AMERICAN AIRLINES ALONG THE
BUTTERFIELD MAIL ROUTE

By Vernon H. Brown*

INTRODUCTION

The writer of this article is neither a historian nor a lecturer, but an airline pilot who has spent much of his life in the service of transporting the U. S. Mails. His interest in events of the past stems from a curiosity of the more than three million miles of terrain over which he has flown. His work with the youngsters of this country in association with the Boy Scouts of America has made him ever more cognizant of the men and their ideals that have made our country great.

On many occasions, while speeding serenely in the silence of the night, drinking in a beauty known only to the favored few who are privileged to work high in the blue of God's heaven, the writer has often wondered: "What am I putting into this bank of life from which I so freely withdraw? What have I done to justify the wisdom and foresight that men like Washington, Franklin and Jefferson exhibited when they laid the cornerstone around which is built our way of life?" The answer that comes to mind is always the same: to try, in some small way, to interest one's fellow men, particularly the youth, in how a remembrance of the courage and adventure of yesterday's actions will light the pathways to tomorrow's decisions.

The writer's efforts on the Butterfield Overland Mail Route have been mostly through the study and research of the works of many historians of this country, including the works of some from this state. Original work in this field has been limited to the aerial observation of this old trail through the state of Oklahoma and to restoration work in the Trans-Pecos region.

In this work, the writer has leaned heavily on his friends, Mr. and Mrs. Roscoe P. Conkling, who are the greatest living authorities on the entire Butterfield Mail Route. He has had many talks with the Conklings and finds their story of the Butterfield Overland Mail is most fascinating. Their three volume work on the subject is among the most treasured in the writer's library. The exact data

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*Vernon H. Brown, Captain, American Airlines, has headquarters at Tulsa. The article contributed here was adapted for publication in The Chronicles, from Captain Brown’s paper on the Butterfield Mail Route presented at the 1954 meeting of the Oklahoma History Professors’ Association at Enid, Oklahoma, December 3, 1954.—Ed.

1 Roscoe P. Conkling and Margaret B. Conkling, The Butterfield Overland Mail, 1857-1869 (The Arthur H. Clark Company, Glendale, California, 1952), 2 volumes and a bound atlas of folding maps.
from which the plan was built for the restoration in the Trans-Pecos region were obtained from Mr. Conkling. His broad knowledge of engineering, and experience in archaeology, plus the patience to painstakingly sift fact from fiction, has resulted in the most accurate and complete material available. It is to Roscoe P. and Margaret B. Conkling this paper is most respectfully and earnestly dedicated. The work that has been done would not have been possible without them.

The World’s Leading Stager

Since the day man first trekked through the wilderness ages ago, there has been need for communication. As transportation has progressed through the years from these humble beginnings, like a shadow has communication followed. The two have become almost synonymous.

The transportation of the mail has excited the imagination of mankind for many, many years. There have been volumes written concerning the hardships and glorious deeds of men who have transported the mail, but few lines have had the impact of the simple expressions of Rudyard Kipling’s “The Overland Mail.” We can take an excerpt from this poem, and with our mind’s eye examine the elements that gave birth to the U. S. Post Office slogan, “Neither Rain, nor Snow, nor gloom of night shall stay these carriers of the mail from making their appointed rounds.” And to this excellent slogan was added, by the deeds of the pioneer pilots who blazed the air trails over the length and breadth of this great country, the word “winged” to bring the slogan in line with present day transportation. When the winged giants of the air are regularly speeding huge loads of mail from coast to coast to the millions to whom air mail is consigned, the speed has changed but the man—well, one still likes to feel that he must have been about the same kind of fellow as the man who pilots today’s airliners.

Today the pilot is every bit as mindful of the darkness, the rain and the tempest. These are two extremes, and the men who came along between times are no less courageous. In fact, the thrilling chapter of the overland mail service could not be complete without a brief sketch of one of the world’s leading stagers, Mr. John Butterfield.

John Butterfield was born November 18, 1801 in Albany County, New York. It was during his early childhood on the family farm that young John’s interest in stage coaches began to develop. The farmstead was located on a stage coach route, and the youngster soon learned when the stages were due by, and was stationed along side of the road to wave at the drivers and passengers as they whizzed toward their destination. The stage coach offered the ultimate in transportation then and was probably looked on as today’s youngster
watches the latest Douglas DC-7 on its departure from the Tulsa
airport. As the stage drivers learned to watch for young John he
became more and more interested in what lay beyond the next
turn of the road or over the next ridge of the Helderberg Mountains,
and when one of the drivers blew his long coaching horn as a special
salute to the boy, he probably decided then that here was the life
for him. He left his home on the farm when he was about nineteen
years old, and moved to Albany. His life on the farm had taught
him much in the manner of care of animals, and since his life had
centered around stage coaches, it followed that young John was
soon to be employed as a driver for a livery firm, and in a short
time was considered one of the best drivers in Albany. That same
year a new stage line was organized to serve Western New York,
and John was quickly hired by the new concern. He moved to Utica.
and before long was listed as a driver, and later became manager
of the Parker Stage Line in Utica.

Farm life in the early Nineteenth Century was hard, and John
Butterfield learned early in life the value of a dollar. This early
lesson was carried with him to Utica where he lived simply and saved
every cent possible. Before another year had passed he had saved
enough to purchase a horse and buggy and begin a livery business
of his own. In 1822, John Butterfield married Malinda Baker, and
they operated a boarding house in conjunction with their livery
stable. As the country grew, so grew John Butterfield. His interests
extended to other stage coach lines in the area. Soon he held con-
trolling interest in most of the important mail and passenger coach
lines in western New York.

As transportation progressed, the stager's business was doomed
by the coming of the railroad as it extended its lines through the
populated areas to the frontiers. Mr. Butterfield then entered into
the express business, but joined forces with his competitors, Mr.
Wells and Mr. Fargo, whose names are not new to students of western
history, in this new enterprise when serious competition threatened
to liquidate the assets of all three men. The new company resulted
in the Railway Express Agency which handles all of the express
shipments carried today by the scheduled air lines under the name of
Air Express.

This was the background of John Butterfield prior to the time
when the political and economic situation forced Congress to consider
the establishment of a direct route from coast to coast. This was no
easy task when the centers of population were east of the Appalachian
Mountains, and west of the Rockies with little in between except the
formidable Rocky and Sierra Nevada Mountain Ranges with their
severe winters to the north and the parched, dry expanse of the
great American desert along either route. The problem of supply
seemed almost unsurmountable.
The story of the ocean mail and the growth of the recently acquired territories on this continent are, in themselves, an absorbing study that can only be mentioned here. It is worthy of note at this point, however, that the demand for transporting the mail necessitated a special design of steamship, as in later years the same demand necessitated a special design of stage coaches, railroad cars and aircraft. Even in the early effort, one of the first commercial uses contemplated for rockets was the transportation of mail. One sees here how important has been the demand for communication, and its effects on the transportation industry.

Toward the middle of the Nineteenth Century, the easiest way to San Francisco from New York was by a long ocean voyage. The trip around Cape Horn was more than 15,000 miles. The shorter one, via the Isthmus of Panama, was over 6,000 miles. The voyage around Cape Horn took many weeks, and even the shorter route across the Isthmus was not without its hardships and dangers. The letter postage under the Mail Act of 1848 was forty cents. It is interesting to note, by comparison, that the side wheel steamers with auxiliary sails that were designed for this service could with a favoring wind reach a speed of fifteen knots, or more. The great circle distance from New York to San Francisco is less than 3,000 miles, and a DC-7 aircraft with a favoring wind could make the flight in eight hours without even a stop for fuel. Regular air mail postage is now 6 cents per ounce.

The water route of thousands of miles was the situation that existed in the United States when some prospecting miner shouted the magic word “gold” at Sutter’s Mill that January day in 1849. Soon the echoes of that cry were heard throughout the country, and the gold rush was on. Laborers, tradesmen and adventurers, both men and women, were preparing to follow Horace Greely’s advice to “go west.” The demand for an overland mail route within our own borders became imperative.

Congress took the problem under advisement, and in 1857 a mail route was laid out which had the nearest resemblance to a transcontinental route up to this time. It began operation between San Antonio and San Diego on a monthly schedule frequency. This mail firm, known as the Birch Line, was operated under contract to the post office. It was a route that could be described as considerably less than a regularly scheduled system by our standards today. Since the equipment that a passenger must take along for his comfort and protection consisted of the following items as listed in a San Diego paper of the times: “A Sharpe Rifle, a Colts Navy Revolver, one hundred and fifty rounds of ammunition, some blankets, change of clothing, socks, underwear, needles, a brush, soap and plenty of food that did not require much cooking.”

The coaches of this company stopped every night and the passengers cooked their own food over an open fire, and slept on the
ground, and in addition, the physical discomfort is indicated by the posters of the Birch firm which specify that the entire trip is made in comfortable horse drawn carriages except for the 100 miles portion west of Ft. Yuma, Arizona, which was conducted on mule back. This route was not very popular as a regularly scheduled link in the transcontinental system being contemplated. It did not serve the centers of population of either of the coasts and a great portion of the country in between. It was said of the Birch Line that "It started in the middle and didn't go anywhere." Be that as it may, the criticism of the post office for not establishing organized lines of communication for passenger and mail service continued, and on September 16, 1857 the contract was signed for what was known at the time as "The Great Overland Mail Contract." Thus began the organization of the most colorful company ever to transport the U. S. Mail, "The Butterfield Overland Mail Company."

Though Mr. Butterfield organized his company and held very close reins on its problems of routing and supply, he himself never went farther west than Ft. Smith, Arkansas. He rode this far on the first west bound stage which was driven by his son, John, who like his father, loved the feel of the rolling coach and the pull of the reins.

An idea of enormous size of the project was evident when we consider that nearly two thousand horses and mules were needed, and, in all probability, this many men were required also. They needed more than one hundred stage coaches of the celerity type; some of the more comfortable types that ran in later years from Ft. Smith, Arkansas through Springfield, to Tipton, Missouri; a large number of freight wagons; hundreds of sets of harnesses; plus hundreds of tons of equipment to supply the relay and home stations, which numbered well over a hundred. At one time the Company even operated its own steamship line in conjunction with its passenger service. All in all it is estimated that the Butterfield Company had spent nearly $1,000,000.00 by the time the first coaches rolled simultaneously from Tipton, Missouri and San Francisco, California.

**The Butterfield Mail Route**

The Butterfield Mail Route had two terminal points on its Eastern extremity, both on the Mississippi River. St. Louis, Missouri and Memphis, Tennessee. From St. Louis the mail assigned to the Butterfield Company agent was transported as far as Tipton, Missouri, on the expanding Pacific (now Missouri Pacific) railroad where it was placed aboard a waiting Concord coach for the first leg of the run to Fort Smith where it was to meet with the mails from Memphis. The mails from Memphis were brought overland to Des Arc, Arkansas, on the west bank of the White River, where it was placed on board the stage along with the passengers who had
made an earlier departure to proceed from Memphis via steamboat down the Mississippi and up the White River, rather than make the trip overland through the swamps of Eastern Arkansas.

Wherever possible the old road ran on established trails, but the Butterfield men never failed to lay a new road where a short cut would save valuable time. Its contract specified that the mail must be delivered in twenty-five days. Later records indicate that this time was often beaten. The road was considered somewhat of an engineering masterpiece by those who have used it. Even when it crossed mountains its grade was slight, and as near a straight line as terrain and the necessity of obtaining water would permit. The Butterfield Trail, as it was sometimes referred to, continued across the southeastern part of the state of Oklahoma stopping at the homes of prominent citizens of the Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations for change of horses and for meals.

The practice of using private dwellings for relay stations was used where possible, but the Butterfield Company was forced to build and maintain its own stations farther west. Across the Llano Estacado, the stations were of the stone fortress type necessary for the protection of the Butterfield employees and stock from the depredations of the Plains Indians. The stages were not molested in this area presumably because of the speed and stamina of the sleek, fat, grain fed horses in comparison with the grass fed ponies ridden by the Indians.

Beyond the great Staked Plains the old mail road wound its way through the ruggedly beautiful Guadalupe Canyon. Just east of the canyon site the ruins of the Pinery Station built by Silas St. John, who was nearly killed during the construction of another Butterfield fort type station a little farther on west at Dragoon Springs, Arizona. The ruins of Pinery Station sit in the shadows of the towering majestic Guadalupe Peak, the highest point in the state of Texas, whose summit was said to be visible to early day immigrants for almost a week before it was reached.

Today, the passengers on American Airlines southern transcontinental flight can still see it more than a hundred and fifty miles away on a clear day. Old Guadalupe has looked down from its lofty position on travelers for many years. Evidence has indicated that man has occupied the caves and had drunk from the sparkling springs around its base for generations. Early Spanish explorers have been said to have traveled the foot trails through Guadalupe Canyon that were ancient when Christopher Columbus played as a boy in his native Genoa.

The Butterfield Route continued on to El Paso where it entered the city from the northeast. The airline pilot can follow its tracks from the Hueco tanks to the boundaries of the Anderson Airport where it disappears beneath the very runways that he lands on today. On west of El Paso, the road runs very closely to the airway,
and many an air traveler has looked down on the spring where Silas St. John was nearly murdered almost a hundred years ago. The old trail continues along the base of Rincon fly and in to Tucson. The American Airlines’ flights that are not bound for Phoenix fly very nearly over the road all the way to the point west of San Diego where the old road turns north westerly to Los Angeles. American Airlines’ people think of Los Angeles as a major terminal, whereas the Butterfield Company gave only a way station status to this sleepy little village of Spanish descent that lay basking in the southern California sunshine more than twenty-five miles from the shores of the beautiful blue Pacific Ocean. American Airlines’ route from Los Angeles to San Francisco lies just to the west of that of the Butterfield Mail Route, nearly coinciding with it as they reach the city.

Guadalupe Pass was a hazardous section of roadway for the driver of the Butterfield stages, so it was for the explorer before him. Along the side of the road through the canyon is the grave of Jose Marcia Polancia. Polancia was a guide for the Longstreet expedition that was operating in the area several years before the coming of the Butterfield Company. Guadalupe Pass, guarded by El Capitan seven thousand feet high and its big brother to the north, Guadalupe Peak, whose summit towers nearly nine thousand feet above sea level, has been looked upon by the pioneer pilots of American Airlines with much respect for many years. The history of aviation has recorded several unfortunate instances along its steep slopes, and it has been the hope of some of America’s older pilots that a memorial could be erected in the area in memory of those who have passed this way before. It was with this thought in mind that American Airlines first became interested in the Guadalupe area. It was the thought of two far-seeing pioneering executives of this company, Mr. C. R. Smith, President, and Mr. O. M. Mosier, Senior Vice President, and a pioneer air pilot in his own right, that a small plaque should be placed at, or near, the summit of Guadalupe Peak, and that a shaft or arch should be placed alongside of the roadway where the story of the pioneers could be told. Upon learning of the amazing parallel of the Butterfield route to the structure of American Airlines system they became interested in restoring the ruins of the Piney Station in its entirety. Fortunately, the ruins are situated almost beside U. S. Highway No. 62, and are the only ruins of any of the Butterfield stations to be adjacent to a major highway.

In a further study of the Butterfield route, it was determined that American Airlines is the only carrier of the United States mail ever to serve all of the terminal points and the way stations of the Butterfield route that have air mail service today with the exception of Fort Smith, Arkansas and Ft. Yuma, Arizona. The shadows of the flagships are cast daily on these two cities as they wing their way over to serve the larger metropolitan areas nearby.
On April 2, 1954, a small, stainless steel plaque was placed near the top of Guadalupe Peak. The plaque is on a limestone outcropping that faces the southeast where it can catch the first glimmering rays of sunlight as each new day is dawning to reflect the rays back over the rocky canyons of the Guadalupe where the courses of the early carriers of the mail coincide thousands of feet below. To add a touch to the plaque, there was mounted a bronze American Airlines insignia from the interior of one of their DC-7 aircraft with an engraved block in the eagle's talons carrying the words, "Dedicated to the memory of the pioneer pilots of American Airlines, Inc." and the date.²

The land upon which the Pinery ruins stand have been acquired by American Airlines through the kindness and courtesy of its former owners, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Glover, upon whose ranch the old mail road runs, and Mr. J. C. Hunter of Abilene, Texas. The plans that were formulated by American Airlines for the dedication of its Pinery restoration have now been incorporated into, and made a part of the Overland Mail Centennial Celebration program of the Trans-Pecos Sub-Committee. They have already begun to collect articles of clothing, stage coaches, harness and other necessary props for their part in the celebration. This important aspect of the celebration is being expedited by Sir Cleofas Caleros, who was recently knighted by the Spanish government for his work in preserving the history of the area. American Airlines, through its Guadalupe Memorial Committee, is working closely with Sir Cleo and his West Texas group.

American Airlines further interest in this project was excited when it was considered how much the future of our country is dependent on the principle that brought this vast operation into being. The principle of free enterprise and competition which must be protected and encouraged. Certainly the creative ingenuity and indomitable courage of the Yankee, John Butterfield, is truly American, for without him, and men like him, this system of government could not exist. "The Butterfield Trail" blazed an exciting chapter in pages of the history of the U. S. Mail, and left a vivid imprint on the minds of generations to follow as these centennial programs will attest.

Besides being dedicated to American Airlines pioneer pilots, this memorial will perpetuate the rich, colorful history of one of our

² The plans for the remaining portion of the pilot's memorial are dormant at the present time, but the architectural plan, the design work, and the specifications have been completed. The detail and working drawings have been printed, and are now ready for the stone mason to take over. The plans call for straightening up the remains of the old wall and tying it in with the new construction so as to preserve it. The only removal of the original stones will be to flash the old wall with a copper flashing before they are to be replaced. The entire site will be enclosed in a masonry wall topped with steel fencing arranged in such manner to enhance the beauty of the restoration without changing the character and fundamental simplicity of the old stone fort.
country's earliest crossroads and that of the great southwest, and in addition will recall to memory a milestone in the field of transporting the U.S. Mail by private enterprise. It is truly a salute from one pioneer to another, a new interpretation of service by America's leading airline.

**Through Oklahoma**

On September 19, 1858, around 3:00 a.m. a brightly painted "celerity wagon" forded the Poteau River from the foot of South E Street in Fort Smith, Arkansas into Indian Territory. This was the first run of the Butterfield Overland Mail. There was only one through passenger, Mr. L. Waterman Ormsby, a reporter for the New York Herald. The celerity wagon was an especially designed coach that could take the rough mountain roads with safety. They were lower than the famous old Concord coaches built by the J. S. Abbot and Sons Company in Concord, New Hampshire that were also used by the Butterfield Line. The wheels were set rather far apart and were protected by wide steel rims to prevent them from sinking into the soft sand found along the road. The celerity wagon carried about nine passengers and their baggage, and was constructed in such a manner that the seats could be lowered to make sleeping space inside. An interesting parallel that was noted in the Butterfield Company posters was that each passenger was allowed only forty pounds of luggage. Exactly the same amount that is allowed by the scheduled airlines today.

The first stop in Indian Territory was at the home of Tandy Walker, who later became a colonel in the Confederate States Army. Walker was a Choctaw Indian who lived at the agency town of Skullyville, and later served as governor of the Choctaw Nation. The Walker home is gone now. It was destroyed by fire on September 12, 1947, almost eighty-nine years to the day that the first Butterfield stage passed that way. All that is visible today are the foundation stones among the huge trees that surround the place. A small cemetery is located nearby in which rest the last earthly remains of these early settlers in this vicinity.

Leaving Walker's, the celerity wagon rumbled off to the southwest along the old mail road toward the present town of Red Oak, Oklahoma. The course of the old mail road is followed very closely by the county road serving this section today. From Red Oak the old mail road continued on to the west and southwest, where it is still followed in places by present day county roads, to Geary's Stand,

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8 Muriel H. Wright, "Historic Places on the Old Stage Line from Fort Smith to Red River," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XI, No. 2 (June, 1933). This article has a map showing the location of the Butterfield Stage Stands along the route through Southeastern Oklahoma.

4 Governor Tandy Walker's home at Skullyville was the old Choctaw Agency building erected in 1832.—Ed.
near present Stringtown, just a few miles above Atoka. It entered the area from the northeast. Sections of the old road can be seen in this area today from the air since some portions of it are still being used by local folk.

The towns that sprang up along the early roads became thriving communities on the railroads and highways. Even today the airline passenger winging his way between Dallas and Tulsa flies over portions of the route south of McAlester, and in some places the deep grooves worn by the steel rimmed wheels of the speeding coaches and heavy freighters are made visible by the erosion of the soil along the abandoned sections.

From Geary's, the passengers probably noted that their trip was a little easier now as the rough rocky roads over the Boston Mountains and between the Winding Stair and the San Bois mountains were left behind. The stage rolled swiftly across the prairies to Old Boggy Depot just to the west-southwest of Atoka. Before railroad construction passed it by, Boggy Depot was one of the most important trading posts in the territory. Mr. Ormsby reported that there were even painted houses there which must have been a sight worth noting. Reverend Allen Wright, who gave the name Oklahoma for the Indian Territory (1866), lived there. The Wright residence stood until 1952 when it was destroyed by fire. The old town has completely disappeared, with the cemetery and a few foundation and chimney stones left to mark the once thriving center. Boggy Depot had grown up around a public square as had many other towns of the day. It was the center of most of the trade with nearby Ft. Washita, a military base whose establishment was occasioned by the warlike Plains Indians in the western part of the territory.

Leaving Boggy Depot, the old mail route turns almost due south. The next station was located on the Blue River. This station was known as the Nail House, owned by the pioneer Nail family, who lived west of present day Caddo, Oklahoma. The Nail house is the only log station house that was used by the Butterfield Company in Oklahoma that is still standing. It is quite possible that it is the only log station that was actually used by the Butterfield Company that is standing today. A short distance from the Nail House are the earth works of old Fort McCullough.

Nearing Red River, the old road follows generally a southerly course to a point on the Red River just to the south of the present town of Colbert. The ferry was operated by Frank Colbert, a Chickasaw Indian who transported the first Butterfield coaches across the sluggish river free of charge,5 thereby establishing a new route to Texas for the wheels of commerce that follow the advancement of

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5 Grant Foreman, "The California Mail Route through Oklahoma," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. IX, No. 3 (September, 1931), p. 313. Frank Colbert continued operation of his ferry on Red River by franchise from the Chickasaw Legislature, approved October 18, 1859.—Ed.
new lines of transportation. Thus, the state of Oklahoma saw the future of our country on parade as the West really began to grow in earnest. Oklahoma's coal mines provided the Butterfield blacksmith with coal for his forges. Other blacksmiths who pounded out the hundreds of horse and mule shoes, wagon fittings, tools and other equipment necessary to transport a civilization, found supplies here. Oklahoma served the transportation industry then, as now, with essential products. Tomorrow's jet transport will be dependent on Oklahoma's oil as the Butterfield Overland Mail was on its coal for the blacksmith forge.

The first coach arrived at Colbert's ferry at 9:50 a.m. on September 20, 1858. The leader of the parade to come took about thirty hours to cross Oklahoma.6

OVERLAND MAIL CELEBRATION

After plans were begun for the Pinery restoration, the writer was advised that The American Association for State and Local History had passed a resolution to create a National Committee with Dr. H. Bailey Carroll, prominent Texas historian and editor (Austin, Texas), serving as Chairman. Dr. Carroll in turn appointed sub-committees in the states of Missouri, Arkansas, Tennessee, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona. California, and a Trans-Pecos sub-committee for West Texas.

The first meeting for the Oklahoma Committee was held on November 24, 1953, in the offices of the Oklahoma Historical Society in Oklahoma City. At this meeting preliminary plans were laid down for the Oklahoma portion of the Overland Mail Centennial program, the date for this portion scheduled to coincide with Oklahoma's Semi-Centennial Celebration in 1958. The plans further called for the marking of the old Overland Mail Route within the borders of this state as the Committee's resources would permit. A public appreciation program was initiated on September 19, 1954, with feature articles in The Daily Oklahoman and the Tulsa World. During August of this year, the first flights were made along the old stage line road between Stringtown and Colbert's Ferry, and the

6 The official list of Butterfield Stage Stands in Oklahoma were as follows: Walker's, near Spiro, Le Flore County; Traherne's, near Latham, Le Flore County; Holloway's (The Narrows), northeast of Red Oak, Latimer County; Riddle's, near Lutie, Latimer County; Pulsley's, near Higgins, Latimer County; Blackburn's, about six miles southeast of Blance, Pittsburg County; Waddell's, near Wesley, Atoka County; Geary's, near Stringtown, Atoka County; Boggy Depot, site of Old Boggy Depot, Atoka County; Nail's, crossing on Blue River west of Caddo, Bryan County; Fisher's, vicinity old Carriage Point (head of Island Bayou) west of Durant, Bryan County; Colbert's Ferry, near Colbert, Bryan County.—Ed.

7 The Oklahoma Sub-Committee is composed of Captain V. H. Brown, American Airlines, Chairman; Dr. W. E. Holton, University of Oklahoma; Dr. E. E. Dale, University of Oklahoma; Dr. Berlin B. Chapman, Oklahoma A. and M. College; Dr. Charles Evans and Miss Muriel H. Wright, of the Oklahoma Historical Society.
part of the road that was visible was photographed. All that is left of Old Boggy Depot was the subject of interest for several minutes of film shots. Another photo reconnaissance flight\(^8\) was on December 18, 1954, when film shots were made of the ruins of Old Fort Washita and the earthworks at Fort McCulloch in the vicinity of the old stage line road, and of the location of Waddell’s Stand. Two television shows have been booked for 1955 in the Committee’s public relations program, one of which was presented over WKY-TV on March 6 from 1:00 to 1:30 p.m., in the show “Through the Open Window,” with the theme built around the story of the Overland Mail Route through Oklahoma.

In retrospect, we must admit that the state of Oklahoma has witnessed in its history a colorful pageant as an expanding empire conquered the frontier. Yet the frontier is not lost, for while new ones are being sought, we like our grandfathers must keep alive the thrilling adventure and blazing glory of yesteryear.

\(^8\) This flight was made by Dr. W. E. Hollon, Mr. Wayne Rock (official photographer from O.U.), Captain V. H. Brown as pilot and Muriel H. Wright as navigator on a Piper Cub (new Tri-Pacer) plane, leaving Will Rogers Field, Oklahoma City, at 9:30 a.m. and returning at 3:00 p.m.—Ed.