

## THE EXPLOITS OF THE INDIAN POLICE

On an occasion like this when we have gathered to discuss our heritage and the persistence of regional folkways in life and literature, my subject, THE EXPLOITS OF THE INDIAN POLICE, may seem odd and inappropriate. However, I hope before I have finished to persuade you that this natural first impression is incorrect. The most valid traditions are always those which we take for granted and which are almost unconscious, ways of looking at things and thinking of things which seem thus instinctive or, at any rate, second nature.

In Oklahoma and the Plains region generally, in which the Indians played and still play so large a part, their ways of seeing and thinking, their patterns of behavior have had and still have far more influence than we commonly suppose. However, I discussed the influence of the red brother upon our manners and ideologies in an article in the Southwest Review some years back, and it is not my purpose to repeat now what I wrote then. Instead, I wish to call your attention to a functional pattern of behavior which carries over from the old wild days of the buffalo plains down to recent times when the Indian had submitted to superior forces and was trying to accommodate himself to white civilization. That is my reason for choosing the subject under discussion.

The Plains Indian occupied a vast extent of country, extending from the Mexican border far into Canada and from the Rockies to the Missouri River. Their range included parts of Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Kansas, Colorado, Nebraska, North and South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, Utah, Washington, and Oregon. In this region the natives subsisted chiefly upon the buffalo and