

Early Bee Guthrey, Tulsa, Oklahoma. Born, Saline County, near Miami, Missouri, February 24, 1869. Parents, Patrick Henry and Addie (Brown) Guthrey.

The following story was sent in answer to a questionnaire:

"EARLY BEE GUTHREY"

"He was born in Saline County, Missouri, near Miami, February 24, 1869, a son of Patrick Henry and Addie (Brown) Guthrey, and was named in honor of two distinguished Confederate soldiers General Jubal Early and General Bee. His parents were natives of Virginia and Kentucky, his father having been a farmer who journeyed to Missouri before the Civil War and established a home in Saline County. At the beginning of the Rebellion he entered the service of the Confederacy under General Price, fought in several engagements, was twice wounded and for a time a prisoner of war. Upon the conclusion of hostilities between the North and the South, he returned to his Missouri farm and cultivated it until 1876 when he went to Parker County, Texas, and undertook contracting work in the construction of the Texas & Pacific Railroad. This occupied him until 1879, when he again began farming, and in 1884 he took up a homestead claim and soon became one of the leading citizens of the district, popular and influential. For five years he continued on the farm in Nebraska (sic.), coming to Oklahoma in 1889 as one

of the boomers of Payne County. Here he became one of the foremost workers to make Payne Center the county seat, he having surveyed and plotted the townsite. In these enterprises he was associated with John G. Payne, with whom he made valuable contributions to the progress of the community and the development of the natural resources. He continued his active work here until his retirement, when he removed to Sulphur Springs, Arkansas, where he died in 1911, his wife having died in 1877. He was an unfaltering member of the Democratic party all of his life and one of the most valuable pioneers of this State. His church was the Protestant Episcopal. Early Bee, his son, was educated in the local schools and attended high school in Seward, Nebraska. When he was fourteen years of age he entered a printing office in Seward and worked as a 'devil' there at the beginning, eventually working his way upward to the rank of foreman. He at this time attended night schools, appreciating even in his youth the value of an education as a means of advancing in business life, and upon leaving his trade of printer entered the University of Michigan, at Ann Arbor, his ambition set upon law. Having no capital, he worked his way through the University by waiting on tables in the college eating places and tutor-

ing when he could get that sort of work. In 1891 he was admitted to the bar and established himself in practice at Stillwater, Oklahoma, where he was appointed deputy county attorney and served in that office for one term, later being appointed assistant United States attorney for one year. He was active in Democratic politics, working hard for the advancement of that party, and while engaged in his law practice he edited the 'Oklahoma Hawk', which had been founded by his brother H. B. Guthrey, and which is now the oldest newspaper in Payne County. Upon the opening of the Cherokee Strip in 1893, he left Stillwater and took up a claim near the town of Perry, where he also became a member of the law firm of How, McMeenam & Guthrey. They had their offices in a tent, but success attended them and Mr. McMeenam became the first United States attorney to be appointed for Northern Oklahoma, when the firm became How & Guthrey. This association continued until June, 1897, when Mr. Guthrey withdrew and assumed independent practice, also opening a branch office in Ponca City and attending to both personally. As a member and secretary of the Ponca City Improvement & Land Company he helped to plat and sell the townsite during the years 1897 to 1901.

With an eye to opportunity he observed the progress of the Beaumont oil boom in Texas and went to the spot, organizing the Beaumont Marble & Supply Company, which opened the great marble quarries in Sequoyah County, Oklahoma, and also engaged in the oil business. He became president of this company and platted and sold the townsite of Marble City, Oklahoma. He was elected Mayor of the town and served for two years. Disposing of his interests in Marble City in 1906, he purchased the townsite of Sulphur Springs, Arkansas there engaging in banking and becoming president of the bank of Sulphur Springs, which office he held for two years. In 1913 he returned to Oklahoma and for a time was located at Sallisaw, but came to Tulsa in 1915 for permanent locations. Until 1918 he served as highway commissioner for the Chamber of Commerce, resigning to accept the office of secretary of the Northeastern Oklahoma Chamber of Commerce, remaining in that post until 1920, when he withdrew, in order to become State distributor of the United States Compression Inner Tube Company of Tulsa. Since 1919 he has served as president of the White River Trails Association, and was one of the organizers of the Albert Pike Highway Association, of which he was secretary

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for nine years. In 1921 he was chosen secretary of the State organization of the Automobile Club of Oklahoma, which he served for two years. In February, 1924, Mr. Guthrey was appointed assistant State Highway commissioner of Oklahoma, and in March of that year when the new highway act was passed creating the first State Highway Commission and abolishing the office of highway commissioner and assistant commissioner, he was appointed secretary of the commission, which position he occupied until March, 1927. From 1921 to 1927 he was editor of 'The Nations Highways', an interstate highway journal which he established in April, 1921. Mr. Guthrey is devoting his full energies to highway promotion and maintenance. He belongs to the Masonic body, having membership in the Blue Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons. He is also a charter member of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of Rogers, Arkansas, and belongs to the Automobile Club of Tulsa, and to the Tulsa-Ozark Club.

"In January, 1921 he was elected secretary and general manager of the U. S. 75 Highway Association, 'The International Route' from Winnipeg to Galveston. He served in this position for two years and was then promoted to the presidency of the Association, in which position he served until May, 1935, to return to the Tulsa Chamber of

Commerce as Highway Commissioner of that organization.

In July, 1935 he was appointed District Director of Information in the First District, of the Oklahoma Works Progress Administration, and is now serving in that capacity.

"Early Bee Guthrey married, in Ponca City, Oklahoma, December 27, 1897, Addie R. Newman, daughter of Joseph A. and Margaret (Polson) Newman, both natives of Decatur, Illinois. Her father was a farmer in Illinois and a veteran of the Union Army during the Civil War, afterward removing to Louisiana and later to Kansas, where he lived in Cowley County, thence to Siloam Springs, Arkansas in 1907. In 1910 he came to Tulsa, where he lived with his daughter until his death in 1917.

"EARLY DAYS IN PAYNE COUNTY

"(Taken from Chronicles of Oklahoma, April, 1925)

"I know of no task that could be assigned to me that would be more pleasing than that of talking to this gathering of early day Oklahoma settlers upon my subject tonight, 'Early Days in Payne County.'

"Payne County is one of the picturesque and interesting spots of early day Oklahoma history. My father Patrick H.

Guthrey located in Payne County April 22, 1889, on a homestead about three miles south of the town of Stillwater, his homestead chancing to be almost the exact geographical center of the county as then laid out. At that time I was a law student at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, and I took up my residence in Payne County in June, 1890. Father was a follower of David L. Payne, and shortly after locating upon his homestead he gathered a few of his neighbors about him and they laid off a town site embracing forty acres of his homestead and named it Payne Center in honor of the famous old Oklahoma boomer. Upon this town site, on a small block of ground near the center of the forty, they erected a wooden, one story, octagon shape building with a sawdust floor which they designated as the City Hall and in which the Mayor, the Justice of the Peace and the City Clerk had their homemade desks. I arrived upon the scene a full fledged lawyer, but I am perfectly willing to admit that I looked much more like I needed advice than one able to give it and I found it much easier to acquire an appetite than a law practice. Being a printer by trade as well as a lawyer by profession and realizing that father's new town site venture needed a newspaper and that he and I both needed something as a

means of livelihood we launched the publication of a weekly newspaper known as 'The Oklahoma Hawk.'

"One of my interesting recollections of early day conditions in Payne county is the manner in which the county seat was selected and the county was named. The town of Stillwater was established in the early summer of 1889 by a bunch of real live pioneers of this great west. Outstanding among them in my memory is Amon W. Swope, John R. Clark and Robert A. Lowery. Lowery was a lawyer, Swope a merchant and Clark a real estate man. These men and many of their associates had come into Oklahoma from Winfield, Kansas, and I remember quite well that many of us commonly referred to them as the 'Winfield bunch.' When the campaign came on for the location of the county seat and the selection of a name for the county, they of course entered the town of Stillwater County. Father and his followers at Payne Center entered the name of Payne Center for the county seat and Payne as the name of the county. As I said in the opening of my remarks, father was a great admirer of old David L. Payne and he was a man that placed sentiment above dollars. I remember of him saying to me on more than one occasion that he would rather honor Payne by naming his home county for him than

to own the homestead upon which the county seat of that county would be located, and he proved the truthfulness of that assertion when he took a leading part in calling a mass meeting of the Payne Center supporters for the purpose of appointing a committee of three to confer with a like committee to be appointed from the Stillwater supporters with no other idea in view than that of agreeing with the Stillwater men to give them the county seat if they would honor David L. Payne by naming the county for him. I had the honor of serving as a member of that compromise committee and my associates on the Payne Center Committee was a farmer by the name of Andrews and a blacksmith by the name of Wood. I regret that just at this time I am unable to call the initials of either of these men, although I knew and remember both men well. The Stillwater committee that met us in this conference was composed of Amon W. Swope, Robert A. Lowery and Frank J. Wikoff. Swope, Lowery, Wood and Andrews are all dead and Mr. Wikoff is at present a resident of Oklahoma City and connected with Tradesmen's National Bank. I regret that he is not here tonight to join me in recalling some of these early incidents in Payne County history. The compromise was effected. The county was named Payne,

Stillwater became the county seat, and by a special business arrangement that was reduced to writing I moved my paper, the Oklahoma Hawk, from Payne Center to Stillwater and shortly thereafter became one of the members of the Stillwater Commercial Club and an intimate and business associate with the men whose early day sacrifices are responsible for the building of that beautiful city.

"Being a newspaper man I was naturally mixed in many of the public and private conferences for the welfare of the town and I recall very vividly of having been named as a member of the legislative committee to attend the session of the First Territorial Penitentiary at Stillwater. We had three representatives in the Legislature at that time. S. W. Clark, commonly known as Southwest Clark, and Ira N. Terrell were in the lower house, and George W. Gardenhire was our member in the Territorial Council which conforms to what we now know ~~as the State Senate~~. Early in the scramble for the location of the territorial institutions we were offered for Stillwater the Agricultural and Mechanical College if we would support some other town for the penitentiary.

But our committee representing the Commercial Club of Stillwater and our representatives in the Legislature stoutly refused this offer and we continued our battle for the penitentiary. Finally Gardenhire took exception to our judgment and decided that the Agricultural and Mechanical College was the greater prize of the two and over the protest of Clark and Terrill in the lower house, and in the face of opposition from the Commercial Club of his home town, located what is now this wonderful school at Stillwater, and I am rather proud to recall that in his effort to do this he had the support of two of the men I have named heretofore in this talk, Robert A. Lowery and Frank J. Wikoff, and it is to these three men, Gardenhire, Lowery and Wikoff that Stillwater is primarily indebted for being the home of this school.

"I often think of some of the ways we had of getting in and out of Stillwater. Our nearest railroad point was a station on the Santa Fe Railroad in the Cherokee Strip known as Wharton which is now Perry and there was a regular hack line run from Stillwater to Wharton daily. It was at a cow camp midway between Wharton and Stillwater that was used as the half way station and place to change horses by the stage driver that I first met and became

acquainted with one of the later notorious early day characters of the territory, Bill Doolin. Bill Doolin at that time was a ranch foreman and a rather respected citizen. The first time I met Bill in his chosen profession as an outlaw was on November 8th of the year Cleveland was elected president the second time. I was coming to my home in Stillwater from Kansas City and the train was held up just as we pulled into the water tank at Wharton. Two men came through the passenger coach, one holding a sack for the passengers to drop their valuables into and one walking directly behind him with two ugly looking Colt revolvers to make sure that this command was obeyed. As I saw the pair coming down the aisle I searched my pockets and found I was the possessor of \$3.75 in silver and I held it in my hand until it came my time to contribute to the sack. By this time I had recognized the man holding the guns as Doolin and I said to him, 'Bill this is all I have and I want to hold out enough to pay hack fare across to Stillwater.' in a very stern voice he said to me, 'drop her in,' and I did. As the man passed on with the sack and Bill got even with me in the aisle he turned his head toward me long enough to say, 'what's the fare on that damn hack?' I told him One Dollar and Twenty-five Cents and he ran his hand in his

pocket and handed me that amount. In other words it was a personal contribution from Bill and he wasn't holding out anything on his pal. Some years after that I met Bill again. I was on my way horseback from Stillwater to what was then the Pawnee agency, and the trip was being made about five or six days after the robbery of the bank at Clarksville, Arkansas, in which robbery several thousand dollars in silver was taken. As I rode along the trail about three miles east of what was then know(n) as the town of Ingalls, I met Bill and three of his pals with their Winchesters strapped upon their saddles and each one of them had a pair of shot sacks filled with something swinging from the pommel of his saddle. They stopped me to inquire whether there were any deputy marshals at Ingalls as I came through. I told them that I hadn't noticed any and they started to ride on when I said to Bill, 'What have you boys in those shot sacks?' Bill used several adjectives in informing me that it was none of my business and I very promptly agreed with him that it wasn't. Just as I started to ride on he turned in his saddle, looked back over his shoulder at me and said, 'Say, Bee, are you still running that one-horse newspaper over at Stillwater?' I told him 'yes' and he asked what the subscription

price was. I told him \$1.00 per year and he reached down into one of the shot sacks, picked out a hand full of its contents and threw it over head towards me. It fell at the feet of my horse and he sat and watched me as I got down and picked it up. After I got through gathering it up from the dust of the road I found I was the possessor of eleven silver dollars, and I told Bill that would pay him for eleven years and asked him where I should send the paper. He laughed and said he hadn't thought of that, but finally told me to send it to Ingalls until I heard that he was dead and then to sent (sic.) it to hell. When I sold out my newspaper at Stillwater some years thereafter I called my successor's attention to that particular subscription but just whether or not he changed the address when Bill cashed in, I am unable to say.

"In those early days we had some interesting political fights and I remember quite well one of our county campaigns in which Johnson Wiles was elected county judge and a man by the name of Vaughn was elected sheriff. They were both Republicans and I was conducting the Democratic newspaper. During the campaign I had said a great many uncomplimentary things about both

Wiles and Vaughn. Early upon their induction to office they decided to settle some of their political scores with the editor by having me arrested (sic.) for criminal libel. Vaughn, the sheriff and plaintiff in the action, served the warrant. Wiles, the county judge, and also an aggrieved party, was the examining magistrate before whom I was tried, and without much ceremony I was placed under \$1000.00 bond which in those days of no real estate titles was an appalling sum for a bondsman to qualify for. It was the intention of my prosecutors to compel the editorial work of the newspaper to be conducted from the county jail. Fortunately, however, I had been in the county long enough to secure the friendship of a stalwart old democrat and ranchman known and loved by all early day Payne County citizens as Bill Berry. Financially, Bill was the real 'poobah' of that section of the territory and when he signed a bond the defendant was promptly released. Shortly after signing the bond Bill got on his mule and started home. After he had gotten far enough from town that the boys felt safe to proceed again a second charge was made against the defendant and a second bond of \$1000.00 required. We promptly rustled a buggy and team

and hurried down the road after Bill and brought him back some nine miles, on the mule, to sign another bond. By this time Bill had made up his mind to two things; first that the newspaper was not to be edited from the county jail; and second, that he was going back to the ranch to look after the livestock, so he went down to the bank and made arrangements with Cliff Rock to sign whatever additional bond might be necessary between that time and morning to maintain my liberty and with this arrangement known to both the sheriff and county judge arrests temporarily ceased.

"Some of you old settlers I know will remember Johnson Wiles. He had a bald head and his whiskers were so long that they hung some five or six inches below his waist band. It was not an uncommon thing to see him on the street with them either done up on hair pins on his chin or put inside his vest. In the next issue of my newspaper, following these arrests, I remembered Johnson's judicial position, his bald head, and his flowing beard, in the following little rhyme. 'I know an old man with power judicial, who hasn't the sense to make an official. When God built his head He made it so thin, that his brains turned to hair and came out on his chin.' The publication of the paper with these

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lines at the head of the editorial column was the cause for renewed hostilities, but I am quite sure that you will excuse me for not going further into these personal reminiscences.

"I love Payne County because in my mind it has a very remarkable citizenship. It is one of the few counties in the state that is today practically controlled by the same men who settled there in the early days. The old settlers have stuck, and in a very large majority of instances they have made good; and even where the fathers have passed on, the sons and daughters have stepped in to 'carry on' their program. They are a class of people who never become very much excited over anything and while they have not builded in my judgment commensurate with their wonderful advantages and opportunities, they have developed a community in which any citizen of this great state could feel proud to live and which many of us feel a real pride in having had even an humble part in laying the early foundation. It is a real pleasure to me every time that I have an opportunity to return there to meet these splendid old citizens and talk over with them bits of early day history. Now my friends, this has been purely an off hand talk, not because I had no

notice that I was to be upon the program, because I had that notice in ample time, but because of the fact that I have been so crowded for time that I have not even taken the opportunity of jotting down a few notes to talk from. Whether I have entertained you or not is for you to say, but that you have honored me by your invitation to come here and by the splendid attention you have given me, I am very frank to confess, I thank you.

E. Bee Guthrey."

"WANIVAPS TURNED AROUND

By E. Bee Guthrey

"(This story was written and first published in 1926 while Mr. Guthrey was with the State Highway Dept)

"Among the numerous interesting and pretty stories that have come to us out of the Cherokee Hills of Northeast Oklahoma in the form of Indian legendary history, is one explaining the origin of the name Spavinaw.

"During the early settlement days of that region by the Cherokees and old Indian, known as Chief Cocheega, to his exceptionally few white visitors, was the leader of a small band of his tribe and is said to have lived near the small town of Ouche, in what is now Delaware County.

"The pride of the old chief's life, and his constant companion, was a granddaughter about 16 years of age named

Wanivaps, who by reason of her native beauty and the fluency with which she handled a small English vocabulary, was a prime favorite, not only among the Indians of the settlement, but the white hunters and trappers as well.

"Her familiarity with the country and her value as an interpreter, often won her a call as a guide for white hunters in the region, and it was on an assignment of this nature that the name 'Spavinaw' found its way into the geography of the old Indian Territory.

"The party had started out on a beautiful spring morning, and on account of the favorable weather conditions the early afternoon found them an unusually long distance from the home base. A thunder storm, a hard rain and a quick flash of cold spring weather delayed their movements, confused them as to directions, until finally nightfall found them on the banks of a creek in a section of country wholly unfamiliar to the tired and worried little Indian guide, who in utter despair sat down upon a big red granite boulder near the banks of the stream and said 'Wanivaps turned around.'

"They improvised a camp for the night, and under a bright sun the following morning Wanivaps quickly led her lost friends back to the home of old Chief Cocheega.

"The old Chief, dumfounded to find that there was a spot so near that Wanivaps had never seen, and hearing their story of the big red granite boulders, insisted upon being taken to it at once. Upon their arrival there the leader of the hunting party said, 'Here it is, and we will name it Wanivaps turned around.' then with a walking stick he wrote in the sand 'Spavinaw'."