

**IN MEMORY OF
DR. GRANT FOREMAN**

With many distinguished friends, eminent leaders of the State and many beyond the borders of Oklahoma gathered to mourn the passing from Earth of one of Oklahoma's most noted authors of history in America, the following program was rendered:

First Presbyterian Church in Muskogee, Oklahoma
April 23, 1953

Clergyman Officiating
Dr. Walter G. Letham, Muskogee

Eulogist
General William S. Key, Oklahoma City
President, Oklahoma State Historical Society

Bacone College Choir, Bacone
Raymond Evans, Director

Soloist
Mrs. Francis Thompson, Bacone College

Organ Music Mrs. W. P. Baswell
Chorale: "When Thou Art Near" Bach
"Evensong" Schumann
"Largo" (New World Symphony) Dvorak

Chorale: "My Heart is Filled with Longing" Bach
"I'm a Pilgrim" (Johnson) Mrs. Francis Thompson

BENEDICTION Dr. Walter G. Letham
"Going Home" (Dvorak) Mrs. W. P. Baswell

DR. GRANT FOREMAN

*By General William S. Key, President
The Oklahoma Historical Society*

**EULOGY DELIVERED IN THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
MUSKOGEE, OKLAHOMA ON APRIL 23, 1953.**

Dr. Letham, family and friends of Dr. Foreman:

It is with heavy hearts and feeble words that we, the associates of Dr. Grant Foreman in the Oklahoma Historical Society, undertake the sad task of paying a richly deserved tribute of respect and honor to him who was our fellow director and peerless leader in the field of history.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said in one of his essays that, "Every institution is but the lengthened shadow of an individual." It

could well be said that the Oklahoma Historical Society, in its growth and development as a great storehouse of rich and romantic history of our beloved State, is but the lengthened shadow of this fine gentleman, this great historian, who has been called home by the Supreme Architect of the Universe, the great Recorder of all history.

Dr. Foreman was first elected a director of the Oklahoma Historical Society on February 5, 1924. He entered upon his duties with initiative and enthusiasm. He was regularly reelected and later, as a reward for his splendid service, he was made a director for life. In this brief tribute I will confine my remarks generally to his association with the Historical Society; even so, I can emphasize only the high lights of his great contribution to the recording and preservation of Oklahoma history.

Upon becoming a director of the Society, Dr. Foreman was appointed on the Committee of Publications, charged with publishing the quarterly magazine of the Society, *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, then in its infancy, only one volume having been published up to that time. The second and each succeeding volume, except those of the past two years, has contained feature articles on some phase of Oklahoma history by Dr. Foreman. I recall his first article published in April 1924, in which he commemorated the 100th anniversary of Fort Gibson. It is one of my prized possessions and I attribute my growing interest in Oklahoma's history to the reading of his fascinating story of the history of that famous Post. Dr. Foreman's splendid services as Editor and contributing author made the *Chronicles of Oklahoma* one of the most valuable historical publications of its kind in the Nation.

At a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Historical Society on February 1, 1927, Dr. Foreman sponsored a resolution memorializing Congress to authorize the placing of the records of the Five Civilized Tribes in the Historical Society for permanent file and preservation. This action was to become effective when a fireproof building for safeguarding the records could be provided. He followed through diligently on both the resolution and the need of a new building and was largely responsible for the erection in 1930 of the handsome building in which the Society is now housed. Shortly thereafter, Congress enacted a law making the Society the official depository of the old records of the Five Civilized Tribes and all other Indian Tribes in Oklahoma. As a result of Dr. Foreman's efforts our Indian Archives today contain the largest collection of classified Indian records to be found outside of the National Capitol.

Another important contribution of Dr. Foreman was his sponsorship during the depression of several Federal Works projects employing a great number of qualified persons in collecting his-

torical data and preserving historical sites. The most important of these, perhaps, was the program of interviewing old Indians and pioneers and obtaining first hand stories and recollections of their early life before and after the Civil War. This is known as the Foreman Collection and contains one hundred and twelve volumes of valuable historical memoirs. Other projects included the construction of a replica of the old stockade at Fort Gibson which has been visited by hundreds of thousands of interested citizens. Another project was the erection of a stone building to enclose the original log house home of Sequoyah, the famous author of the Cherokee alphabet, near Sallisaw; still another, was the construction of a stone wall around the family cemetery of the noted Choctaw leader, Robert M. Jones, near the site of his palatial antebellum home near Hugo. Jones was perhaps the wealthiest Indian in Indian Territory and represented the Choctaw Nation in the Confederate Congress at Richmond during the Civil War.

It was Grant Foreman who first struck the spark of interest in the fascinating history of the first permanent citizens of Oklahoma, our Indian ancestors of the Five Civilized Tribes. To him above any other writer is due credit for developing, through intensive study and research, the engrossing story of these tribes in their progress from primitive life to orderly self government and conventional society.

Dr. Foreman's interest and efforts in obtaining and preserving history was not confined to the Indian race. However, since the history of Oklahoma is so closely interwoven with the history of the Indian, naturally his work developed heretofore unpublished facts about their achievement in wresting this beautiful country from a wild state of nature before the coming of the white man.

It was largely through Dr. Foreman's tireless research in the musty and forgotten records and reports of human, and sometimes inhuman, activities and adventure of representatives of the various nations that colonized America, before and after our War of Independence, that we have learned the real history of America and Oklahoma's original citizens.

Dr. Foreman recognized that the documentary history of our State has been in progress of recording for many years and that the source material was scattered far and wide. He spent much time and money in patient and laborious study and research in libraries scattered over the United States and Europe, and in doing so he assembled a priceless collection of historical information. To him there was no vocation so interesting and so fascinating as historical research. We Oklahomans owe him a great debt of gratitude for his contribution to the history of our great State.

His historical books are too numerous to mention individually but his absorbing stories of the *Five Civilized Tribes*, *Indian Removal*, and *Advancing the Frontier*, belong in the front rank of historical research and reporting. Dr. Foreman was a good man and a good citizen, proud of his adopted State and loyal to his Nation; his life was an inspiration to his many friends and admirers in all walks of life; and to his associates in the Oklahoma Historical Society he was the Dean of Historians. His gentle spirit will linger long with us:

“Fading away like stars of the morning,
Losing their light in the glorious sun,
So do we pass from the earth and its toiling,
Only remembered by what we have done”