"Three score years and ten," the life span stated by the Psalmist, was that attained by Arthur Grant Evans, 1858-1928. His vocational experiences exceeded that of most men of his time and his life was lived in three continents: Asia, Europe, and North America.

Born September 9, 1858 at Madras, India, he was the son of British missionaries, the Reverend E. J. and Caroline (Taylor) Evans. In his early childhood they returned to England where he was educated in the schools of London. Ability and motivation enabled him to do elementary work in private schools at an accelerated pace. When he was ready for more advanced schooling, Great Britain had begun to organize public schools, thus improving his educational opportunities and his preparation for teaching.

The Elementary Education Act of 1871 created hundreds of schools in England, especially in the larger cities, in charge of local school boards. The need for teachers grew faster than did their number. This provided opportunity to try extensively the Bell-Lancaster system, a plan which, in some ways, peculiarly paralleled Evans' experience. Chaplain Bell had inaugurated the plan in Madras, India, before 1800, to care for the schooling of the many orphans of British soldiers there. Lancaster, a little later, began a similar plan in South London where the need of teachers was so great and where his father helped him to get building facilities to try his educational experiment. Later, young Evans participated as monitor in a secondary Lancastrian school and had his college training for this plan and, still later, saw it unsuccessfully tried in the North American schools for Indians.1

Under this plan one competent teacher could instruct dozens, even a few hundred, pupils. The abler pupils were chosen as monitors, taught by the "master" and, in turn, each monitor taught a group of about ten classmates. The master provided for instruction of monitors that they were to pass on to their small groups, the wall charts used by monitors, and other material needed by them. Being above the average in ability, and with the added advantage of teaching the subject matter, the monitors gained better understanding of the courses than did most members of their small groups of classmates.

In 1871, Evans was a monitor in a South London school for boys. He took the full course for pupil teachers, and then obtained the Queen's scholarship and "entered the British and Foreign Training School, the oldest of English normal schools, established by Joseph Lancaster, the eminent Quaker educationist." In 1878 he was granted the A.B. degree by this Lancastrian school. For the next five years he was principal of a public school at Earls Barton, which was certified by the London School authorities.

In 1883, with his sister, Miss Carrie Evans, he moved to North America where he spent his remaining years. At first they lived in Canada where he taught in a private school. After about two years she returned to London. In the summer of 1884, while teaching in Nashville, Tennessee, he helped to entertain a party of Cherokee teachers, escorted by Robert L. Owen, then secretary to the Cherokee Board of Education. They were en route to visit a chautauqua in East Tennessee. "Shortly afterwards Owen wrote offering me a position in the Cherokee Male Seminary and so my connection with the work began." He found the Cherokees with about 100 public schools, besides the Male and Female Seminaries, which he described as "practically boarding high schools." The financial records of the Cherokee Nation, now in the Indian Archives of the Oklahoma Historical Society, show that he was made assistant principal while teaching there, his salary then raised from $133.33 to $155.55 per month.

"After about two years of work the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions asked me to take charge of their educational work in the Cherokee Nation." "He organized and superintended a number of schools, including those at Park Hill and Elm Springs, and reorganized the old Dwight Mission, at Marble." Interviews found in the "Indian and Pioneer Papers," Indian Archives, show that he began to preach in 1885, and became pastor of the Park Hill Church in the autumn of 1886. He was ordained to preach in 1887. Dr. Evans once stated:

I was strongly of the opinion that the picking out of a few bright young people and sending them to boarding school was not satisfactory and accepted the commission with the understanding that I should try to organize neighborhood schools in districts and supplied by the Cherokee school system, putting at least two teachers in charge of each school, and making them available to children of white renters.

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3 Daily Oklahoman, April 12, 1908.
4 Evans, op. cit.
5 Ibid.
7 Evans, op. cit.
This was the beginning of his interest in schools for the rapidly growing number of white children in the Indian Territory. Also, he believed that the two races should attend school together because he foresaw the end of Indian control of their schools, and because he believed that it was not good for Indians to continue to live apart from the already large number of white settlers, whose number was obviously destined to increase.

From about 1890 to 1899 he preached in three states, and taught in one of them. His first pastorate, after leaving the Cherokee Nation, was at Oswego, in the extreme southeastern part of Kansas. During this time, in 1891, he married Miss Katherine Robb, daughter of Andrew W. and Martha (Requa) Robb, pioneer citizens of Muskogee.8

After a one year pastorate in Pendleton, Oregon, the young couple moved to Colorado where he preached and taught until their return to Muskogee. He was pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Salida and then at Leadville. While at Salida he was principal of the Presbyterian Academy there,9 and there he advanced in Masonry, "being dubbed a Knight Templar in Salida Commandery, K.T."10

In Muskogee a school for Indian girls was started by Miss Alice Robertson in 1884, later enrolling boys, also. In 1894, it became Henry Kendall College, sponsored by the Indian Territory Presbyterian Synod. In the spring of 1899, W. R. King, president since 1896, resigned and A. Grant Evans immediately succeeded him. In 1906, the Women's Board of Home Missions turned the college over to the Presbyterian Synod, with instructions that it be made a great sectarian school. One of the first decisions that followed was to move the school to another town. Of the several bids for the new location, that of Tulsa was accepted. In September, 1907 the college opened at Tulsa, using as temporary quarters the Presbyterian Church building, at 4th and Boston. Tulsa citizens soon secured a campus and made plans for building.11 It was President Evans' responsibility to lead the school and its local supporters during the difficult transition period. In 1908, he resigned to accept a better position. The name of the school was changed to the University of Tulsa in 1920.

During his nine years as president of Henry Kendall College, Evans continued to grow in leadership roles besides school work, including that of his church and Masonry. "He organized a University Club, composed of about seventy Muskogee men

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8 Gideon, op. cit.
10 Gideon, op. cit.
who had been university students and the cosmopolitan character of the citizenship was shown by the fact that almost every university in the United States of any standing was represented.\(^\text{12}\) Besides being at one time moderator of the Indian Territory Synod, in 1894 "he was sent by the Presbyterian Churches of America to the Pan-Presbyterian Council, held at Liverpool, England," and "he had been a speaker at the annual Lake Mohawk Indian Conference."\(^\text{13}\) In 1904, he was among those appearing before the U. S. House of Representatives Committee on Territories, helping to present the argument for single statehood.\(^\text{14}\) In 1905 he was a delegate to the Sequoyah Convention, and helped to draft the constitution for the proposed State of Sequoyah.

In 1907, when the Oklahoma Constitutional Convention was in progress, Gabe Parker, a Henry Kendall graduate, was assigned to help design the great seal for the new state. He asked aid of President Evans, then heading Henry Kendall, who drew from his files the design that he had prepared two years previously for the Great Seal of the State of Sequoyah. It was slightly modified and the Great Seal of the Territory of Oklahoma, adopted in 1893, was placed in the center of the revision of the Evans design. Today's Great Seal of the State of Oklahoma is basically the concept of A. Grant Evans.\(^\text{15}\)

Evans' greatest service to the cause of common school education in the Indian Territory came early in the new century, after months of effort on his part. He had earlier suggested at a meeting of the teachers of Indian Territory "that Congress should be asked to make an appropriation to increase and develop the Indian school systems and make them available for non-Indian citizens residing in the school districts."\(^\text{16}\) Later, on request, he presented this proposal to the Lake Mohawk Conference and then to Congress. The first Congressional appropriation was for $100,000 in 1904. The next two years it was for $150,000 and then increased to $300,000 annually and continued at that figure in the first years of statehood.\(^\text{17}\)

With statehood came changes and threatened changes in all phases of leadership in Oklahoma, including that of the schools. "Rumors were already current that considerable reorganization,


\(^{13}\) House, *op. cit.*


\(^{16}\) Evans, *op. cit.*

not only of the university faculty but of the university itself, might be expected under the new state government. President Boyd, whose work had been amazingly successful, was serving for the sixteenth year, a long service for a university president in the Middle West. The Attorney General ruled that the University Regents did not have authority to choose its president; that only the State Board of Education could make that choice. At a meeting in March, 1908, the State Board unanimously chose A. Grant Evans, then president at Henry Kendall, to be the head of the State University. "Dr. Boyd, at the University since 1892 as its first president, was not considered for reappointment." During the three months that followed there was much agitation and unrest about possible changes in the university teaching staff. The O.U. Regents, at their June meeting dropped seven leading faculty members, all of them soon getting better positions elsewhere. Others resigned. "A total of thirteen old faculty members were no longer on the campus.

One of Boyd's last major contributions to education in Oklahoma was planning and beginning the first real summer session at the University, which was at about mid-stage when Evans became president, July 1, 1908. With a member of the O.U. Board of Regents, Boyd visited several universities during that summer to get ideas for a new building to replace the Administration Building that had burned December 20, 1907. During that summer the outgoing president did all that he could to help his successor get well started on what was obviously to be a very difficult year. In his last chapel address he said, "Every personal prejudice must give way to the good of the university."

Unrest and uncertainty contributed to a significant drop in enrollment in September. As his predecessor had done through the years, President Evans maintained a heavy speaking schedule throughout Oklahoma, using these opportunities to meet prospective students and their parents, and to build better support among the citizenry of the new state. The correspondence files of Evans, now in the University Library Archives, show careful attention to his letters to those who might be interested in enrolling or sending their children to the University of Oklahoma. These letters reveal his efforts to interest people from other states, writing to those parents that their children would not be at a disadvantage financially because of not being Oklahoma residents, stressing that no tuition was charged anyone except for "private lessons in music and painting."

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18 Roy Gittinger, The University of Oklahoma, (Norman, Oklahoma, 1942), p. 54.
19 Norman Transcript, March 26, 1908.
21 Gittinger, op. cit., p. 57.
22 This new building, later named Evans Hall, was completed during the administration of Acting President Monnet.
The 1908-09 school year began with twenty-eight new members on the teaching staff. Considering the size of the faculty at that time, this meant a large change in faculty positions. It meant, also, a loss of some outstanding professors whose successors, in certain instances, suffered in comparison with their predecessors. A not too friendly attitude prevailed for awhile toward some new staff members. Though President Evans was not responsible for this sweeping change, he did face the difficult task of getting started in a very discouraging and embarrassing atmosphere. He was equal to the occasion, exercising remarkable self-control, and was able to help others under the trying conditions for which he and they were not to blame.

The time was then ripe for a reorganization of the faculty, including teaching and administrative positions. During 1908-09 two “colleges” and five “schools” were created or, in some cases, slightly changed. There was then the College of Arts and Sciences, with eight subdivisions, and the College of Engineering, with four departments. The five schools were: Graduate, Fine Arts, Medicine, and Pharmacy, with Law developed during that year and actually starting in 1909. These seven divisions were headed by deans, nearly all of them able and ranking staff members under the previous administration. Of course, the Law School dean had to be a new member of the faculty. A member of the original faculty of 1892, was made vice president, also a new position. Thus the new president had leadership support of outstanding “old” staff members. The Schools of Law and Medicine soon had increased enrollments, due to absorbing those areas that had been a part of Epworth University, Oklahoma City. Enrollment grew slowly, the total number of students decreased by gradually dropping of the Preparatory Department, a movement planned and begun under Boyd’s administration.

Even before the reorganization of the staff into colleges and schools had become effective, and authorized by the University Regents, a newly organized Senate replaced the General Faculty in administrative functions. The vice president, deans, and heads of departments in the College of Arts and Sciences made up this new group and the administrative machinery was accordingly strengthened.

Gradually, though slowly and sometimes uncertainly, student leadership was organized and was encouraged and guided by the president and his staff. Long before the organization of the Student Senate, President Evans utilized a small ex-officio group of students who advised with him and sometimes were able to help in some phases. The presidents of the four college

23 *Norman Transcript*, July 2, 1908.
24 Gittinger, op. cit., pp. 59-60.
classes constituted this group. Also, the "Sooner Rooters" was organized as a cheering section, composed of both sexes, and with presidential blessing and guidance. In December, 1908, was formed an organization of those above the freshman level, "to supervise the affairs of freshmen." President Evans called a meeting of this group and planned with them student assistance in shared responsibility for "all activities of students." Gradually, some students who had felt disappointment, some even harboring resentment, over the fairly recent and extensive changes in the teaching staff, were effectively aligned with the administration in promoting growth and improvement of the university.

In January, 1911 Governor Haskell was succeeded by Governor Lee Cruce, whom he had defeated in the primary election of 1907 and had made president of the O.U. Board of Regents. Governor Cruce aided in getting prompt legislative action to remedy the overlapping and sometimes competitive conditions existing among the public colleges of Oklahoma. All boards of regents, except those of agricultural institutions, which were under a constitutionally provided board, were discontinued. The State Board of Education, with the State Superintendent as president, was placed in charge of the state institutions of higher learning. As had been true three years before, the official board decided upon a change in the presidency of the University of Oklahoma, without consulting or considering the incumbent. In May, 1911, The Daily Oklahoman carried a conspicuous headline, "New President Appointed," and soon there were news stories in Oklahoma papers that "seven old faculty members are let out." President Evans remained in charge until September 1, 1911 when Dean J. C. Monnet, of the Law School, became Acting President. During the summer he was on leave to lecture in another university, though continually cooperating with the outgoing president in planning the 1911-12 school year. Evans showed the same spirit of assistance that he had enjoyed as incoming president three years before. In his last chapel address, June 20, 1911, he showed a fine spirit and assured students and public that the Board was acting in good faith and with the best interests of the university in mind.

During the year following his presidency, he and his family moved to California, which was his home through his remaining years. After about four years of pastoral work at Long Beach, he moved to Santa Barbara, preaching there for twelve years. During the last two or three years, he taught part time in the fields of English and Philosophy at the State Teachers College and Junior College at Santa Barbara.

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During the last five decades of his life he was sometimes preaching and sometimes teaching, often carrying on both of his favorite services. "I know that he felt that preaching and teaching were so closely allied," wrote his daughter, "that if you were doing one you could hardly keep from being the other." At least that was true of A. Grant Evans. Filling his pulpit in Santa Barbara on Sunday, November 25, 1928, and meeting his college classes the following day, "his prayer was granted that he might wear out rather than rust out." His rich and rewarding life ended November 30, 1928. The beautiful El Montecito Presbyterian Church building at Santa Barbara displays this plaque: "This Building, a Memorial to the Reverend Arthur Grant Evans, D.D., LL.D., Minister and Pastor of El Montecito Presbyterian Church, 1916-1928, Was Made Possible through the Gifts of Many Appreciative Parishioners, Neighbors, and Friends, 1932."

"Minister, teacher, linguist, scientist, and poet," wrote Miss Alice Robertson about the friend whom she knew so well. Also, he was missionary, school administrator, and modest, though effective, statesman. His chapel talks often showed a real love of poetry, which he enjoyed writing as well as reading. "Dr. Evans knew more scripture than any man I ever knew. He had committed nearly all of the Psalms, word for word."  

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26 Dr. Evans was survived by his wife and five children. Mrs. Evans died in 1950; Edward (Ted) Andrew Evans, in 1951; and Mrs. Jessie Elizabeth (Evans) Jackson, in 1955. Two daughters, Martha Gwenllian and Mary Carol Evans, and one son, Arthur W. Robb Evans, are living in California in 1960.

27 The 1909 and 1910 volumes of the University of Oklahoma yearbook, The Sooner, include three of Evans' longer poems. One of them, "When Key Wolf Gets the Ball," made quite a hit when he read it in chapel.