

## NECROLOGIES

## PAUL NESBITT

1872—1950

Paul Nesbitt was born April 3, 1872, at Milford, Iowa, and died July 22, 1950, at Talihina, Oklahoma. He was the third son of James Blackburn Nesbitt and Evaline Watkins Lee Nesbitt. His father had been a First Lieutenant in the United States Army 1861-1865, and saw action at Fort Donaldson and Shiloh and other engagements in the western theatre. His great grandfather, James Nesbitt, was an Irish immigrant who served under General Washington and was present at Valley Forge and Yorktown.

Shortly after the war, while Paul was still a small boy, Father Nesbitt settled in Nebraska and the boy grew to manhood on the prairies of that State and obtained a high school education. He was graduated from Chicago Medical College with an M.D. degree in the spring of 1894, and practiced medicine at Vinton, Iowa, for awhile.

It was during the Nebraska years that his father, always an independent thinker, left the Republican party and via the Populists emerged a full fledged Democrat by the time Bryan appeared on the scene. Son Paul followed in his sire's footsteps, so that, shortly after the Democratic National Convention in 1896 he posed with his bride for a photograph, having across his lap a current newspaper bearing a life-size portrait of William Jennings Bryan.

Paul practiced his profession at El Dorado Springs, Missouri, from 1895-1899, coming to Watonga, in Blaine County, Oklahoma Territory, where he continued to follow the profession of medicine. But Paul was depressed and discouraged by the lack of knowledge of the medical profession of his day, and was intrigued by the prospect of journalism, engaging in the newspaper business even while still practicing medicine. He finally abandoned his profession and in 1904 went to St. Louis to serve his apprenticeship as a cub reporter, later working on the Joplin Globe. In 1906 he returned to Oklahoma to direct the press bureau for the Democrats in the Constitutional Convention campaign.

He was secretary to Governor C. N. Haskell, and on the night in 1910 when the capital was removed from Guthrie to Oklahoma City, he and a Mr. Anthony lifted the Great Seal of Oklahoma and bore it to Oklahoma City, so that the State could legally do business in the new capital the next morning.

Later, as a resident of Pittsburg County, Paul represented that County in the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Sessions of the Oklahoma Legislature, serving as Speaker of the House for the Sixth Session in 1917. He was an ardent supporter of Jack Walton for Governor and served as Commissioner of Highways through Walton's stormy tenure of office. During the bitter Ku Klux Klan controversy he was a leading anti-Klan advocate, campaigning for Walton for U. S. Senator on an anti-Klan platform.

In the late 1920's, he went to New Mexico at the request of an old friend and was engaged for a number of years in building roads for the Highway Commission of that State. During that time he established a residence at Chama, almost astride the Continental Divide, and became Postmaster, a position he held for ten years.

In the fall of 1944, having retired as Postmaster, he returned to Oklahoma—to Talihina—where he and his wife were to care for Mrs. Nesbitt's aged stepmother. Like many another man who has led an active life, he failed rapidly under retirement, and died of a cerebral hemorrhage in July, 1950.

While practicing medicine in El Dorado Springs, Missouri, in 1896, Paul was married to his boyhood sweetheart, Carrie May Lee. To this union were born five children, two of whom survive: Robert L. Nesbitt, Bellingham, Washington; Mrs. George D. Bradley, Clifton, Arizona. The widow makes her home with her daughter, Mrs. Bradley.

Paul Nesbitt sleeps in a little hilltop cemetery in his beloved Oklahoma, whose destiny he helped shape in her formative years. Of him, a former colleague said: "He was a competent official, an honest man, and his character was above reproach."

—Howard Nesbitt.

*Muskogee, Oklahoma*

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## MRS. JASPER SIPES

1861—1950

Mrs. Jasper Sipes, one of "Old Oklahoma's" pioneer women, died at her home at 701 N.W. Street, Oklahoma City, on May 8, 1950. She was eighty-nine years old.

Mrs. Sipes was born Eliza Anna Johnston on February 5, 1861, at Mount Pulaski, Illinois. Her father, Captain Robert Johnston, lost his life while serving in the Union Army during the last days of the Civil War. She often described her visit to Kentucky as a little girl during the War when she saw Abraham Lincoln reviewing the Union Army. The widow of Captain Johnston lived in Ohio with her two daughters where they attended the Finley schools. Anna Johnston went to Oberlin College, in Ohio. In 1883, she left College to visit her sister, Mrs. Horace Carpenter, in Wichita, Kansas, and there met Jasper Sipes from Virginia City, Montana. They were married April 7, 1884, at the home of her sister in Valley Center, Kansas. For the next five years, they lived in McPherson and Pratt counties, Kansas, where Jasper Sipes farmed. He also used a "timber claim" right in Stanton County. Three children were born to this union in Kansas: a daughter, Helen, died in infancy; the son, Glen, was born in 1886, and the daughter, Gail, in 1889.

In 1889, Mr. and Mrs. Sipes came to Oklahoma City where they established a school and church equipment business which continued down through the years until the death of her husband in 1941. They exercised their homestead right when "Old Oklahoma," or the Unassigned Lands area in the Indian Territory, was opened to homesteaders, locating their claim about five miles east of Oklahoma City on what was known as "Crutcho Farm" near Crutcho Creek. Mrs. Sipes lived there with her two children during the period necessary to secure a homestead title. During this time, her husband carried on his business in Oklahoma City. When weather would permit, she would drive to Oklahoma City with the old family horse and buggy so her husband could come home for Sundays and holidays. This time on "Crutcho Farm" was indeed a rugged and colorful experience in Mrs. Sipes' life. She loved to see the farm prosper as it was entirely under her supervision. She was a courageous and ambitious young woman. She wanted to build the family's place and position substantially in order to give their children all the education they wished and to have a home

of comfort and graciousness. All this she realized during her contented busy life of eighty-nine years. She was indeed one of Oklahoma's true pioneer women.

Mrs. Sipes was interested in all civic and cultural activities that contributed to develop Oklahoma Territory from the time of its organization in 1890, into a leading commonwealth. She served for several years as President of the School Board of District 74 which included Crutcho Farm in Oklahoma County. She was active in the '89er organization serving as President in 1929-30. She was a Charter Member, also a Life Member of the Y.W.C.A. of Oklahoma City. She was a Charter Member, and later elected Honorary Life Member, of the New Century Club, serving as President in 1922-23. She was a patron of the Art Center of Oklahoma City for many years. She was a Charter Member and, also, a Life Member of Epsilon Sigma Omicron Club.

After the death of Mr. Sipes on July 12, 1941, Mrs. Sipes continued to live in her old home in Oklahoma City until her death. She is survived by her son, Glen J. Sipes, of San Francisco, and her daughter, Gail Sipes Wright (Mrs. Curtis Wright), of Piedmont, California, besides three grandchildren, and four great-grand children. A devoted wife and mother and an esteemed citizen has passed from her family and many friends except in loving memory.

—Gail Sipes Wright

*Piedmont, California*

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## MARION RILEY TITTLE

1864—1951

Marion Riley Tittle was a self made man with varied interests. Born and reared on a farm, he became a successful farmer, banker and merchant. He was a worthy and highly respected citizen, enjoying the confidence and respect of those who knew him. Coming to the Indian Territory in the early days, he helped to lay the foundations of this great commonwealth, the State of Oklahoma.

Of sturdy Scotch-Irish ancestry, Mr. Tittle was the son of poor but honest and honorable parents. He was born at Pilot Point, Denton County, Texas, November 3, 1864, the oldest son of twelve children of Adam Elias Wells Tittle and Elizabeth (née Farris) Tittle. His father was a native of Tennessee and his mother of Alabama. They were married in Texas where Adam Elias Wells Tittle enlisted in a company raised in Denton County, Texas, for service in the Confederate army. He served with gallantry and distinction throughout the period of the Civil War, and at its close returned to his farm in Texas. In 1868 Adam Elias Wells Tittle moved to Arkansas and two years later to the Indian Territory. Nine years later he returned to Texas, but not satisfied there he went again in 1880 to Charleston, Arkansas. In 1887, he moved to Webbers Falls, Indian Territory, where he later died at the age of sixty-seven years. The mother later died at the home of her son at Fort Gibson, Indian Territory, at the age of fifty-nine years.

Marion Riley Tittle received his education in the common schools of his day but his family needed him, so much of his time was spent on the farm. When twenty years old he was granted his "time" by his father, who also presented him with a horse, saddle and bridle, his sole capital of material things when he went out to make his way in the world. He was able to secure a plow on credit, and fashioned a make-shift harness, the lines of which were largely made of tops of old boots cut into strips.

With this modest equipment he started his career as a farmer in the vicinity of Webbers Falls, Indian Territory. After a few years, he entered business life as a clerk in a general store. By hard work he saved \$1,000 and invested it in a general store at Prairie Grove, Arkansas, where he went to live. After seven successful years in business there, in 1900 he came to Westville, Indian Territory, where he established the well known and successful firm of Cherokee Lumber Company. In 1906, he bought out Sheffield and Son Mercantile Company, a general store, which under his management grew to large proportions and afterwards became the M. R. Tittle Mercantile Company, of Westville, Oklahoma. He owned considerable real estate, and for some time was a member of the firm of Hall-Tittle Drug Company and president of the Peoples Bank, both of Westville.

In politics, he was a conservative Democrat of the old school, and had little patience with some of the modern liberal and socialistic schemes trying to take over the Democratic party. He was a strong believer in the free enterprise system and competition in business. Work, economy and thrift represented his way of life. For seventeen years he served as School Director, and otherwise never sought popular favor. He was enthusiastic in his aid for all public improvements. He was a member of the Masonic Lodge and the Methodist Church of Westville. At the church he taught the adult Bible class for thirty-two years.

In 1892 at Webbers Falls, he married Jennie D. Belleu, who died in June 1930. To this union were born four children: Marion R. Tittle Jr., a son, of Westville, Mrs. Nell Hall, a daughter, of San Antonio, Texas, Mrs. Lena Cabe, a daughter, of Westville, and Mrs. Lola Graves, a daughter, who died in April 1919. Mrs. Lola Graves left one son surviving her, Earl Homer Graves who was reared from a small child by his grandfather. Mr. Graves now holds a very responsible position as electronics engineer with E. I. Du Pont DeNemours & Company, at Aiken, South Carolina. Mrs. Hall has one daughter, Mrs. Virginia Longmoor, of San Antonio, Texas. Mrs. Cabe has a daughter, Mrs. Van Duke Carlton, of Westville. Two brothers survive the subject of this sketch, W. A. Tittle of Lincoln, Arkansas and John Tittle of Walla Walla, Washington. On November 30, 1931 Marion Riley Tittle married Mrs. Gertrude Howard of Rogers, Arkansas, who survives him and now lives at Westville.

At the age of eighty-six years, in apparent good health, he was suddenly stricken with a heart ailment and two days thereafter on April 20, 1951 passed from this world. In the spring time, with all nature waking from the winter's sleep, with flowers newly in bloom, with him making plans for future years, nature beckoned to him and the mighty column fell. The funeral was conducted by Rev. D. C. Welch of Westville and Rev. Lee Cate of Lincoln, Ark., in the Westville Methodist Church, and loving hands laid him to rest in the Westville Cemetery.

At the funeral, a fitting eulogy was delivered by Judge Joe M. Lynch, of Stilwell, Oklahoma, who had known Marion Riley Tittle for over forty years. Speaking of his friend, Judge Lynch said: "His life is the culmination of as beautiful a Christian life as I have known. Such men inspire us to live as God wants us to live. He was truly a Christian gentleman."

—William B. Moore

*Muskogee, Oklahoma*

## CLINTON RILEY STRONG I. 1877—1951

Clinton Riley Strong I, called "Clint" by his friends, was one of the most colorful, likable, enterprising and capable businessmen and executives who ever lived in Oklahoma, or on the frontier of the Plains Country of the United States of America. His Creator endowed him with extraordinary gifts and abilities in many ways. He was born in California March 30, 1877. When a little boy his father moved the family to Iowa. In the 1890's another move was made, this time to the Cheyenne and Arapaho County of Oklahoma Territory. There, in 1898, his father went to his eternal reward. Now, at the age of 21, Clint was left the head of the family. No man ever discharged his responsibilities and duties more faithfully. The "Good Book" says, "But if any provide not for his own, and specially those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." His Maker will never charge Clint Strong with failure to care for, direct and protect his people. He did it with joy. He watched over his mother, a devout Christian, as though she were a baby, until she went to heaven at a ripe old age. He saw to it that his sisters and brothers were properly educated and trained. They are all useful, God-loving, law abiding citizens.

Clint engaged in almost every line of endeavor: merchant, landowner, rancher, builder, automobile dealer, banker, oil, mining and railroad building. He owned many business buildings in many towns and cities, in all parts of the country. He exchanged a fine ranch for Signal Hill, Long Beach, California, long before it became a choice residential section, and, later on, covered one of the greatest oil pools ever developed in California. The former owner gave him \$10,000 to exchange back. This was before it was covered with houses or oil was found underneath it.

Everything Clint did was on a large scale. But he transacted business with such ease his way was truly a work of art. He loved his fellowman, and ever treated all alike, whether rich, poor, educated or uneducated. He was a handsome man, good natured, possessed a high sense of humor, a hearty natural laugh, and made a friend, instantly, out of practically every person he met. His individuality was warm, strong and vivid. There was no limit to his loyalty to his friends. He never failed them.

He made a tremendous contribution, financial and in executive ability, in the building of a railroad from Clinton to Butler, Custer County, Oklahoma, and then on to Strong City, Roger Mills County, a distance of fifty-four miles. Strong City was named in his honor. His connection with this business venture came about through his acquaintance with Thomas J. Nance, a banker and large property owner in Clinton, Oklahoma. A rich farming and stock raising territory extended from Clinton northwest into the State of Texas. Most of it was a long distance from transportation of any kind, save by freight wagons. The people of that region were clamoring for a railroad. At the time Clinton had three railway systems: the Rock Island, Frisco, and Kansas City, Mexico and Orient. Clinton was a thriving wholesale center and growing city. Its citizens felt that a railroad up the Washita River to the northwest would be of great financial benefit to it. Mr. Nance discussed the matter with his friend, Clint Strong. They decided to pool their financial assets and built it. They organized the Clinton & Oklahoma Western Railway in about the year 1907 or 1908. Mr. Nance was President and Clint Vice-President and General Manager. The people of Clinton, Butler, and the farmers and stockmen of the whole region joined with them heartily. A bonus of about \$90,000.00 was raised and considerable right-of-way donated. The line was completed to Butler

in about 1910, and to Strong City in about 1912. Later it was purchased by the Santa Fe System and extended to Pampa, Texas, where it connected with the main line of the Santa Fe from Chicago, Ill., to Amarillo, Texas.

Clint was appointed by Governor William Murray (Alfalfa Bill) as a member of the unofficial "Budget Committee", and served with Mr. C. C. Hatchett, Major Eugene Kerr, Judge Cromwell, and Ben Harrison, State Budget Officer. This committee worked harmoniously and with great efficiency. It was one of the best Oklahoma has ever had.

In 1933 Governor William Murray appointed Clint as Business Manager of the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Stillwater, Oklahoma. After serving his term he was absent for a time, then was appointed by Governor Robert Kerr. In co-operation with Dr. Henry G. Bennett, and other able men of the above College, mighty advances have been made.

The "Good Book" says, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction." Clint, instinctively, always sought out those in sorrow and distress. In such cases his generosity knew no bounds. These acts of kindness were seldom remembered by him, but were never forgotten and never will be forgotten by the recipients. And no man ever held, in his mind, heart and soul, a greater reverence for God than Clinton Riley Strong I.

Clint passed from this life on August 30, 1951, at Stillwater, Oklahoma. Services were held in that city in the auditorium of the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College on September 1, with the Rev. Roman Smith of the First Christian Church in Stillwater the minister in charge and the memorial tribute was delivered by the late Dr. Henry G. Bennett, President of the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College and Assistant Secretary of State of the United States. In this moving funeral address to the memory of his great friend, Dr. Bennett paid tribute and gave acknowledgment to the magnificent contribution Mr. Strong made to the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College in these words:

"We live in a world of confusion. Too many times, men who ought to be strong are timid. Mr. Strong was a man of great courage. Nothing looked impossible to him. Nothing was too difficult for him to undertake with full assurance that we could carry it through to ultimate success. It would have been impossible for us through these trying years, years of drouth, years of depression, years of hard fiscal conditions—it would have been impossible for us to have carried out the dream which we had together with our associates of an evergrowing, expanding service institution for the State of Oklahoma without the faith and the courage which our great friend had.

Funeral services were also held in Clinton, Oklahoma, in the First Christian Church, on Sunday, September 2, 1951, with the pastor of that church, the Rev. H. Thornton Jones, the minister in charge, and the eulogy delivered by Judge Don Carrough of Clinton. Burial was in old Parkersburg Cemetery near Clinton.

Survivors include his widow, Mrs. Minnie Strong; a son, Dr. C. Riley Strong, El Reno; two daughters, Mrs. Isabel Gutshall, Long Beach, Calif., and Mrs. Alveta Von Osterheldt, Minneapolis, Minn.; three brothers, J. S. Strong, Oklahoma City, R. B. Strong, Arapaho, and F. F. Strong, Wichita, Kans.; two sisters, Mrs. Delma Chapman, Clinton, Oklahoma, and Mrs. V. D. Hicks, Osceola, Iowa; and four grandchildren.

—Charles H. Lamb

*Tulsa, Oklahoma*