NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

CENTENNIAL OF THE CALIFORNIA TRAIL IN OKLAHOMA

The opening of the California Trail for "Gold Seekers" making their way west across the Indian Territory one hundred years ago may be classed as another one of those openings to this land for which Oklahoma is famous in history. While the opening of the Trail was not a land opening like the nine others recorded here for homesteaders beginning in April, 1889, yet it was equally as colorful and romantic and of even more significance in the development of the Great West in America.

The California Trail lay west from Fort Smith, following the south side of the Arkansas and the Canadian rivers across the state to the Antelope Hills that had marked the international boundary line (100th Meridian) with Mexico, and later with Texas. During the height of the excitement in the Gold Rush to California, Oklahoma had its full share of emigrants that literally poured out of the East across the continent. The first three weeks in April, 1849, alone saw more than 400 hundred leave Fort Smith entering the Indian Territory and traveling in long trains of ox wagons, pack mules, and fine saddle horses. Their story and that of the opening of the California Trail through Oklahoma are told in Grant Foreman's *Marcy and the Gold Seekers* (Norman, 1939).

Under Orders No. 5 issued from "Headquarters Seventh Military" and dated Fort Smith, April 2, 1849, "to establish the best route from this point to New Mexico and California" and to improve a road when necessary "wholly on south side of the river [Canadian]," Capt. R. B. Marcy set out from Ft. Smith in command of two military detachments: Lt. J. Buford and 26 non-commissioned officers and privates, F Co., 1st Dragoons; and Lts. M. P. Harrison and J. Updegraff and 50 non-commissioned officers and privates, 5th Inf. The command also served as a military escort for the emigrant trains leaving Ft. Smith early in April, traveling on the south side of the Canadian River, and departing from the last encampment in Oklahoma, in view of the Antelope Hills on May 31, 1849.

Captain Marcy's report of this expedition gives the account of the beginnings of the California Trail, the route followed for more than fifty years, by many parties westward bound through the Indian Territory. Now obliterated, the Trail can only be pointed to in places by pioneers familiar with the wide roadway and some of the well known crossings and camp grounds. One of these
camp grounds near a large spring was on the old ranch of Mrs. Jessie E. Moore, in the vicinity of Wayne, McClain County.

To commemorate the centennial of the California Trail and Captain Marcy's expedition with the "Gold Seekers" through Oklahoma, the Historical Society's Committee on Marking Historic Sites, Maj. Gen. Wm. S. Key, Chairman, has selected Captain Marcy's encampment in the region of the Antelope Hills as one of the fifty historic sites to be marked this year, in the state. A handsome, metal plaque giving a brief history of the beginning of the California Trail and other important events in the vicinity will be erected by the Committee and the State Highway Commission, at the junction of U. S. Highway #283 and State Highway #33 in Roger Mills County.

—M. H. W.

The Last Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic

An era has closed in the history of the United States. On August 29, 1949, at Indianapolis a few men who have passed the century mark met for the last national encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic. Theodore Pinland of La Jolla, California, who celebrated his one-hundredth birthday in January is the last Commander-in-Chief. Of the more than a million Union soldiers and sailors who survived the Civil War fewer than eight were in the final parade.

Eighty-four years of reminiscences may have weakened the voices that rang out to cheer for the banner they followed through the streets of Decator, Illinois, at that first reunion in April 1866 yet there is only added luster to the love which glows in the dimming eyes for the grand old flag.

The last meeting of the Oklahoma branch of the Grand Army of the Republic which was attended by any Union veterans was the fifty-sixth Department Encampment at Ponca City on May 8th and 9th, 1946. State Commander, Sylvester Patterson from Tonkawa, was there. He died on October 29, 1947 and was succeeded by his Senior Vice-President, Moses Ratledge of Enid, who died February 15, 1948. Before the passing of these two a resolution signed by them as commander and vice-commander was issued requesting that the allied organizations (The Ladies of the G. A. R., The Woman's Relief Corps, The Daughters of Union Veterans and the Sons of Union Veterans) continue to meet at the same time and place each year as a "Memorial to the Grand Army of the Republic". This they have done.

Grace J. Ward
Union Memorial Room
Oklahoma Historical Society
ANADARKO HISTORY, 1859-1949

Ninety years ago, the first U. S. Indian Agency in Western Oklahoma was established on Leeper Creek, about four miles east of the present town of Fort Cobb in Caddo County, on the north side of the Washita River. This was the Wichita Agency, later moved to another location, and now known as the Western Consolidated Indian Agency at Anadarko. On October 1, 1859, almost two months after the opening of the first Wichita Agency, Fort Cobb was established by Maj. W. H. Emory on a hill, about a mile east of the present town of Fort Cobb. This post was the farthest west in the Indian Territory, and was named in honor of Ex-Gov. Howell Cobb, of Georgia, Secretary of the U. S. Treasury, 1857-60.

After the outbreak of the War of the States, two important treaties were made at the Wichita Agency, in behalf of the Confederate States by Commissioner Albert Pike, on August 12, 1861, with the western Indian tribes in Oklahoma. These treaties were signed by the chiefs and leaders of the Peneteka Comanche, Wichita, Caddo, Anadarko, Tawakoni, Waco, Ione (Hainai), Keechi (Kich-ai), Tonkawa, and some bands of Shawnee and Delaware who lived in the Wichita Agency region on the Washita River. A year later, the Agency was attacked and the building burned (October 23, 1862) by some Delaware and Shawnee who had been armed and come south from Kansas on a scouting expedition from the Union forces, against the Southern Indians.¹

Judge C. Ross Hume has supplied the following notes about his home town, Anadarko:

Part of the chorus of the song, "Grandfather's Clock"—"Ninety years without stopping"—can well be applied to Anadarko at this time. In a study preparatory to writing the history of Anadarko, we find that about June 24, 1859, Elias Rector, Superintendent of Southern Indians, Lt. Stanley, Capt. Black Beaver, famous Delaware scout, and a cavalcade of Indians, soldiers, and Government employees selected the site, "at an old Kichai village," and located the first Wichita Agency; and on August 18th the two groups from Indian Territory and Texas Reserve Indians numbering 2500 to 3000 were united and settled here.

The ninetieth anniversary of this settlement will occur during the American Indian Exposition at Anadarko this summer, and might well be the theme of its pageant.

Another Anniversary this July, 1949, is the sixty-fifth year from the beginning of Anadarko Masonic Lodge No. 21, by eight or nine of the early pioneers, and the old lodge building on West Arkansas Street is the oldest building on the townsite.

¹See fn. 2, note on "A Natural Bridge in Oklahoma," p. 320, this issue of The Chronicles.
Notes and Documents

Part of the proceeds from the sale of town lots in 1901, at the opening of the Kiowa-Comanche country, was used in building four of the bridges across the Washita River which went out during the recent floods.

We have the oldest community in western Oklahoma, the first Masonic Lodge west of the 98th meridian, and the first Indian agency for the plains Indians, and Anadarko citizens should be proud of this heritage, and preserve it for posterity.

I have talked to many of the Indians and whites who participated in these stirring events, and am including them in a History of Anadarko, which is now in course of preparation. Missionary enterprises have also had definite influences on both Indian and white citizens through these years.

Our two museums and City Library are gathering materials which will help us to preserve that which other communities would give much to have.

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A Natural Bridge in Oklahoma

The following notes on the natural bridge in Caddo County, Oklahoma, were furnished by E. H. Kelley, State Bank Examiner:

Eight and one-half miles southwest of Anadarko, Oklahoma, Highways No. 9 and No. 62 separate at the northeast corner of Section 33, Township 7 north, Range 11 west. The Natural Bridge of Caddo County is in the northwest quarter of Section 33, on land belonging to Entaugo, a full-blood Indian woman. Many of her tribe have only one name. She is Mark Keahbone's sister and is sometimes called Katie Keahbone.

The best road to the bridge is one mile west on Highway No. 9, then turn south on a country road for a distance of 3/10ths of a mile. At this point the bare spot on the east side of this road is exposed gypsum, and a good place to stop the car. Enter the pasture and walk toward the top of trees appearing over the rim of a ravine to the east. These trees are just beyond the bridge, and you will cross the dam of a pasture pond on the way. There are three canyons in this pasture that merge into one on the north boundary of this section, and the bridge is on the central one.

This is a real natural bridge, eighty feet wide at its narrowest point. It spans a draw twenty-five feet wide and twenty-five feet deep. The roof floor has a thickness of ten feet or more at the piers, and five at the arch, that will bear the weight of the heaviest truck. Before the state was settled, a wagon road over the prairie crossed this bridge, the ruts of which are plainly visible today. The roof beneath the bridge is arched, and cliff swallows have covered it completely with their mud nests. These birds always build in colonies. Their nests are in the form of water jugs,
with the entrance through the spout, which is turned downward to overcome moisture.\(^1\)

This bridge is located in the buck-eye belt of Oklahoma, but these shrubs and trees have been removed from this pasture to prevent damage to cattle.

Members of the tribe say that an Indian War was fought over this bridge many years ago.\(^2\) Mr. Ed Melencamp, the lessee of this property, found a skeleton in one of the many small caves around the bridge. It was rich with bone beads and bracelets, and stone implements of war. A caving bank near by, later exposed another skeleton buried in a sitting position. No scientific search has been made here, but it would appear to be a desirable location for archaeological work in our state.

My first trip to this bridge was taken with Mr. N. J. Dikeman, Vice President and Cashier of First State Bank of Anadarko. We went through the farm yard of Mr. Ed Melencamp, the lessee of the property, into his barn lot, through the feed lot and the pasture. There were four gates to open and close at each entrance. This would not appeal to visitors and would become a nuisance to the tenant.

My next trip some months later, I went alone and stopped at a point where the State Highway \#9 crosses the draw on which the bridge is located, and attempted to walk directly south to the Bridge. The ravines to cross were so steep, and mud in the branch so bad that it is definite that this would not be a desirable way to the bridge.

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\(^1\) The history of cliff swallows was published in *The National Geographic Magazine*, April, 1930, p. 522.

\(^2\) The war referred to was undoubtedly the Tonkawa massacre that took place on October 24, 1862, the principal engagement in Western Indian Territory during the War between the States. The day before the attack on the Tonkawa Indians, the Wichita Agency (first location about 4 miles northeast of present town of Ft. Cobb) was attacked and burned by bands of Indians that had gone north and joined the Union forces in Kansas, and had returned well armed on a scouting expedition to the Washita River. In the excitement of the Agency fight, a report had been spread that the Tonkawa living a few miles away had reverted to cannibalism, had killed a Caddo boy, and had been seen “cooking his body making ready for a feast.” Infuriated by this report, the Northern Indians joined by other tribal bands in the vicinity set out after the Tonkawa who by this time had left their homes for Fort Arbuckle seeking protection at that Confederate post since they were armed with only bows and arrows. Overtaken on the way by the enemy, the Tonkawa suffered attack early on the morning of October 24th and were practically exterminated as a tribe, for the men, women, and children were hunted down and killed throughout the day. This bloody massacre centered in what is now Tonkawa Township south of Anadarko, Caddo County, but some of the fugitives were said to have been killed miles away. Of the Wichita Agency tribes in alliance (treaty signed there on August 12, 1861, Albert Pike, Commissioner) with the Confederate States, the Tonkawa were the most loyal to the South which in view of the time and circumstances was the main cause of the massacre.—Ed.
My next trip was to take Mr. R. R. Jackson, President of the Anadarko Bank and Trust Company out to see the bridge. He was chairman of a committee appointed by the Chamber of Commerce to escort visitors to the Bridge and he had never seen it. On this trip we went one mile west of the parting of Highway #62 and #9, on Highway #9 and down a country road south. Mr. Jackson’s speedometer was not working so actual distance could not be measured. However at this point there is only one fence to cross, the trees that mark the site of the bridge are visible at all times and no ravines to cross. Just a walk across a ten acre pasture with the car in view all the time.

My next trip was the next morning when I went to measure the actual distance so visitors would not have to ask questions of anyone.

The confusion of names of landowners was ironed out by the Indian Agency at Anadarko with the help of Mr. Jackson.

The tenant Mr. Melencamp was introduced by Mr. Dikeman and he described the skeletons he found and the trinkets with them. He brought in the Indians who told of the old Indian war fought here years ago.

Buckeyes are in all wooded districts around this county, but have been removed from the pasture. The Indians brought them here in early days to use in fishing. Crushed and put in water they stupefy fish so they can be picked up by hand.

VISITORS TO THE FORT GIBSON STOCKADE

The following news item from The Muskogee County News for August 4, 1949, sent in by Mrs. Grant Foreman, of Muskogee, shows the interest of tourists in visiting Fort Gibson’s historic sites:

STOCKADE DRAWS TOURISTS

I don’t think the people of Fort Gibson realized how many visitors come to town to see the historic landmarks. So many folks tell Mrs. Ross [custodian] that they have trouble finding the Stockade.

The Park Board is planning to erect some markers over the State, directing folks to Fort Gibson Stockade.

It is puzzling to people from afar to stop in town and ask directions and be told, “I don’t know,” or send them in the wrong way.

During the month of July, this summer, there were people registered from a great many states; Ohio, Maryland, Arkansas, Illinois California, Missouri, Texas, Arizona, Louisiana, Florida, Kansas, Colorado, North Carolina, Michigan, Iowa, Delaware, New York, New Mexico, as well as South America and Cuba.
By request of the Editorial Department of The Chronicles, the following brief history of Wiley Post Airport was received from J. H. Burke, President of Burke Aviation Corporation, Oklahoma City:

The Wiley Post Airport, located on the shores of beautiful Lake Hefner northwest of Oklahoma City, was established in 1925 and is the State's oldest commercial airport. It has been the home field of the late Wiley Post, who made contributions to the altitude and long-distance navigation flight problems in the early 1930's. Wiley Post Airport was also the home of the Braniff Airways, Inc. and contributed much to the early development of scheduled air carriers.

This Airport was the hub of a system of military training fields for both the Air Force and the Navy during the last world war, and has been the place where many brilliant careers of leading Oklahomans have begun in both civil and military aviation.

It is now owned and operated by the Burke Aviation Corporation as a private field where flight training, aircraft service and storage are offered to the public, and is one of the most complete and beautiful private airfields in the southwest.

SPARTAN SCHOOL OF AERONAUTICS—TULSA

By request of the Editorial Department of The Chronicles, the following history of Spartan School of Aeronautics, Tulsa, was received from Glenn O. Hopkins, Placement Manager of Spartan School:

Spartan School of Aeronautics had its beginning in one small hangar in 1928. The purpose was to train pilots and mechanics for the aircraft then being produced by the Spartan Aircraft Company. Constant expansion to keep pace with the Aviation Industry has led to the development of eight schools and the Spartan College of Aeronautical Engineering housed in 28 modern buildings with a capacity of 2000 students. Courses are offered for practically every aviation objective.

In 1939, Spartan was one of nine schools chosen to train aviation cadets for the expanding Air Corps. Due to the urgent demand for more cadet training, a branch of the flight school was opened in 1940 at Muskogee, Oklahoma. In 1941, Spartan was awarded the primary, advanced and instrument flight training of British pilots who came 4000 miles to train at Spartan's British Flying Training School at Miami, Oklahoma. In those war years more than twelve thousand pilots were enrolled in the three Spartan schools.

In 1939, the War Department chose Spartan and five other civilian schools for aviation mechanic training. Spartan trained over 5,000 Air Force Mechanics.

The Civil Aeronautics Administration and the State Department in 1942 gave further recognition to Spartan by designating it the training agency for Inter-American Aviation Mechanic Training. Students were enrolled from thirteen South and Central American countries.
These activities have contributed to Spartan’s facilities and experience in aeronautical training and today are benefiting young men and women from all over the world in their preparation for aviation careers.

Spartan now offers the following ground school courses:
Aeronautical Engineering—leading to an Associate in Arts Degree in Aeronautical Engineering.
Airline Maintenance Engineer—a course which includes the basic Aeronautical Engineering subjects plus the necessary instruction for C. A. A. Aircraft and Aircraft Engine Mechanic Certificates.
Flight Engineer Course
Aircraft and Aircraft Engine Mechanic Course
Weather Forecasting Course
Standard Instrument and Electrical Instrument Technician Course
Link Trainer Operator Course
Radio Technician and Radio Engineering Course
Airport Management Course
Parachute Rigger Course
Ground Instructor Rating Course
The School of Flight offers training for the following C. A. A. Ratings:

Under the guidance of Capt. Maxwell W. Balfour since 1939, Spartan School of Aeronautics has pioneered many ideas in methods of instruction and in new courses to fit the needs of the time. Two courses of particular interest are the Ground School Instructor & Rating Course and the Multi-Engine Maintenance Mechanic-Flight Engineer Course.

Realizing the great need for properly trained Pilot Ground School Instructors, a course which includes not only the technical knowledge necessary for the training of pilots, but also the basic theories of the psychology of instruction and methods of instruction was instituted in the Spartan curriculum. For the Spartan graduate this has meant greater earning power and for the industry as a whole it has supplied instructors capable of producing better qualified and safer pilots.

While the basic knowledge acquired in the approved C. A. A. curriculum for Aircraft and Aircraft Engine Mechanic Certificates produces a mechanic well versed in general knowledge of all types of aircraft, it does not produce a mechanic with sufficient knowledge of the present day large commercial aircraft used by the major airlines. Concern over this situation and anticipation of the requirement of Flight Engineers on heavy commercial aircraft resulted in the organization of the Multi-Engine Maintenance Mechanic-Flight Engineer Course at Spartan. Graduate A & E Mechanics are given a complete indoctrination on present day four-engine commercial transport planes plus the requirements for the flight engineer ground school examinations. Experience with the Link Trainer as a safe and economical method of giving flight instrument training to pilots gave the idea of such simulated training for prospective flight engineers. Using the Link trainer as the foundation and installing the necessary instrumentation for a flight engineer station, the personnel of Spartan School produced a Synthetic Flight Engineer Trainer. Herein can be given training in flight engineer problems which would be impossible to demonstrate in actual flight because of the danger and possibility of damage to very expensive equipment. The excellence of the instruction in this course was rewarded on May 3, 1949. The C. A. A. authorized Spartan to train flight engineers and gave recognition to the Synthetic Flight Engineer Trainer.
by allowing credit for 12 1/2 hours of the required 25 hours of actual
flight training required for certification as a flight Engineer.

Through constant vigilance and application of the experience gained
in years of training, schools such as Spartan School of Aeronautics are
contributing to the rapid advancement of Aviation.

VANCE AIR FORCE BASE—ENID

By request of the Editorial Department of The Chronicles, the
following history of Enid Air Force Base and its reactivation as
Vance Air Force Base was received from the Office of James G.
Fussell, Capt., U. S. Air Force Headquarters, 3575th Pilot Train-
ing Wing (AME), Vance Air Force Base, Enid:

ENID AIR FORCE BASE

Enid Air Force Base, home of the 3575th Pilot Training Wing, Advanced
Multi-Engine, is one of the newer stations in the Air Training Command.
Reactivated on August 1, 1948, the base was assigned the mission of train-
ing students to fly B-25 aircraft.

The Enid base opened originally in December 1941 as Enid Army Air
Field, and was utilized for basic training of aviation cadets. In 1945
the primary mission of the station changed, with B-25 instruction becoming
the principal function. Chemical warfare and allied schools also were es-
tablished to train enlisted men for overseas service.

At the close of hostilities following World War II, the station was
deactivated, and from late in 1946 until the summer of 1948, operated with a
stand-by crew.

Commanded by Colonel John G. Fowler, rated command pilot, combat
observer, and senior aircraft observer, the base will graduate its second
class of aviation cadets in June.

Enid is one of two stations in the Training Command which gives
B-25 instruction. The other advanced multi-engine school has been located
at Barksdale AFB, Shreveport, La. Aviation cadets are selected for multi-
engine aircraft for advanced training at Enid after they complete basic pilot
training at Goodfellow, Randolph, Waco, and Perrin AFB's.

Enid's first class of students—24 student officers—arrived in October
1948 for advanced training. In January 1949, 50 cadets were transferred
to Enid from Barksdale AFB to complete the last two months of their
advanced course. On 25 February, the first graduation exercises were held,
with the student officers receiving their pilot wings, and 49 cadets their
wings and commissions as second lieutenants, 13 of them in the regular
Air Force as "Distinguished cadets."

Class 49-B, consisting of 154 cadets fresh from basic pilot training at
Perrin and Goodfellow AFB's began advanced training at Enid early in
March. After their graduation on June 17, Class 49-C will succeed them,
300 cadets strong. New classes will enter training thereafter at 6-week
intervals, spending four months at Enid before graduating. Under the
new 8-class program instituted by the Air Force, Enid will have a constant
398 students in training at all times.
In the flying syllabus at this station, transition flying, day-night navigation hops, instrument flights, and formation tactics make up the bulk of the instruction. Flying B-25's, however, is only one phase of the program. Almost equal emphasis is placed on academic and military instruction.

At graduation from Enid AFB, outgoing students are assigned to tactical outfits where they continue training in combat aircraft; to other Training Command installations as flying instructors; or to the Military Air Transport Service as transport pilots.

A secondary mission assigned the base shortly after its reactivation already has been accomplished. "Project Mothball", an aircraft modification project, has converted 56 wartime B-25's into training ships by the base shops. The planes, placed in desert storage at Pyote, Texas near the end of the war, were stripped of guns and armament and streamlined for pilot training.

Enid AFB is located four miles directly south of the city of Enid, whose population, according to a recent unofficial survey, is 37,000. The approximate 200 frame buildings which house personnel, offices, shops, and aircraft are of the construction known to the services as "Mobilization" type, and cover 740 acres.

Many expansions and improvements are in the planning stage, including family housing for officers and NCO’s, extensions of runways and ramps, laying out a golf course, and gradually replacing temporary structures with permanent-type buildings.

With total strength of 2,320 May 1, 1949, including officers, airmen, and civilian employees, the gross payroll of the base figures approximately four-and-a-half million dollars each year.

VANCE AIR FORCE BASE*

Vance Air Force Base will observe its first year of operation on Monday, August 1, 1949. Just one year ago this week, the base was beginning the painful process of reactivation.

Measured in time alone, a year is not long. But measured in accomplishment, the past 12 months were crowded full of reactivation problems encountered and overcome.

A year ago a group of deserted buildings drowning in the Oklahoma sun, today Vance AFB is alive with activity, a smoothly operating training component of the United States Air Force, and a $5,000,000 a year industry for the city of Enid.

The buzzing of bees in last July's waist-high grass has been replaced by the round-the-clock roar of B-25 engines.

With a current strength of 220 officers, nearly 1,900 airmen, and 460 civilian employees, this week Vance AFB was over the highest hurdles and ready to embark on its second year of operation.

First on the scene at the base's rebirth after nearly two years of deactivation were the 25 men—most of them with the Fire Department—who were the caretaking detachment. A small group of men also remained to operate the airways station, to provide flight information for aircraft in this vicinity.

As early as last May, when Washington announced that the Enid base was to be restored to activity, the standby crew began preparations, opening barracks and office buildings, and battling the weeds and tall grass that overran the base.

On 18 July the first advance party of mess personnel arrived in Enid from Barksdale AFB, Shreveport, La., the parent station responsible for opening the field. The 20 men who set up the mess hall served their first meal 10 days later, feeding 136 men.

When orders officially reactivated the base effective August 1, 1948, there were 15 officers on duty, and 162 airmen.

August was a month of feverish activity. Work details were busy “GI-ing” barracks, chopping weeds, and sweeping out clouds of tenacious Oklahoma dust. Men who needed housing in town found quarters few and far between. Personnel trying to manage the complicated administrative details of setting up a base had to do their paper work without needed supplies, publications, forms, typewriters and desks. Long lines of boxcars full of supplies were shuttled onto the railroad siding, waiting to be unloaded. The unstacking, sorting and distributing of great volumes of supplies of all kinds was one of the most complicated tasks of reactivation.

“Desolate” is the word the members of the advance party still stationed at Vance AFB use to describe those first weeks a year ago. But, with a big job ahead, officers and men ignored the discouraging features and concentrated on the task at hand. Slowly, vehicles arrived, aircraft were flown in, and supply channels established. After a few hectic weeks, the reactivation party looked around them and found their labors had made the station a going—and growing—proposition.

On August 4, Colonel John G. Fowler took over as base commander. Throughout the month new personnel arrived daily from other stations, and by September 18, Enid AFB was ready for its first public inspection on Air Force Day, when hundreds of visitors came to take a look at their new peacetime Air Force.

The Berlin air lift claimed 200 airmen late in September, leaving a critical shortage of personnel just two weeks before the first class of flight students was scheduled to arrive. A number of the flying instructors, administrative officers, and airmen now stationed at Vance are veterans of “Operation Vittles.”

Just as the base was ready to launch its training program in B-25 aircraft a secondary mission was assigned by higher headquarters. Wartime bombers, equipped with heavy armament, had been taken direct from the assembly plants and shuttled off to desert storage in Texas near the war’s end. Orders came to the Enid base to ferry them here, strip them of guns and armament, and modify them for training.

On December 1, 1948, the first of 58 “Mothball” planes was flown to Enid. The depot activity kept all sections of the base in high gear until early April, when the last B-25 left the base shops streamlined for pilot training.

Two classes of students in advanced multi-engine flying have been graduated from the base during the past year—216 student officers and aviation cadets in all. With 238 students now in training, Vance AFB will graduate cadet class 49-C in the fall. The peak of training will be reached next February when 398 cadets receive flight instruction here.
Altho its official mission is pilot training, other events marked the first year's operation. Eighty airmen helped the town of Canton remove wreckage after last March's devastating tornado. B-25's sped two desperately ill Enid infants to specialists on life-saving missions. And on July 9, the base adopted the name "Vance", in memory of Lt. Col. Leon R. Vance, Jr., World War II Air Force hero from Enid.

With the building of a trailer court on the base to accommodate 48 trailer-dwelling military families, an effort was made to ease the housing problem in Enid which had plagued military personnel and civilian employees since the base was opened. Promise by Congress of on-the-base housing to be financed by the government came as a welcome birthday present.

Great strides have been taken in providing wholesome recreation for Vance personnel. Attractive clubs for officers and non-coms are in operation. A cadet club is now being constructed, and a service center offers a variety of entertainment for men of the lower grades. The base hobby shop offers space and equipment for all kinds of handiwork and carpentry.

On the eve of the first anniversary, Col. Fowler said:

"We have tried to make Vance Air Force Base a credit not only to the Air Force, but to the community whose neighbors we are proud to be.

"Looking back over this past year, we believe that a great deal has been accomplished in rehabilitating this station, and getting it organized so that it now operates smoothly and efficiently, and economically, making the wisest possible use of appropriations allotted us.

"We further feel that the merger of our military personnel and the townpeople during the year has been most satisfactory. The goodwill extended to us, which the base has wholeheartedly reciprocated, has been a definite factor in helping us mark up a year of progress," the commander added.

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CORRECTION

A typographical error in the printing of the memorial tribute to Judge Thomas H. Doyle, in The Chronicles, Vol. XXVII, No. 2 (Summer, 1949), page 143 (last paragraph, line 5), gave the year of his death as 1947. The correct date is February 6, 1949.—Ed.