OFFICIAL RECEPTION OF THE WHIPPLE PAPERS

By Charles Evans

Promptly at eleven o'clock A.M., October 28, 1950 President Key announced that the program which had been developed by the Board of Directors and relating to the official presentation of the valuable, historical material given to the heirs of Lt. A. W. Whipple would be taken up.¹

The President said: "I have here a telegram from a truly great son of Oklahoma—General Patrick J. Hurley. The Secretary read the telegram:

DEEPLY APPRECIATE YOUR KIND INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN PROGRAM OCTOBER " THE ACCENTING PRESENTATION TO YOUR SOCIETY OF WHIPPLE COLLECTION. THROUGH MY FRIEND COL. WHIPPLE AND MEMBERS OF THE WHIPPLE FAMILY I WAS HAPPY TO ASSIST GOVERNOR TURNER IN OBTAINING THIS SPLENDID COLLECTION FOR OKLAHOMA. A PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENT PREVENTS ME FROM BEING PRESENT BUT I DEEPLY APPRECIATE THE HONOR YOU HAVE SHOWN ME IN ASKING ME TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM, KINDEST REGARDS TO YOU THE GOVERNOR AND MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY AND THE WHIPPLES.

Patrick J. Hurley

The President then said:

"May I invite the attention of our distinguished guests to the exhibits in the next room. They are the documents which we have already received physically but which we are going to formally accept today. We want all visitors to see these exhibits.

"The Oklahoma Historical Society is a public agency. This building was erected for its use. Our Society is young in years but rich in historical data, largely because of the leaders of our great country who contributed to the establishment of Oklahoma. In many ways we are indebted to the Army, for after all Oklahoma was pretty much the testing grounds of the Army. We are also indebted to the old missionaries, to the surveyors and the engineers and to the Indian and Governmental leaders who made the early history of this great State. This commonwealth of which we are so proud,

¹The Whipple Collection in brief, consists of the following: 32 leather bound notebooks (journals covering Mexican Boundary and Pacific R. R. surveys); 7 maps; 14 manuscripts including 8 letters; 48 art pieces (original drawings and paintings of botanical specimens, scenes, and characters—artist H. B. Mollhausen—4 by Tidball); 16 lithographs—Mollhausen, Tidball, Kern); 18 small proofs of lithographs marked on margin "Approved by W. P. Blake;" 3 printed items including book by Simpson. Total of 138 items.
is collecting and preserving its records in the Archives of this fine building.

"Our Historical Society, comprising the citizenship of Oklahoma and the Board of Directors, meet quarterly. We have an executive group who operate the affairs of this Society and the Directors meet quarterly to direct the channels of the organization and this happens to be the last quarterly meeting of the year.

"The Governor will arrive shortly. He is particularly appreciative of this historical collection. We might say to the grandchildren of General Whipple and to the great-grandson, Mr. Dudley Stoddard, that the Whipple family should feel at home in Oklahoma. It is a family of distinguished soldiers. Four generations of West Pointers comprise the Whipple family. The original General Whipple, whose documents have been given to us, was the first to serve in Oklahoma, and then General Whipple's son also served here and later a grandson and a great-grandson saw service in Oklahoma. I would like to tell you, Prof. Whipple, because you are the father of two fine soldiers, that Oklahoma has been the testing ground of the army for almost a century and a half; that the first white settler in what is now Oklahoma was the fourteenth graduate of West Point, Lieutenant Auguste Chouteau, who resigned from the Army and became a distinguished citizen of Indian Territory. Since that original West Pointer settled here a great many officers who later distinguished themselves in the Mexican War and in the Civil War received their training in Oklahoma. So you should feel at home. This is really not only the home of the Red Man but the home of the soldier man. Your distinguished grandfather would not recognize in this land of peace and progress the undeveloped wilderness through which he passed almost 100 years ago.

"We are greatly honored by the presence of our distinguished guests. I want to ask one of our Directors and a fellow soldier, Colonel George Shirk to introduce our guests."

Colonel Shirk spoke as follows:

"It is quite a distinction to be the one to introduce to Oklahomans a family who has known our country for one hundred years. General A. W. Whipple who came here in 1849 and made a survey in 1853, had four children, among them, Charles William Whipple who was appointed to West Point by President Lincoln. He served in what is now Oklahoma. General Charles William Whipple had five children. Of the four who are living today, three of them are here with us now. His oldest son is Professor William Whipple, now a resident of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. His next child is Colonel Sherburne Whipple, U. S. Army, who could not be present today. He is likewise a graduate of West Point. He resides in North Carolina. He also has a son who is stationed at Fort Sam Houston
who had planned to be here but wired us this morning that he could not come. General Charles William Whipple's next child was Annette Whipple, now Mrs. Arthur M. Collins of Hartford, Connecticut; and his next was Eleanor, who is now Mrs. Francis R. Stoddard of New York City. So we have present the three grandchildren of General A. W. Whipple, and General Whipple's great-grandson, Dudley W. Stoddard. He, too, has served in the army in Oklahoma. He is the 'lad' who actually and physically brought the records here in June and gave them to this Society."

AT THIS TIME HON. ROY J. TURNER, GOVERNOR OF OKLAHOMA ENTERS

The audience arising and cheering, President Key, said, "May I present the Ex-Officio Director of the Oklahoma Historical Society, the popular and efficient Governor of Oklahoma, Hon. Roy J. Turner."

Governor Turner spoke as follows:

"General Key and all of the family of General A. W. Whipple and all of those responsible for this fine contribution to the great history of Oklahoma: It is a real pleasure for me to have the privilege of thanking you for this gift; the word gift came to my mind but it really is more than a gift to the Historical Society. It is something for Oklahomans who are now here, and others who will visit this beautiful Historical Building in years to come to use and to treasure. I have read something about the work and explorations that Lieutenant, later General Whipple, made during his trip through this country, some one hundred years ago. We realize that this is a historical collection that would be appreciated by any historical society in America and therefore, we are more than proud that it is made a possession of Oklahoma. I want to offer profound tribute to all of our friends who had a part in securing this contribution from the Whipple family. We are proud of our remarkable progress in an area that we believe is more than important to the Southwest. I think I can assure you, knowing the efficient historical work that is being done in this Society that this collection will be treasured by all Oklahomans. And to you, the heirs of the illustrious General A. W. Whipple, I express my everlasting appreciation."

At the conclusion of the remarks of Governor Turner, General Key introduced Professor William Whipple, Dean of Engineering, Louisiana State University, grandson of General A. S. Whipple, in these words:

"We already have possession of these valuable documents. The great grandson of General Whipple brought them down about two months ago, but we postponed the official reception of them until this time. I want to recognize a member of the family who will present on behalf of this distinguished family these valuable gifts."
This gentleman typifies the blending of the finest characteristics of the northern and southern people of this great country. He is a lovable Yankee who moved to Louisiana, married a beautiful Rebel girl, and reared a family in the heart of the old South. He is a graduate of M.I.T. and has been Dean of Engineering at Louisiana State University for many years. I am proud to introduce Professor William Whipple, grandson of General A. W. Whipple, who will officially present these documents to us."

The audience gave eager attention as Professor Whipple made in brief this reply:

"Governor Turner, General Key, President of this Oklahoma Historical Society, and Directors and Members, I am really a poor choice of the family to perform this service. My two sisters wished the job on me. Nevertheless, my sister, Mrs. Stoddard, really did a great deal of investigation before deciding that this was the best place for the storing of these documents. We wanted to put them in a place where they would be appreciated. We are sure now that we have made no mistake. We have been delighted with the reception we have had. We are sorry that Dr. Grant Foreman will not be here because it was his book, really, that first brought our attention to the fact that you have this fine society and his magnificent fire-proof building. It was made clear that you had rich archives, the Indian Division of which is second only, perhaps, to the Smithsonian Institute at Washington. Your Governor had a great deal to do in making us realize that this sacred historical material presented to you this day would be properly preserved and used. My nephew, Dudley Stoddard, has made the physical presentation. May I say that I have one boy who is now in the Engineering group of the Army and one, a Captain in the Navy, and they want me to say how sorry they are that they could not be present. Dudley represents with them this latest generation of our family. On behalf of my two sisters, also for my brother, Colonel Sherburne Whipple, and for myself, I assure you it is a great pleasure to present this historical collection to the Oklahoma Historical Society. This flower, which I hold in my hand, came out of a bouquet, which you kindly placed in my hotel room, and I offer it as a token of the feeling of our family of the happy hospitality extended while in your city to all of us. I thank you."

At the conclusion of these words of presentation, General Key said, "You have gladdened our hearts, Professor Whipple, and now I observe that Hon. R. H. Hefner, formerly Judge of the Supreme Court and Mayor for many years of our City, wishes to say a word."

Judge Hefner said he wished merely to urge that the audience should have a word from the other members of the Whipple family. General Key then introduced Mrs. Annette Whipple Collens of
Hartford, Connecticut, granddaughter of General Whipple. Her good husband is Chairman of the Board of the Phoenix Mutual Life Insurance Company at Hartford, Connecticut, represented by a distinguished citizen here today, Mr. George C. Summy. Mrs. Collens arose and in a happy fashion said: "All I can say is that we are most happy that these papers have come into this wonderful historical Society for their permanent home and that is something for which we have been hunting for a long time."

Mrs. Eleanor Whipple Stoddard, another granddaughter of General Whipple, charming mother of Mr. Dudley W. Stoddard, was introduced and she made a reply in a single sentence, "I am glad to be here."

Mr. Dudley W. Stoddard was called upon. He said, "I think it is not quite fair to call upon me. However, I might say that when I came down here with my great grandfather's papers in June of this year, I knew that this was the exact place where they should rest and I persuaded my family to come here today because I wanted them to see for themselves what a perfect place it is for my great grandfather's records."

The suggestion was made at this time by Dr. Emma Estill-Harbour that our distinguished guests, Mrs. Francis R. Stoddard, New York City; Prof. William Whipple, Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Col. Sherburne Whipple, Biltmore, North Carolina; Mrs. Arthur M. Collens, Hartford, Connecticut; Mr. Dudley W. Stoddard, New York City, be made honorary Life Members of the Oklahoma Historical Society. In line with this suggestion Judge Edgar S. Vaught made the motion that the names here presented should be made honorary Life Members of the Oklahoma Historical Society. This was seconded by Judge Baxter Taylor and the motion was carried unanimously.

President Key then turning to the Secretary said, "I am going to ask our distinguished Secretary, Dr. Charles Evans, to formally accept this fine collection on behalf of the Society."

**DR. EVANS SPOKE AS FOLLOWS:**

"Governor Turner, Mr. President, Members of the Board of Directors, distinguished donors of these valuable historical documents, and distinguished guests: At the very outset of what I have to say, I wish to make this observation that since I have been in public life in Oklahoma, some forty-five years, I do not believe I have ever seen assembled in a room of this proportion, a more splendid citizenship. It is good to know that a majority of the Supreme Court of the State, many heads of the State Departments, great leaders in the avenues of Oklahoma development, past and present, and these graced and ennobled by the presence and participation of
the Governor of Oklahoma, are here today. It is well that you have come to meet this wonderful family that has given to us this priceless gift.

"In order to understand an occasion of this kind which crowns with tribute a movement or a period, it is necessary to set a background. This is no ordinary occasion. In order to appreciate an hour like this in its fulness, it is well to take such a vantage point which permits one to view history in the large.

"The currents of life which have moved through the centuries and that have served to make America the leading Nation of the World, are flowing through this room and making this occasion possible.

"The European races of Caucasian blood coming upon these shores found here a noble race. The Indian leaders that met men like Penn of Pennsylvania, Elliott and Roger Williams of New England and John Smith of Virginia, had as much to give in all that really counts for courage—justice, honor and right, as these early discoverers and explorers had to offer them. Through the infiltration and neighborly relationship set up between the great Indian tribes of the Southeast and South—the Cherokees, Choctaws and Chickasaws, and other tribes, an amalgamation of blood took place that made an American, possessing all the characteristics of the higher European stock and those of the brave, intrepid, honorable and daring North American Indian.

"In the fell clutch of circumstance in the latter part of the third decade of the nineteenth century, yielding to the avarice and greed for land and gold, found in the blood of all human beings, these Southeastern first American’s were stripped of their lands and possessions; their laws were set aside; their schools and churches and printing presses were despoiled and the American Government under military leadership brought them into this region now known as the State of Oklahoma. With great leaders like John Ross, John Ridge and Elias Boudinot, they knew their rights, and knowing, dared maintain them.

"May I pause to state at this time that I believe one of the great books has not yet been written. I predict, or almost prophesy that some future historian with a clear and penetrative eye, not straying into other fields and not taking up other things, will hold steadily to the story that will tell how the American Indian in the land of Oklahoma met the Caucasian civilization of that day and eye-to-eye and foot-to-foot fought for equal rights and equal power and beneath overwhelming odds won the contest. The Oklahoma Indian won his battle, and because of this Indian prowess and courage and intelligent leadership, we can say of Oklahoma at this hour something that can not be said of any other Commonwealth in the
American Union: Here is the only state where the race of the first American, together with the sturdy stock of the finest Caucasian race, met and mingled to build up the one state only which upon its entrance into the American Union November 16, 1907, recognized and placed the American Indian on the same level and in copartnership with the Caucasian race in bringing to the Union an American commonwealth. This is the central theme of a great book yet unwritten.

"Out of these merging forces, there appears in this room today two outstanding figures. One is that of a scion of a splendid New England family, a graduate of West Point, an adventurous spirit, who choosing civil engineering for his life work, found himself at the age of thirty-five called by those in high authority of the United States Government, to make a survey for a possible railroad, stretching from St. Louis through Jefferson City, on to Ft. Smith, Arkansas, and thence to the gold fields of California. Jefferson Davis, serving as Secretary of War under Franklin Pierce, President of the United States, hearing the clamor of the Gold Rush occasioned by the discovery of gold in 1848, made a provision for this railroad survey. He choose Lieutenant A. W. Whipple, a graduate of West Point who had proved himself an engineer of courage and initiative. He gathered about him a squadron of soldiers of the United States Army with military equipment. Perhaps the most outstanding proof of the wisdom and vision of this young Whipple was displayed when he chose to make this expedition into the Western wilderness, was that he chose as his aids, a Dr. J. M. Bigelow, physician and botanist; Jules Marcu, geological and mining engineer; Dr. C. B. R. Kennerly, physician and naturalist; H. B. Mollhausen, Topographer and artist; Hugh Campbell, Assistant Astronomer; William White, Jr., Assistant Geological observer and surveyor; George Gibson Garner, Assistant Astronomer and Secretary; John P. Sherburne, Assistant Meterologist, observer and surveyor; Thomas H. Clarke, Computer and Walter Jones, Jr., Assistant Surveyor. Behold what an aggregation of real discoverers, recorders and future historians this young man, Lieutenant A. W. Whipple brought about him. He moved out of Ft. Smith, Arkansas to enter the Oklahoma country, where we are sitting at this present hour, and on into the unyielding and unconquered West until finally in 1854 he arrived at the little town of Los Angeles. He took a route so clear and accurate that the Santa Fe Railroad uses it at this present time, to reach the Golden West.

Time forbids that we enter into any further details of this survey. However, it would be unfair to the very nature and character of Lieutenant A. W. Whipple and this splendid audience here today, embracing as it does the grandchildren and great-grandson, not to trace a line or two revealing the later growth of his life. Returning from the West, the military powers sent him to various points of
the United States—Red River on the South to the great lake regions and New England of the North to build proper defenses and forts for the growing Nation. The War came and immediately he was called by President Lincoln to be Chief Engineer for the defense of the City of Washington. He yearned for the soldier's life and was placed in command in due time of a division of the Federal Army, as a Brigadier General. Destiny moved him forward until on May 4, 1863, General Whipple found his men battling bitterly with Stonewall Jackson's Army in the Battle of the Wilderness. While near a battery directing construction of some earth works near the apex of the salient which extended into the Confederate lines, Whipple was mortally wounded by a sharpshooter. The bullet passed through his belt and stomach and came out of the small of his back close to the spinal column. The General was taken to Washington where he never regained consciousness. Just prior to death, President Lincoln caused him to be commissioned a Major General of Volunteers. Whipple died in Washington on May 7, 1863. President Lincoln attended his funeral and said, that he was there as a friend of the family and not as President of the United States. The President not only gave his autographed photograph to the widow, but he gave a presidential appointment to the older son of his friend. After Lincoln was assassinated, there was found on his desk a note asking his successor, if anything happened to him, to appoint the younger son of General Whipple to Annapolis. This, President Andrew Johnson faithfully performed.

The other figure that makes this occasion possible was another young lawyer who entered this country in the early territorial days and finding within his powers the ability to choose the real love of his life's work, he fixed his eye on the history of the Indian tribes centered in and about Muskogee or what is now Eastern Oklahoma, and became through the years the leading historian relating to Indian life, not only in this region but many spheres, the most prolific writer and best authority on Indian affairs in America.

I refer to Dr. Grant Foreman, who joined the Society on November 6, 1923 and was elected a member of the Board of Directors February 5, 1924. From that day until this good hour, Dr. Foreman has been the leading light in this Society's greatest field and that is to make it a genuine depository of the broadest and richest archives of the Caucasian and Indian races, which purpose has brought it to its present high state. In February 1927, Dr. Foreman introduced a resolution before the Directors of the Society petitioning Congress of the United States, since its supervision of the Indians composing the Five Civilized Tribes was drawing to a close, that the records not essential to the administration of Indian affairs would be given over to the archives of the Oklahoma Historical Society, to be properly arranged and classified for reference purposes and to be
protected against loss. Congress carried out this request and the first great step was taken whereby it can be said at this time that through the great vision of Dr. Foreman we have here more than two and a half million pages of manuscripts, making the second largest Indian Archives in America. In order to carry out the promise made to Congress that these records so valuable to posterity would be lodged in a worthy, fireproof building, Dr. Foreman and Judge R. L. Williams, together with such other men as Judge Doyle, H. L. Muldrow, Baxter Taylor, and other of like mind on the Board, set up July 25, 1929 in his Society, a special division of mechanism of steel filing cases, typewriters, cards, etc., and on September 9, 1929, they called Mrs. Rella Looney, the good lady who is now taking notes at this table and whose service can not be too highly defined, and these archives began to take practical and profitable shape; this called for a better building and so in that year the Board of Directors secured $500,000 and upon this spot this building was erected and dedicated on November 16, 1930, before a great concourse of people with Governor William J. Holloway, presiding. This home of history, as Mrs. Stoddard called it, immediately placed the Oklahoma Historical Society in the van of the leading historical societies of America. Such in brief, too brief in truth, is just the beginning of the remarkable work done by this truly great historian, Dr. Grant Foreman. And it would be wholly unfair and inaccurate if it is not said that his aim could not have been so high, nor his labors so broad and so fruitful, had it not been that another eminent historian, his beloved wife, Carolyn Thomas Foreman, had not been as she is today at his side. He has served this Society without compensation. Though he is on a sick bed, he is with pen still enriching our fields of history and he is still defining ways whereby priceless records of Oklahoma history can be brought to these archives.

"In January 1941, there appeared from Dr. Foreman's pen a book from the University of Oklahoma Press, entitled A Pathfinder in the Southwest. Time is too brief to tell you how this eminent writer became familiar with the marvelous records of Lieutenant A. W. Whipple, a pathfinder of this Southwest; how he met the members of this distinguished family sitting here now in this room; how all the features relating to the constant persistence and remarkable research has brought about this occasion, and brought to this building this wonderful collection coveted by all the historical societies of America acquainted with its nature.

"In this letter which I hold in my hand, Dr. Foreman states: 'I have known the Whipple and Stoddard family for a long time. Mr. Stoddard, at one time, opened up the question by asking me where I thought would be a good place to deposit the papers of Lieutenant A. W. Whipple. This conversation, and further negotia-
In the front of this book, Dr. Foreman has written this:

"To the Oklahoma Historical Society:

Herewith my book, A Pathfinder in the Southwest; the journal of A. W. Whipple during his Exploration for a Railway Route from Fort Smith to Los Angeles in the years 1853-54. I present this to you in order to preserve in our archives a record of an interesting service to this country this illustrious Army officer. In part to celebrate this occasion when the surviving representatives of General Whipple have come to our building to present to us a gracious gesture of appreciation of our desire to preserve them, the papers of General Whipple, concluding the negotiations between me and the said representatives begun nearly ten years ago. In presenting this book I ask only that it be received as a proxy to represent me at the meeting.

October 26, 1950

(signed) Grant Foreman

"This request, needless to say, will be sacredly kept. This book will be placed in the library of this institution along with other remarkable books and documents in a beautiful case where in future years some of the story of this occasion may be read.

"So, in conclusion, Ladies and Gentlemen, here in this Society's home, these more than valuable historical documents, which even in their material worth could not be very well estimated, will repose in well protected vaults and cases. Here, future generations will come and learn the story of a great—truly great, American, who had much to do with pointing the way to the beauty, the riches and future glory of Oklahoma."

The President took over at this time and said: "As we come to the last part of the program we are reminded that Dr. Grant Foreman, Director of Historical Research, who in the largest measure has made this occasion possible, is not able to be present today. Through the long years he has served as a director of this institution. He has both in deed and thought been a shining light in the life of this institution and has shed constant luster upon it as perhaps the foremost Indian historian, not only of Oklahoma, but America. We more than deplore his absence today. One of his co-workers in the field of history and his ardent friend, Dr. E. E. Dale, also a director, is here today. I am going to call upon him at this time for a few words.

Dr. Dale arose and said: "It would not become anyone at this time to assume to take the place of Dr. Grant Foreman on this program. I shall not attempt it. I shall merely say that for a long
period of years I have served in the Department of History and Research in Oklahoma University. It has been my constant aim to obtain from every source possible, books, letters, everything that would reveal a better story of this State and region. This has led me into strange and remote places. It has been my privilege to bring here many collections, which in my mind were valuable. I shall continue to do this work. These papers we are receiving here today are from many standpoints almost priceless. In material worth many institutions would give a good sum for their possession. But over and beyond that, though I have studied the collection only indirectly and in a sense superficially, yet I know enough of this collection given us by this gracious family of Major General A. W. Whipple that these archives here will be all the more valuable because they shall rest here."

President Key introduced many of the dignitaries present, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Denver N. Davison, together with his assistant Justices, Gibson, Arnold, Welch and Johnson. Judge N. B. Johnson was introduced as one of our illustrious Cherokees, and a director of the Oklahoma Historical Society. Many heads of the departments of the State were introduced, among them Hon. Wilburn Cartwright, Secretary of State, and Hon. John Connor, State Treasurer. Mr. Walter M. Harrison was introduced as a member of the Oklahoma City Council and writer and editor for many years. He received happy greetings.

The President introduced Judge Edgar S. Vaught, the senior Federal Judge in Oklahoma, stating that he was also one of the directors of the Oklahoma Historical Society. The crowd broke into warm applause.

Mrs. Guy C. Reid was introduced as a leading citizen of the city and a member of the Choctaw Nation. Her sister, Miss Muriel H. Wright, Associate Editor, was introduced and she presented Judge D. C. McCurtain, whose grandfather, Cornelius McCurtain, Choctaw Chief, had met General A. W. Whipple when he entered the Choctaw Nation with his survey in 1853. Judge McCurtain was cordially received.

Mrs. Anna B. Korn, for many years a member of the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma Historical Society and founder of the State Memorial Association, together with Mrs. Virgil Browne who occupies a high station in the D.A.R. was introduced and received applause. Mrs. Korn presented Mrs. Mabel Bassett, who for many years was the State Commissioner of Charities and Corrections. Mr. Clarence C. Paine, Librarian of the Carnegie Library was introduced. Dr. I. N. McCash, President Emeritus of Phillips University and member of the Board of Directors of the Oklahoma Historical Society was presented.
The President at this point said, "We have a distinguished officer of the United States Regular Army here today. I am happy to introduce Col. Henry A. Bootz and Mrs. Bootz residents of Oklahoma City."

Judge Baxter Taylor arose to say that "as one of the citizens of this community, I would like to impress upon the visitors the fact that you are looking upon an average group of Oklahomans. We are happy to say this. Will you be so kind when you go back home, (Addressing smilingly the Whipple Family) and tell them, if you will, that you saw more than cowboys and blanket Indians? It is gladdening to know that from whatever point of the compass we come, we are genuine Americans."

The President announced the conclusion of the program and Mrs. J. Garfield Buell arose and made the motion that the meeting now adjourn. Dr. Dale seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.\(^2\)

The audience passed from the hall in a merry mood and asserted that it was one of the most remarkable programs that had ever been witnessed in the history of the State.