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Biltmore Hotel, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Since the first formation of human society man's history and accomplishments of man have been of great interest to those who came after for two reasons: first; because the average of us allow our imaginations to go back to the heart throbs, the joys and laughter and the heartaches, trials and tribulations of those who have passed into history, and second; because the more thoughtful of us recognize the history of man to be experience and we accept it as such and apply it to our present day affairs.

And so, even with us who have lived much of the history of Oklahoma the past is interesting, the bringing to recollection the times we have lived through and been a part of is intriguing.

If and when the history of this state is properly written it will be a romance. There are so many different parts, so many different histories within the whole and differing so essentially, that it will not read like the history of a state, but the history of many states.

From the far northwestern strip, forfeited by Texas to the demands of slavery; 169 miles long and 34½ miles wide and known in the olden days as "No Man's Land" or officially as the "Public Land Strip" where from 1850 until February 9th, 1889, no country, no state or no territory had jurisdiction; where men who sought refuge there were as free from the laws vengence as if in the darkest part of Africa and where the cattlemen of the old west endeavored to establish a cowman's state, where a citizenship gathered who demanded of the congress of the United States recognition for 36,000 people, after they had formed a government, elected officers and designated a representative in the Congress; where the deer

and the antelope played and where the buffalo roamed in countless thousands; where the prairie dog and the rattlesnake and the little owl lived at peace with each other and where the old time outlaw found refuge from the pursuing marshall; where the Cherokee demanded and recieved an "Outlet" to the Buffalo grounds west of the 100th Meridian and which was the last of the places where homes were available to the people of the United States to the faraway southeastern portion of the State, people<sup>A</sup> by the Choctaws driven from the homes in Mississippi and brought back from their sojourn in the depths of Texas and which boasts the first ~~of~~ of the permanent settlements of this common wealth; Oklahoma can tell a tale of intriguing interest to the world.

But not only that, turning to old "Greer" county which until 1896 belonged to Texas and in which thousands of people had gathered, builded their cities, taken up their homes, established their courts formed their government, paid their taxes to Texas and were satisfied and contented in the belief that they owned their property and were secure in their government only to wake up on a day in 1896 to find they were homeless, their cities without foundation, their government without stability and their courts and court proceedings a nullity to the far northwestern domain where the Cherokee had been banished from his native land in the east; where the Ridges and John Ross faught for supremacy; where the great Sequayah lived and labored and finally left; where old Ft. Gibson, the gateway to the Territories was found<sup>ed</sup> and in 1824/to which came many of the celebrities of this country as army officers and writers and where the early day soldier of the far southwest strutted and bragged and talked of war and women's love and passed<sup>t</sup> which flowed the murky waters of the Arkansas up which steamed the river boats laden with supplies and arm<sup>ed</sup>

They came from all sections, they came from all lands; with stern set faces, with hope and fear, with strong determination and resolve; self sufficient, resourceful, unafraid; adventurous men and women—strong men and women; they came. And there were no friends to greet them, no one to cheer them on. But they <sup>were</sup> welcomed <sup>by</sup> the genial sky and the generous earth, <sup>and</sup> settled down, unslung the old plow, ran a few furrows and built them a sod shanty and out <sup>of</sup> sheer resourcefulness became independent of all the world. They were not pretty men and women, they did not have soft hands, but they had strong hearts. They did not have fine manners, but they were generous and hospitable. They did not build fine homes but the respectability within made them palaces for civilization. They were leather faced and stern of eye and as rugged as the knafled juniper that twists its trunk on the wind swept slopes of New Mexico. They told the truth and made no debts and lived within their means. They asked no man's aid but they granted succor to the needy and unfortunate wherever they were found. They raised their children in the Grace of God and taught them to live by the Golden Rule. They applauded riteousness and despised hypocrisy. They did not think it disgraceful to be useful and were not afraid of work. Every man and woman was a producer, self sufficient, a salvation within <sup>themselves</sup> himself. They were the salt of earth, God bless them, they were pioneers. They have gone, the most of them, but they left their imprint upon a future state. No marble shaft has been erected to commemorate their lives, they needed none, for their greatness lives in the character of their children. They laid the foundation for the greatness of a future state. They wrote a history that will live forever in this great nation of ours and be of consuming interest to every man. The first great run followed by others; the Pottawatomie, Sac and Fox, Cheyenne and Arapaho and the Cherokee Strip. The simple tell <sup>ing</sup> is a garnished tale.

And into the land of the Cherokee, the Choctaw, the Chickasaw, the Creek and the Seminole pushed the white man seeking homes and writing history.

And then demands began to be made upon the Congress for Statehood, for local sovereignty. But the vast Indian population must be heard from from the east, from the Indian Territory side; their disposition must be learned. So the State of Sequayah was proposed by farsighted men and an election was had. A majority sought statehood for the Indian Territory alone. But the congress was cold to such proposal but the eastern side had gone on record for state sovereignty and statehood for Oklahoma was inevitable. And it came. Delegates to a constitutional convention were selected. They met in Guthrie. They contrived a constitution that the wise heads of other places proclaimed a "monstrosity"; but it has served our needs well and many times has vindicated the sagacity and foresightedness of those who laid the keel of this ship of State.

And then on November the 16th, 1907, just twenty eight years ago this day a new state was born into the Union of States. A new star was added to the banner of liberty. Oklahoma became a state.

What has been its record, its achievements, its contribution to the sisterhood of states in the twenty eight years that have so swiftly flown? Let us see:

We found a few straggling school houses in old Oklahoma Territory and a few Missionary schools and subscription enterprises in the Indian Territory and have builded a school system that is a credit to any state in this Union or to any nation of the world. The little red school house, the log structure, the sod symposium and the dug out school have given place to substantial structures where convenience and comfort is at the maximum; sanitation and cleanliness have been

emphasized; great busses carry our children to the country school and heat and cheer enhance the facilities for learning. We have everything to be proud of in this respect.

Railroads and fine highways traverse the state from east to west and from north to south and into the remotest corners of Oklahoma. There the oxwain creaked and the cover wagon rumbled over the *Shadowy* trails and the rutted wagon roads of yore gravel and concrete enables the present day citizen, or the tourists from other states, to traverse the state in a day. Where the before statehood citizen wended his way on horse back, finding his way by the high places and prominories for guides, the present day citizens finds a glistening ribbon of concrete or gravel that permits him to accomplish in an hour what it took days to do twenty eight years ago. We have progressed in this respect.

Where the dusty and unpaved village once stood fine cities rear their proud heads of brick and stone in every section of the State.

Great elevators touch the sky on every hand to house the products of our soil and the hum of machinery in mill and ~~manufactory~~ *factory* can be heard on every hand.

Cattle and sheep and horses and swine dot the hills and the meadows from the panhandle to Idabel; lumber and coal, lead and zinc and the glistening asphalt are produced in abundance and the concrete plants send their dust to the sky and their products to every part of the nation.

Agriculture stands at the head of the class and our broom corn, our cotton and wheat furnish the markets of the world.

Our oil fields render their golden harvest and send their products *in state* into every port of the earth. ^

We could go on interminably, but these are material, commercial things.

But what of our citizenship? Has it been true, has it kept the faith; with those old pioneers who laid the foundation for our accomplishments.

No finer, higher, braver citizenship dwells within any state or principality of this earth. The ghosts of those who have gone before can but approve in this respect.

When the great war came and our boys were called they answered in strength from every part of our state. Many of them lie "Over There" that civilization and our traditions might be preserved. Many of them returned home with the highest honors for their labors. Decorations and citations have been many and well merited. But they fought not for glory or conquest or spoils but for higher ideals and they did not come back demoralized but ennobled, prepared to make as good soldiers in time of peace as war.

It would be unjust and discriminating to refer by name to any one or more of our statesmen who have received high acclaim in the nation and the state. But their accomplishments have been great and their abilities recognized. There are those among us who have served in the cabinets of the chief Executive of these United States. Some of our jurists who have occupied positions in the highest courts of the land with honor and ability. Many of our business men and lawyers have been called to the highest places in business of the country. We have no complaint as to our citizenship or its accomplishments but what of the culture and have we given anything to the world?

A woman of this state is the president of the world's organization of women "Confederated Clubs." That speaks well for our women.

Our artists have sent their pictures to hang in the halls of the mighty in different parts of the world.

Our poets have been recognized by the greatest publications of the land and we have given to the world one of the most exhaustive biographies of modern literature-The Raven. Our writers have received acclaim in every department from fiction to science.

We have given to the world of sports the greatest athlete of all times, Jim Thorpe, a native son.

We have given to the world the first to circumnavigate the globe in an airplane, first as a member of a team and then as a Lone Eagle, Wiley Post. He has, for Oklahoma, written on the pages of history for all time to come- the Magellan of the air.

And last we have given to the world Will Rogers, the everywhere beloved cowboy philosopher and humorist. The Benj. Franklin of modern times, the best beloved, the most cherished the most missed of any living man within the last hundred. <sup>years</sup> In his quaint writings he did the thinking for millions of people- and their thinking was sound. In his pictures he filled the earth with chuckles and clean thoughts. On the radio he made the people laugh and cry and love his generous comradeship more. And in his charities he helped those who will never know.

Had Oklahoma given to the world nothing more than the last two great names mentioned above the peoples of the world would be under lasting obligations.

We believe we can be justly proud of Oklahoma's accomplishments in every line and in every way. Here we have performed in twenty eight years the supreme miracle of modern civilization. Here princely cities have sprung up like magic; our products reach every port of the <sup>globe</sup> earth; our glorious men and women have reached the hearts and conscience of the world and our citizenship is capable of producing more and more. The transition has been a romance; swift, amazing and continuous.

And now we have <sup>passed</sup> on to you the memories of the past and are standing upon the threshold of the future. And thinking of those things we have just related we ask ourselves: what of the future? Will it be as full as the years that have flown? And we can safely say that it will. It is dependent upon you and <sup>me</sup> ~~I~~ and upon our children. So it is incumbent upon us all to instill into the minds of our children those high ideals, those principles of righteousness which make for good citizenship. Shunning over indulgence, teaching discipline, building character. And as we go along we must not forget to inculcate industry, for nothing worth while in all this world was ever accomplished without work. The road is short to everything we fear but it is long and tiresome to the things <sup>we desire</sup> ~~worth~~ while. In the home and at the fireside <sup>of the</sup> ~~are~~ the <sup>best</sup> ~~are~~ the ~~chance~~ of the future. We must not fail.

Good night and God bless you and may happiness and contentment abide with you all.

C. Guy Outlip