was a downstairs bedroom off the west side of the parlor and a dining room off the north side of the parlor. Off the east side of the dining room was the kitchen. The kitchen extended into what they called the "little house" which was divided into two parts. In one part was a long table to hold hot foods to cool; the other part held laundry and washing equipment.

It was in the dining room, with its large table, china cabinet, secretary and sewing machine, that the family gathered, played games and relaxed.

The most striking apparatus in the kitchen was the cream separator, where cream was separated from the milk. The watery milk was fed to the hogs.

There were three bedrooms upstairs, where the children slept. The stairs were steep—almost straight up. There was only one closet for their clothes. The roof was slanted, which made it difficult to stand upright in one

of the bedrooms.

Porches surrounded the house on two sides. After the days work, Gay's parents rested in rocking chairs on the front porch. The children played in the yard, chasing fireflies, and studying the formations of the stars.

A long driveway led to the barns on the west. On the north was a storage house, a cellar, chicken house and a privy.

It was on the east where much of the family activity took place.

There was a large garden across the driveway to the west. This was before insecticides, so many vegetables were lost. There was however, plenty to can and store in the cellar.

Gay rememberd how her mother placed barrels under the eaves of the house to catch rain water; this soft water was used to shampoo women's hair.

There were also the days when the girls helped their mother heat and lift large tubs of water for washing clothes. Because they liked white, white sheets, they boiled them in lye soap, which they made there on the farm.

My mother told me that she always felt that her mother did housework "only when the spirit moved her." She left that chore to Gay and Massie. My grandmother however, was an excellent seamstress. She spent many hours at the sewing machine making clothes for the family.

Mother informed me that her straight-back walking carriage came from the fact that her mother, when fitting her for a dress, would "whack" her on the back and exclaim "Gay Ione, stand up straight! I can't fit you if you slump."

Grandmother Dolly knew a lot about herbs. She often took the children to gather the wild ones on the farm. She used them for medicinal purposes. She learned this from her own mother who was of Indian descent.

My grandfather, Harry, was not a typical farmer. Mother called her father a "perfect gentleman." She felt that he could have been a successful minister, politician, or teacher. He was an avid reader and dedicated to a search for knowledge.

He saw in my mother, when she was a very young girl, the same love of literature and reading. He also saw the promise of the school teacher he

wanted her to be.

And yet, in spite of these ambitions, he loved the land, and called himself "a farmer." Much later during the "Depression" of the thirties, when many farmers were losing their farms my grandfather managed to hold on to his.

At that time, children died from many diseases. Vachel died of pneumonia when only one year old. There were no miracle drugs, modern treatments, or vaccines. The killer diseases were Diphtheria, Scarlet Fever, Tuberculosis, and Pneumonia. My mother almost died during the Influenza Epidemic when she was sixteen.

Mother related that her parents were practical and conservative. Grandmother was a "straight-laced" moralist—Grandfather stern and serious. Even so, he was a romanticist; he often quoted from Longfellow, "Life is real, life is earnest."

The Bible was the most used book in my mother's home. Reading the scriptures was a regular evening ritual. Grace was said at every meal. He read the poetry of Whittier, Riley, Poe, Tennyson and Emerson to his family.

Books were Gay's father's most treasured possession; he took excellent care of them. My mother was the one who most often begged him to unlock his cabinet and allow her to read his books.

Mother loved and admired her father. Even though he was a strict disciplinarian, she knew he loved her. She told me his most lovable characteristics were his complete fairness, his joyful personality, and his love of life and people.

The piano in the parlor of the Albright home was a constant source of entertainment. My mother had a lovely soprano voice. Her sister accompanied her on the piano. This is the manner in which she and Massie entertained their suitors when they came to call. My grandfather insisted that all the girls in his family be given music lessons (voice or instrument).

Grandfather loved to sing himself. At church, he was a constant source of embarrassment to the family because he could not "carry a tune." He would promise, "Oh, well, I'm sorry. I won't do it again." But the following Sunday

morning in church, he could be heard singing loudly and joyously, and "off—key" as usual.

Playing cards had not been allowed in my mother's home because of its association to gambling. In my mother's home, however, we played all kinds of card games.

As I have said, the Church was most important in the life of my mother's family. My grandfather as Superintendent of Eden Chapel, kept the church community together. My mother clearly remembered her father conducting services when there was no preacher, leading the choir, when there was no music director, and building the fire when the janitor did not appear. He was committed to the Christian life, with a burning desire to serve his fellow man. His leadership abilities enabled him to get things done in the community.

My mother and her sister Massie rode to school on two small ponies. The boys walked. When they asked for ponies, Grandfather said, "You boys are strong. Girls need to be handled with care." As mother said, "a true gentleman."

Mother and Massie were very companionable—my mother outgoing and vivacious, Massie quiet and retiring. They complemented one another and remained good friends all their lives.

Mother remembered that her father cared about people bettering themselves and their stations in life. As a cotton farmer, he hired "pickers." Most were negroes, who came year after year. They lived in small houses on the farm. He strived to instill dignity and self-respect in them. He helped them financially to get started, by buying them food and clothing. With his help and support, these black families built a church.

As the Albright children grew older their own interests and activities took their time. Black women were hired to work in the home. Mother remembered quite clearly her fond regard for the lovely colored lady who dressed her for her wedding.

One of the other customs at that time was the "chivari." When a young couple were married, friends and neighbors would arrive at the bride's home

The couple would stay away, keeping them waiting for hours. When they finally did arrive at the home they were greeted by ringing bells, blowing whistles, shooting fire crackers, and congratulations. Coffee and dessert was served to the well-wishers.

There were Chatqua shows at Stillwater and Medicine shows at Perkins.

On Saturdays most farmers went to town to sell cream, eggs and chickens. They bought groceries for the week. Grandmother Albright's list was small because most of their food was grown on the farm.

As my grandfather observed my Mother's studious nature and leadership abilities, he became determined that she become a teacher. It seemed to my mother that her father was living through her his own ambitions. She sincerely felt, however, that being a teacher was the highest calling a person could have.

Her father made the decision to establish residence in Stillwater, Oklahoma in order to enroll my mother in what was then Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College. He did not think it proper for his daughter to live alone while attending college.

She completed the Payne County Teachers Examination never failing a course. She obtained a teaching certificate, with a contract to teach High Prairie School. Later she taught at Oak Grove and Payne Center Schools.

My mother's brothers and sister attended Payne Center School, where she taught. This school was closer to their home.

Her brother, Arnold who later became a doctor, was serious and studious as was his sister, Massie. Mark was bright but not motivated, Edwin was an average student, but a constant mischief-maker.

My mother loved teaching and nourishing the minds of young children. She could also be found at some time during her teaching day, washing and removing lice from the hair of some of her pupils. She felt compassion for these miserable little children, whose parents allowed them attend school in this deplorable condition. Of course, the parents loved her!

While she was teaching and living at home my mother met James

Harvey Clark, who worked as a representative salesman for the S. F. Baker Company. His job was to carry farm remedies, conditioning powders for cattle and horses, salves for man and beast, household supplies, extract and spices. All this in a day when a lot of people still used wagons and buggies to get around, and many were not able to get to town more often than once every two weeks. Even then it was difficult to remember shampoo, bay rum, and castile soap. James Clark was a welcome visitor to many farm families.

James Harvey courted the young teacher for some time. She entertained him in the parlor of her home by singing, accompanied on the piano by her sister, Massie.

This performance was repeated when Massie's suitor courted her.

My mother learned that the S. F. Baker Company was a reliable firm. It chose its representatives carefully for personality, integrity and good character. James Harvey passed the test and they were married in Eden Chapel Church in 1914.

The young couple lived in Kingfisher, Oklahoma where I was born, Dover, Oklahoma, where my brother was born. They lived in Cushing for a time. These moves were a lark for my mother for she had lived all her young life in one place.

It wasn't long until they were involved in Church and Community activities, for they both enjoyed people.

My father, however tired of the selling business. He had the opportunity to become Railroad Inspector in Arkansas City, Kansas. They bought a home and settled there. It was a booming railroad city.

Their life was very happy. Kansas schools were superior.

Again my mother became active in Church, Parents Teachers Association, and a Literary Club.

I remember a play the P. T. A. sponsored, in which my mother participated. She was to disappear into a "time machine" and emerge as an entirely different person. My father, brother Harry, and myself were seated in a front row close to the stage. When my mother disappeared into the machine

my little brother cried so loudly my father had to take him out. He thought he would never see his mother again, I was two years older and understood it was only make-believe. That was my first taste of theatre. I thoroughly enjoyed it!

My mother sang solo for the services at First Methodist Church in Arkansas City. Her singing in public was cut short when an unsuccessful tonsilectomy damaged her throat. She still sang well but the volume in her voice was deminished.

When the railroads went on strike, my father and mother decided to move back to the area that would always be home. It was their feeling that a railroad town was not the best place to raise their children.

They bought an acreage about a mile and a half east of Perkins, close enough so the children could ride the bus to school. We lived not more than a mile from my mother's parents. Harry and I were able to enjoy a relationship with grandparents.

Mother's parents had started a second family, two daughters, Geneva and Iris, who were born about the same time as Harry and I. Being close together in age, we enjoyed many happy hours together. I remember we three girls loved to play house. I thought my brother too much of a baby to play with us. I decided to get rid of him. My brother ran crying to my Mother, "Jamie won't let me play house with them!" My mother asked, "What did you do, Harry?" "Well," he sobbed, "I tore up their play house because she wouldn't let me play!"

I was the one Mother punished rather than my brother. She said to me, "Jamie Alyce you provoked your brother. You deserve the punishment."

It took me a long time to understand that discipline, but ever afterwards, I was cautious about provoking people to anger.

My grandmother was a great story teller. We children would sit enthralled when she told us about the Indians—how she was taken on horseback to the fort when the news went out they were on the warpath. She explained how children were hidden under the floor boards when it was known that unfriendly Indians were in the neighborhood. She remembered

how her father a circuit preacher, made trips between Oregon and Missouri in a covered wagon soon after the Civil War. He was able many times to win the friendship of the Indians, and was not attacked.

My grandfather loved to "talk politics." When the family gathered for family reunions, he and the men would retire to the parlor after dinner. There my grandfather would expound for hours about local and national leaders.

The women would gladly remain seated at the table discussing anything except politics. I enjoyed this, but I could not help slipping into the parlor to listen to my grandfather express his views on how things were in our country at that time. He had an articulate speaking voice and I was mesmerized.

It was this interest that later influenced my grandfather to run for County Commissioner of Payne County. He was elected, the only Republican to hold that office for three consecutive terms.

Then I remembered the Fourth of July. We all went to Perkins to celebrate. My two young aunts, and I wore pretty new "fourth of July dresses." We promenaded around town showing them off and visiting friends. The boys threw firecrackers close enough to cause us to jump and giggle. The band played loudly. Flags waved in the air. We looked forward to the Fourth of July for months, and were proud to be Americans.

Christmas was a wonderful sacred event in our home. My mother had impressed upon our minds the true meaning of Christmas. My father took Harry and I to the woods to chop an evergreen tree. We decorated the tree with candles, which we lit only when we could watch to prevent the candles from falling and igniting a fire. The traditional cranberries and popcorn were strung into ropes to hang on the tree, along with gingerbread men my mother had baked.

My brother and I received three gifts each—something we wanted, something we needed, and a real surprise.

Earlier on Christmas Eve we went to Eden Chapel where we participated in a Christmas Pageant. At the close of the program, Santa Claus passed out bags of popcorn, nuts, Christmas candy, oranges and apples. On occasion

my grandfather played the role of Santa Claus.

I liked to play the piano and dance. I had begun to take piano lessons at an early age. I remember when I visited my grandmother, Dolly, she would say, "Jamie Alyce, make some funny faces for me." I complied and she would laugh. Then she would say, "Now, do the 'snake dance'." I would turn and twist while she continued to laugh and clap. This was the lighthearted side to a strict and moral lady. We had great times together.

As I grew older and attended high school, I became involved in many school activities. I loved to take part in plays. I did solo dancing. I was also interested in literature, public speaking and music. I took part in many recitals.

I was allowed to stay in the home of a friend in Perkins if I had a part in a play. Sometimes play practice would run for four or five weeks. I would go home on the bus on the days we did not practice.

I attended group parties on the week ends. My mother allowed me to date occasionally when I became a Sophomore in High School, but only on week ends. Mother and Father insisted we keep up our studies during the week

There was no air conditioning. In the summer time we sometimes slept outside in the back yard. In those days there was not the awareness of danger there is today. Along toward morning when it was cool, we gathered up our bedding and went into the house. It was fun.

Heavy storms brought on bad road conditions. We felt marooned inside. Friends could not visit. There was no mail delivery, and many times no school. We entertained ourselves by playing games, I played the piano. We all loved to read.

My father was a hilarious mimic. He would perform for us by the hour, imitating characters he had known. My mother would sing, dressed in a beautiful pink kimona my father had given her on one of her birthdays. I remember her singing, "I'm Only a Bird in a Gilded Cage," with all the emotion she could muster. My father would clap and exclaim, "That's my Lillian Russell!" My brother and I were proud and delighted with our parents "theatrics!" These are good memories. There was love in our home, and joy in each other.

On many Saturday evenings our family visited my grandparents to enjoy homemade ice cream. Ice had been bought earlier in Perkins. Each of us took turns turning the freezer, which grandmother had filled with a combination of thick cream, vanilla and mashed bananas. Never since have I tasted more delicious ice cream probably because I associate this event with such good times. My mother had baked two of her delicious vanilla cakes. We sat in the yard eating until it grew dark and the stars came out.

Sometimes my mother allowed my brother and I to stay all night. We tried to see which one of the four of us could get up first on Sunday morning to get the ice cream that was left in the freezer. Later we all went to church.

On some Saturday nights, we all went to Perkins to see a movie. My grandfather loved moving pictures. It was there that I first saw, "Gone With the Wind." It was a memorable evening.

The Great Depression in our country had begun about the time I graduated from high school. I knew that I would need to help with the expenses of putting myself through college. My mother strongly encouraged me in my desire for higher education. She gave me confidence that I could make it. I shall always be grateful for her belief in me.

I enrolled in the School of Commerce, with a major in Secretarial Training and a minor in Speech. I was fortunate enough to obtain a part time job as a legal secretary for Earnest Jenkins, then County Attorney, and a long time friend of our family. I learned on the job, and worked for other lawyers to supplement my salary.

During my college years, I remember my mother writing wonderful letters. It became a habit of hers to enclose clippings she had cut from periodicals about how a young girl should conduct herself away from home, to hold on to the values of her up-bringing, and have pride in accomplishment. There were times when I thought, "Mother doesn't think I know anything!" These letters, however, strengthened me, and created a bond between my mother and I that was never broken.

During my college years mother became active in the First United Methodist at Perkins, the Mutual Improvement Club (a book review club),

retired teachers in the Nursing Home. They were all pioneers in the teaching field. She told "teacher stories" to the other residents.

She was selected "Resident of the Month." Again she entertained her friends with stories of her life. She retained her clear speaking voice, and sense of humor.

After suffering many strokes and trips to the hospital, she died in her sleep on April 12, 1987 (Palm Sunday) at the age of ninety-three. She was my best friend, a perfect mother, and a vital force in my life.

Four years after her death, younger friends are still saying to me, "I miss your mother. I never had a better Sunday School teacher."

One of her favorite quotes from the Bible was from the Prophet Micah; "and what does the Lord require of Thee; but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with Thy God."

A Story Typical of Pioneer Life in Oklahoma Territory

(Combined statements of PERRY A. SMITH, 1201 S. Duck St., Stillwater, Oklahoma given Oct. 27, 1965, June 10th, 12th and 23rd, and July 10th, 18th and 25th, 1966, given to JOHN H. MELTON, Director of Research of the Payne County Historical Society, for his use and benefit.)

I was born in Payne County, Territory of Oklahoma, on the 27th day of October, 1889 on my grandfather's (James Gilbert Smith) homestead two miles east and two miles north of the Big Mill at Stillwater. My father, George Anderson Smith, made the land run of September 16, 1893 and homesteaded a quarter section two miles southeast of present Yost Lake in the same county. I just barely got through the fifth grade out in the blackjacks.

I was big enough to know something of what was going on the time. Early one morning, when the Doolins, single file and strung out, rode up to our house and asked for breakfast. Dad was very ill; had been for some time. While mother fixed the food, they washed at the well using our wooden bucket. When mother called them to the table they stripped off their spurs and hardware, layed their pistols on the well-curb, and, before stepping inside, removed their hats. One outlaw stayed outside to keep watch.

While they were eating mother said, "I want to ask you a peaceable question. How come you men have such good manners?" Bill Doolin replied "Mrs. Smith, we all lead a rough life, but we all had a mother. God help the man that insults or harms you in any way."

When they went outside, the one who kept guard came in and ate. Before they rode off Doolin went to my father and said "Things are close with us too right now, but we'll do what we can for you." That our need was great was evident to them, because they left \$50.00 with us. "We'll be back in a few days" Doolin added when they started off.

A few days later some of the same men rode up in time for dinner, after which one of them gave Dad \$300.00. Mom fed them a number of times after

that , but they never stayed overnight. They never imposed on our good nature and were perfect gentlemen. If you didn't do them a wrong they wouldn't do you one. They'd stay your friend, in fact, and nothing was too good for you. Our family wouldn't have made it that summer and winter if it hadn't been for the Doolins and we still appreciate it too.

They were hard customers we all know, but I never know'd a more manly bunch. I've often wondered about what could have caused them to go against the law. I suspect they'd been abused so much that they committed a crime and had to take to the woods.

Fred Mitchell, a neighbor of ours (a bachelor when this happened) told of the time four of the Doolins rode into his place for dinner. He was cutting corn in the field at the time. Mitchell know'd some of the boys and was friendly with them. He cooked them a big mess of beans and hamhock. When they had enough and pushed back from the table, Fred insisted they finish it all, pretending to threaten them with buck-shot if they didn't. They enjoyed the game and put it all down, and stayed awhile and visited. Dynamite Dick was among them I recall Fred telling.

Joe Johnson had a farm on the north bank of the Cimarron, and we were shucking corn on a bottom on his place when I heard him tell of the time when a new desperado, a young fellow, joined up with the gang. It was early morning, between daylight and sun-up, when Joe saw this fellow throw his rope on two mules in his pasture and lead them off. Joe know'd the gang were camped nearby. His wife complained because he didn't stop him. "By God my mules will come home." You jest wait. Joe said. Since he had befriended the Doolins, hauled food, amunition and medicine for them he wasn't surprised when this feller came back sheepishly leading the mules and put them back where he got them. Joe told me that he walked out to the the man and asked "Ya had them, why didn't ya keep them?" The stranger explained that "the boys considered Johnson their friend. This delighted Johnson and he said "By God, I know'd you would bring them back! Thanks jest the same."... (There are 7 more pages which are herewith omitted. J.H.M.)

Signed: Ethel R. Smith, Perry A. Smith

Of this story teller's credibility I have no doubt. His account of the outlaws, particularly of Bill Doolin, is of similar vein of numerous first-hand accounts of other pioneers I have interviewed. My sources, like Perry Smith, chose to go public by executing signed and witnessed statements to lend historical credence—unlike the "anonymous" sources many writers of Western Lore draw on .

By the 1880's the U.S. Government had closed large areas in present Oklahoma to ranchers. Consequently "cowboying" was on the way out. For much of their adult lives these desperadoes, described by Smith, had punched cows. In appearance they might have passed as any cow-camp outfit except for their classy horses and shooting-irons. Having stepped over the line dividing the lawless from the law-abiding, each was the subject of a reward notice. Now they were on the run, leaving a hot trail. To be accepted in a home and fed a home cooked meal was a luxury; likewise sleeping under a roof, even in a barn or cave.

Yet these notorious characters held to certain values. In Smith's revealing statement we see them observing (1) the sanctity of a home; (2) respectful of womanhood--Doolin elicits this in austere words: (3) helping a neighbor in need; (4) honoring one's word; and (5) not betraying a friend. This seemed a natural thing to do, a code for living that never made the statutes, rather an unspoken agreement since referred to as the Code of the West. Granted, they did not extend the code "fair play" to banks and trains, which they considered fair game.

To attempt an academic analyzation a hundred years later, from the viewpoint of the undersigned, these infamous misfits take on the appearance of fossils of an extinct species of humanity. If true that strikes him as sad.

Dated at Dallas, Texas this 1st day of June, 1992.

John H. Melton

Note: This story was mailed to Bill and Carolyn Simank to be read at the Yost Lake meeting of Payne County Historical Society, July 1992.

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