

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

IN MEMORIAM

VICTOR MURDOCK

Perhaps no man living without the confines of the State of Oklahoma has played a more interesting part in the development of the State than has Victor Murdock. He died on July 8, 1945 at Wichita, Kansas. As Editor of the *Wichita Eagle* which he inherited from his father, Marshall M. Murdock who established the *Eagle* in 1872, he had almost as large list of readers for forty years in Oklahoma as in Kansas. He filled his paper so full of Oklahoma news and took such interest in Northern Oklahoma development that no Oklahoma paper could make much headway in the northern tier of counties in the state.

Victor Murdock was an engaging and national figure from the time he entered Congress in 1902. Joseph Cannon, the "czar" Speaker of the House, had ruled with an iron hand and pushed the membership of the House around just about as he pleased for many years. The young congressman from Kansas growing up on the western plains got such a breeze of liberty and independence in his red head that he and Cannon soon clashed. Uncle Joe had his way for awhile but realizing that he had a fight on his hands from an unconquerable spirit, he soon recognized the merit of Victor Murdock and through the twelve years the Editor of the *Eagle* served in Congress he and Cannon were close friends.

In 1914 he retired from the House of Representatives to make a race against Charles Curtis, another warm friend of Oklahoma. It should be said that he had bolted the Republican Party to support his warm friend, Theodore Roosevelt, in 1912. He declared his candidacy that year on the Bull Moose ticket. He was elected and became the Bull Moose selection for Speaker of the House. He subsequently lost his race to Curtis and retiring, took up the editorship of the *Eagle* which he held until his death.

His pen as editor was full of vitriol for his enemies and ardent love for his friends. He was friendly to the movement of making Oklahoma territories into a State. He followed the pioneer development of the State with great interest, and the files of the *Wichita Eagle* would make a splendid history of pioneer sacrifice and final triumph in developing the State of Oklahoma. He was invited to speak at the dedication of the State Historical Society building in November, 1930, and he gladly responded and expressed

his pride and profound satisfaction upon the wonderful progress made by this State since he first knew it as a child.

He was born in Burlingame, Kansas, March 18, 1871. His was a life full of achievement and rounded with such power that he became one of the Nation's great. Oklahoma will miss Victor Murdock and profound regret and sorrow was expressed by thousands of his Oklahoma friends upon his passing.

—Charles Evans.

Oklahoma Historical Society.

KEEPING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

An article "Origin of Oklahoma Day" by Muriel H. Wright was published in *The Chronicles* for autumn, 1945 (Vol. XXIII, No. 3, pp. 203-17), in which special mention was made on the history of the Oklahoma Memorial Association and its "Honorees" to the "Hall of Fame" since 1928. Owing to imperfect records for writing and compiling the history of the Memorial Association, the following name was not given in the published list of "Honorees" for 1932 (pages 211-12) and is herewith added: *Frank M. Bailey*, Chickasha: Prominent attorney, jurist; civic, church, and Democratic Party leader.

Other corrections in the lists of "Hall of Fame Honorees" in this article are made as follows:

Page 211, list for 1932, *Campbell Russell* was formerly of Muskogee rather than Ardmore.

Page 212, list for 1932, the name "J. B. Connors" should read *J. P. Connors.*"

Page 214, list for 1937, the name "John R. Keaton" should read "*James R. Keaton.*"

Page 216, list for 1939, the biographical notes following the name of *Cassius M. Cade*, Oklahoma City (formerly of Shawnee), should read, "Kingfisher County pioneer ('89er), pioneer banker, former Republican National Committeeman from Oklahoma." Mr. Cade was never a delegate nor representative to Congress for the Territory or the State of Oklahoma, as stated in the published list for 1939.

(M.H.W.)

CHIEF RABBIT RUN OF THE ARAPAHOES

The following story published in *The News-Review*, Oklahoma City, for August 13, 1942, was submitted to the Editorial Department by Mrs. Golda I. Kammerzell, of Hobart, Oklahoma, who is a daughter of Judge T. C. Knoop:

"RABBIT RUN"

Judge T. C. Knoop, father of Mrs. J. A. Curtis, of the *News-Review*, is an honorary chief of the Arapaho tribe. He knows the Indians as well as any man in Oklahoma, having lived among them for almost a half century. He has practiced law at Canton for a major portion of that time and is one of the honored deans of the legal profession in Oklahoma.

One of his best friends passed away the other day and Judge Knoop was asked to write a few words in memory of his comrade.

His tribute must be of interest to our readers as it is a story of the present which deals with the past—a past that is, for lack of interest, being rapidly forgotten.

"The other day one of the few remaining links which connect the state of Oklahoma with its early history was broken. Rabbit Run, the last chief of the Arapaho tribe died July 30th at Canton and was buried August 3rd in the Indian cemetery at Canton.

"Two funeral services were held. The first, for his white friends, was conducted by Rev. Dyke of Eagle City, in the Church of the Latter Day Saints, at Canton, while the second service was conducted for the Indians at the Mennonite Mission church south of Canton. It was fitting that the Indian service be conducted at this church, which was established over 50 years ago as a mission for the Indians, before the country was opened for settlement by the whites.

"The customary Mennonite funeral service was conducted by Rev. Fresson, pastor of the Mission. He was assisted by Ben Spotted Wolf and Dave Black Horse, and other members of the Arapaho tribe. This service was simple but impressive and the devotion and sorrow displayed by his fellow tribesmen indicated the esteem and reverence his people had for this last chief.

"Rabbit Run was a member of the Arapaho Tribe of Plains Indians. He was born in 1837, in Wyoming in what was then known by the Indians as their country, and is now called the Black Hills country. This tribe at that time and prior thereto were the most wealthy Indians of all tribes in land holdings. Owning and holding the entire Missouri Territory country embracing parts of Wyoming, Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico and Oklahoma.

"Through various treaties with the U. S. Government the tribes conceded vast tracts of this land for great sums of annual payments covering a period of 50 to 60 years, and in a final and last Treaty, that went to the United States for approval and ratification, the U. S. Senate changed the treaty by having Art. II read: "All former treaties are hereby abrogated," and further changed it by eliminating a large part of land reserved by the tribe. This changing of the treaties by the U. S. Senate without the knowledge or consent of the tribe.

"Thus, by the simple process of treaties, between the civilized, and uncivilized—the strong and the weak—the Tribes were stripped of their magnificent possessions; larger than the states of Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey combined, and left them without a foot of land they could call their own.

"Rabbit Run, growing up and becoming active as a young Tribesman, studied the history of the tribal possessions and found that the Tribe had established their home and possessions of the large tract of land including the Black Hills country prior to 1803 and that no other Tribe was there. That subsequently the Sioux Tribe came and established their home with

the Arapaho and Cheyennes. That in 1923 the Sioux Tribe apparently filed a suit in the Courts of Claims to recover the Black Hills Country.

"The Arapahoes at once proceeded to protect their interest, and obtained permission from Congress to intervene in the suit filed by the Sioux.

"In 1884, the Tribe having recognized the ability of Rabbit Run, made him a High Chief and Medicine man, and in that capacity he served the Tribe. When it became apparent that a delegation of Chiefs and Tribesmen would have to appear in Washington in behalf of their interests, Chief Rabbit Run was one of the delegates to go.

"I recall the first council following the return of the delegation from Washington. I was ushered into the council tepee, and saw the Tribesmen sitting in a circle, as silent and as motionless as statues. Not a word was said—not a muscle moved for minutes. Then Rabbit Run arose and began to speak.

"When he began his voice was low, scarcely above a whisper. We had been rebuffed and insulted in Washington. He keenly felt this treatment and he was discouraged and sick at heart. But as he spoke, he began to lose his air of dejection. He was a tall man, but he appeared to become taller until he seemed to command the entire room. His voice became full and as resonant as an organ. His eyes blazed and every muscle of his body became a mobile part of a great orator.

"Today that is one of the outstanding mental pictures that I have of a life that has covered more than the ordinary three score years and ten. That vision of an uncultured, uneducated savage—wronged as only the Indians have been wronged, but still hoping for some of the white man's justice. Pleading for the rights of his tribe. Begging for fairness and a restoration of that which had been taken from them by might and trickery. That a wrong might be righted and justice prevail.

"It was a thrilling and inspiring moment; one that will live in my memory forever—but alas—it was just another episode in our black record of Indian oppression—just another heroic picture of the oppressed pleading for a lost cause.

"I first met Rabbit Run in the spring of 1895 at a large Indian village near the present town of Canton, and at this meeting formed an acquaintance and respect for him as a man and Chief. Shortly thereafter I had occasion to transact business at this village and was directed to the tepees of Rabbit Run. After the business was finished I started to leave, Rabbit Run arose and spoke, requesting all present to pause a moment, he then came forward and gave me his hand and stated: 'Me Friend—You Friend?' When I assured him I wanted to be a friend, he continued to hold my hand and stated: 'Me strong friend all time—you strong friend all time?' and when I told him I would be a strong friend forever, he then gave me the Indian sign lock of lasting friendship.

"Sealed by that ceremony and lock of lasting friendship, I am proud to say that seal of friendship was never unlocked and never broken.

"During the two-score and seven years of our associations, friendship was one of his outstanding traits. He was not a warrior by nature. He had deep religious convictions. He was kind and loyal. His philosophy of life was kindness, mercy and love. He believed more could be accomplished by kindness and true friendship than by force and strife. And thus will the surviving members of his tribe ever cherish and revere his memory."

Judged by the standards of the white man Rabbit Run was a savage. But by every other standard on the Judgment Day, he will take his proper place, high on the rolls of those patriots who gave so much and received so little from his generation.

ACCESSIONS IN THE OKLAHOMA HISTORICAL SOCIETY LIBRARY

Recent accessions in the Library reported by Hazel Beaty, Librarian, include the following:

American Ancestry: Giving the Name and Descent, in the Male Line, of the Americans Whose Ancestors Settled in the United States Previous to the Declaration of Independence, A. D. 1776. By Thomas P. Hughes. Volumes I-X. (Albany, N. Y.: Joel Munsell's Sons, 1887-1895. Index.)

Boston Recorder, fifteen numbers in broken file, date lines late in 1818 and early in 1819 (Boston: Nathaniel Willis, Publisher). These old papers contain many contemporary news items on missions and missionaries (American Board, Baptist, Presbyterian, Moravian, etc.) in foreign fields and among the American Indians (Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, Seminole, Seneca, Wyandot, etc.); notes on education listing colleges and academies; news from foreign countries and the United States; notes on U. S. military affairs and vessels; notes relating to the Jews both historical and contemporary; notes on slavery, agricultural societies, original research in natural science, and U. S. floods; and obituaries. The lists of marriages and deaths, giving individual names and the places in states both north and south, are particularly valuable to genealogists.