

THE ENID OKLAHOMA COLLECTION IN THE CARNEGIE LIBRARY

By Berlin B. Chapman

"No documents, no history," begins one of the best known text-books in historiography.¹ Certainly there is nothing more fundamental for efficient use of Oklahoma history than knowledge of the content and location of the leading collections in the State.

The Enid Oklahoma Collection in the Carnegie Library is especially strong in clipping files made from newspapers and magazines. It gives immediate access to material about any person listed among a group of 450 State authors. There are files for Oklahoma artists, musicians, movie stars, and sportsmen. A voluminous file deals with Oklahomans who in other ways have become nationally known. The collection gives much information about Oklahomans whose attainment is considerable but who are not nationally known. It deals primarily with persons who have lived within what is now Oklahoma.² In this article names of persons were chosen at random from those who have lived within that area, the aim being merely to illustrate the nature of the contents of the files.

Since 1929 it has been the policy of the Library to collect all publications by Oklahoma authors, autographed copies when possible. Many books about Oklahoma, now out of print, are preserved in the rare book collection.

The collection of clippings was made during the last sixteen years, being largely the work of Miss Mabel B. McClure, Librarian, who was familiar with the clipping files in the Public Library of Kansas City, Missouri. When W P A assistance was available, clippings made prior to 1940 were mounted. Since that date only the biographical and Enid clippings are mounted.

One who thumbs through the files finds material collected under such headings as: Mrs. Thomas E. Dewey, Sen. Thomas P.

¹ C. H. Langlois and Charles Seignobos, *Introduction to the Study of History*. My study was undertaken after Mr. James W. Moffitt had repeatedly pointed out the advantage of having in *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* a description of special collections in various libraries in the State. Mr. Moffitt was Secretary of the Oklahoma Historical Society from 1936 to 1944.

² In the collection are files for many persons who never lived in Oklahoma, but who made an important contribution to the State. For instance, among the files of artists is one for John Noble who made the Run in 1893, but who apparently never lived in Oklahoma. His pictures, "The Run," and "The Big Herd," endeared him to the people of Oklahoma.

Gore, Alice Robertson, Dennis T. Flynn, the Fergusons (Gov. and Mrs. Thomas B. Ferguson, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Ferguson et al.), Gen. Stand Watie, Patrick J. Hurley, Roberta Lawson, Rev. S. A. Worcester, Mrs. Lawrence Langner (nee Armina Marshall), "Aunt Susan," Rev. John R. Abernathy, Joseph A. Brandt, Flora Campbell, C. F. Colcord, H. H. Champlin, Dr. Forney Hutchinson, Dr. I. N. McCash, Phillips Brothers, Tom Slick, Wiley Post, etc.—hundreds of names.

Among Oklahoma authors the clipping files give data on Mary McDougal Alexson, Lynn Riggs, Alex Posey, Jennie Harris Oliver, Stanley Vestal, Bishop F. C. Kelley, Todd Downing, Kenneth C. Kaufman, Mary Plum, Mrs. Dorothy Cameron Disney, George Milburn, Vingie E. Roe, Dora Aydelotte, George R. Hall, Dr. and Mrs. Grant Foreman, E. E. Dale, Muriel H. Wright, and Muna Lee.

There is a file on Enid authors, of whom there are forty. Among them are Marquis James, Russel Crouse, George Rainey, Althea Bass, George Storm, and Paul Wellman. Some are persons of poetic attainment. Among them are Therese Black, Bess Truitt, Helen P. Neal, Gertrude Major, and Gwen Hendrickson.

Among artists are Adah Robinson, Acee Blue Eagle, Nan Sheets, Doel Reed, Father R. G. Gerrer, Robert Garrison, and N. M. Davidson.

There are files for Joseph Bentonelli, Kathleen Kersting, and Leta Mae Flynn of grand opera renown; there is material on other Oklahoma musicians including Paul Pendarvis, Roy Harris, Princess Tsianina, and Tessie Mobley Brave of Indian extraction and known as "Princess Lushanya." Complete files of programs of the Cimarron Opera Company, with Enid press notices, keep alive the history of the Enid Summer Opera.

Among movie stars are files for Glenda Farrell, Joan Crawford,³ Rochelle Hudson, Jennifer Jones, Erik Rhodes,⁴ Lon Chaney, Pinky Tomlin, Gene Autry, and Kay Francis. There is an extensive file for Will Rogers, actor and author. Contemporary accounts of his tragic death will increase in value with the years.

Miscellaneous clipping files carry material on nearly every subject pertaining to Oklahoma. Indexes reveal material on Aviation in Oklahoma, Beauty Spots in Oklahoma, Historical Markers, Highways, Birds, Flags, Camps, Churches, Early Missions, Mound Builders, Genealogy, Ghost Towns, Gardens, Rivers, Dams, Flood Con-

³ Joan Crawford lived in Lawton, Oklahoma. There she knew Don Blanding whom she befriended when he went to Hollywood.

⁴ When Rhodes was a student in Central High School in Oklahoma City he was known as "Earnest Sharpe." He attended the University of Oklahoma.

trol, Dust Storms, Snakes, Spiders, Rhodes Scholars, Oklahomans in West Point, Oklahoma Hall of Fame, Bruce Barton's Tribute to Oklahoma, History of Printing in Oklahoma, Oklahoma Trails, Oklahoma Census Reports, Oklahoma Indians, World Wars I and II.

The Oklahoma Book Collection in the Library numbers about 1355 volumes. The Library has all publications of the Oklahoma Geological Survey; all books published by the University of Oklahoma Press; a complete file of the *Chronicles of Oklahoma*; a complete file of Dr. and Mrs. Franklyn P. Davis, *Anthology of Newspaper Verse*,⁵ donated by them to the Library; all Enid City Directories since 1910; and many volumes of *Harlow's Weekly*.

Through courtesy of former Governor William H. Murray, the Library owns copies of the Proceedings of the Oklahoma Constitutional Convention, and a copy of the State Constitution in original binding, each bearing the donor's autograph. George F. Southard, who was Chairman of the Library Board for twenty years, gave the Library his collection of rare books, known as the "Southard Collection." There is also a collection of books on genealogy given by members of the D.A.R. An atlas of Garfield County published in 1906 by a Chicago firm, includes a plat of villages and cities of that time, and gives the individual claim owners.

In the Oklahoma Incunabula are four volumes in the Cherokee language, probably printed on the first printing press in what is now Oklahoma, some 100 years ago. They are, *Gospel According to St. Matthew*; *Gospel According to Exodus*; *Cherokee Hymns*; and *Swiss Peasant* by Rev. Cesar Malan. There is a rare edition of John Ridge's poems published in 1868.

Don Blanding, artist and poet, lived in Enid in his youth. He gave the Library many of his original illustrations used in his books.

Marquis James, whose *Raven* won the Pulitzer prize for biography in 1930, was reared in Enid. He presented the Library the original manuscript of the book on the occasion of the 100th birthday of Mrs. Mary C. Lee, founder of the Library.

In conclusion it may be said that the Enid Oklahoma Collection makes immediately accessible to readers material about persons, more or less prominent in the history of Oklahoma, much of which material is not otherwise easily accessible. Classification includes the topic approach.

⁵ The *Anthology of Newspaper Verse* comprises 23 volumes, a volume being published each year from 1919 to 1941 inclusive. This selection of poems from newspapers is a barometer to the sentiment of the American people. Dr. Davis, an Enid physician, began the work and continued it until his death in 1933. Thereafter his wife, Mrs. Athie Sale Davis, continued the work until 1941.