



LETTERS

Russell Perry Bio Corrected

In enjoying the Spring 2004 issue of the *Sooner Magazine*, another excellent issue, I noticed a small error in your "Politics with an Attitude" story.

On page 19, below a photo of Burns Hargis questioning Russell Perry, the cutline identifies Russell as "former Secretary of Commerce and editor of *The Black Dispatch*," but neither is correct.

Governor Keating attempted to name Russell as Secretary of Commerce, but Democratic foes (Russell had switched his registration from Democrat to Republican at Keating's urging) prevented the appointment, so Russell became an unpaid special adviser to Keating for industrial development.

But the grievous error concerns *The Black Dispatch*. Russell was hired by the two wealthy owners of the paper in the late 1960s to bring it back to life, in which he did a marvelous job.

But this success led to a disagreement with them, and he walked out, abandoning his 52 per cent ownership of the *Dispatch*, which went into decline and disappeared.

He found a small vacant building and created from scratch *The Black Chronicle*, a resounding success, of which he is owner and publisher.

That led to the creation of Perry Publishing and Broadcasting, a true American Dream success story.

G. Dan Rambo, '51 bba, '56ms, '65jd
Norman, Oklahoma

More on the Phi Delt Five

To the article "Brothers in Arms" concerning the five Enid Phi Delt Five who were memorialized in Henry Bass's book in memory of his son, Bob, I'd like to add personal observations about three of them in particular.

An interesting sidelight in regard to Bob Vance's father's death. Mr. Vance, Sr., was killed in a small-plane flying lesson being given to Claire Oven, daugh-

ter of Jerry Oven, a Missouri Phi and sister of David and Herb, later to become Phis at OU.

You were right in characterizing "Pinky" Neal as a daredevil. I still carry scars on my elbow from riding behind him on his Indian motorcycle when it skidded out of control as we went around a corner from concrete pavement to a gravel side street.

And Jack Holland, probably the one closest to me all through 12 grades of Enid schools. It's a wonder he and I survived our wild driving escapades. We put each other in mortal peril at times. In his Dad's 1940 Pontiac, we flew through the air several times as we jumped the railroad tracks on North Cleveland, when they were still out in the countryside. I drove my Dad's 1939 Olds down US 81 at 109 mph to get Jack to work at the *News-Eagle* when we had been hunting up north of Pond Creek and had forgotten to look at our watches. US 81 had no shoulders, was only 18 feet wide, and had a country road crossing every mile. We could have been creamed or could have creamed a farmer and tractor at any intersection.

Enough of this old man's reminiscences.

L. G. (Bud) Everitt
Westminster, Colorado

Enid Classmates Recalled

I have thought for some time I needed to write an expression of appreciation for the two fine publications you edit for the Foundation—the *Sooner Magazine* and *Priority*. I look forward to these two publications for the excellent articles and the easy to read style. The Fall 2003 issue was of particular interest.

Your article about "Brothers in Arms" brought back memories of several that were included. Those in Enid High School in the late '30s and early '40s were Bob Bass, Alan Neal and Jack Holland. Bob and Alan were both in the Class of 1939 and Jack in the Class of 1941. My wife, Virginia Ann Cleveland, was also in the Class of '41 so knew and was well

aware of the fine examples these individuals exhibited.

I have made my copy of this *Sooner* available to several friends who fondly remember these classmates. Thanks for such a fine and informative series of articles.

Charles C. Weddle, '44 pharm
Edmond, Oklahoma

Review Overstepped Bounds

I am grateful for the space allocated to book reviews in *Sooner Magazine* but was distressed to read, in the Winter 2004 issue, the review of *Blood of the Prophets: Brigham Young and the Massacre at Mountain Meadows*, by Will Bagley. The role of a book reviewer, I believe, is to reserve judgment regarding the issues addressed in the book under consideration and instead, using questions such as the following, to assess the author's treatment of those issues:

- What are the author's main arguments and conclusions?
- Is the scholarship sound?
- Is the book well written?
- Are the photographs and maps well chosen and clearly reproduced?
- How does the book compare with others in the same field?

The notice in *Sooner Magazine*, however, took the author's assertions at face value and drew parallels with 9/11, loading an already appalling historical event with freight it should not bear and then laying it at the door of the leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Mr. Bagley sent his manuscript to the University of Oklahoma Press because in 1962 we had published *Mountain Meadows Massacre*, by Juanita Brooks. Although that book has achieved classic status, the author, who lived near Mountain Meadows, did not have access to the materials available to Mr. Bagley. Before his manuscript arrived, I knew of his assertion that Brigham Young had ordered the massacre of an emigrant wagon train. Thinking that Mr. Bagley might

have verifiable new insights, we solicited expert readings of his manuscript, and when the readers (including one at Brigham Young University) gave his work high marks, we decided to publish it.

Reviews of *Blood of the Prophets* in media such as the *New York Review of Books* suggest that the question of Brigham Young's complicity remains unsettled. *Blood of the Prophets* is the new standard on the subject, but it surely is not the last work. Already Oxford University Press plans to publish a book contradicting Mr. Bagley's thesis. This dialog, in which the LDS Church is a participant, is at the heart of serious scholarship. Such dialog, we trust, brings us ever nearer the truth, and we are pleased that the University of Oklahoma Press is a partner in such explorations.

I should add that in my fifty-plus years of membership in the LDS Church, on three continents and in positions of some responsibility, I have seen little to suggest that our leaders are inclined to cover-ups. Responding to every criticism that comes its way would be prohibitively time-consuming, of course, but when an issue demands attention and when the Church is in a position to shed light on the issue, these leaders see that it is given fair consideration.

John Drayton
Director
University of Oklahoma Press
Norman, Oklahoma

Editor's Note: No one is better qualified to take Sooner Magazine to task on behalf of the OU Press and the LDS Church than Director Drayton. As the reviewer in question, the editor apologizes for a carelessly written review of a well-written and intriguing book, albeit one on a subject still very much in dispute.

Book and Review Challenged

I was outraged and deeply offended when I read the article advertising a book in the Winter 2004 edition of *Sooner Magazine* (page 31) ["From the Bookshelf," re:

Blood of the Prophets]. I have included a copy of the article for your review.

This article, and perhaps the book itself, accused the Mormon settlers in Utah of an act of murder and slaughter in [September 11] 1857. The author (CJB) of the article in your magazine compares the incident to the murder of thousands of Americans on 9/11. This comparison is not only illogical, but is not supported by fact and is an article yielding only hate against another group.

This comparison is made despite the fact that church officials dispute the allegations made by enemies of the LDS church and the fact that the Indians were involved (southern Paiute Indians). I am a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and am not aware of any allegiance made with the Indians. Peace only was made with the Paiutes, not an elaborate plot to murder innocent settlers passing through the territory. This church is the fastest growing church in the world, and hundreds of your students and perhaps thousands of your alumni are LDS church members.

Because *Sooner Magazine* is about producing hate articles and the University of Oklahoma supports books of the same nature, I request that you do not send me any future editions of your magazine. Furthermore, I will forward a copy of this article and my letter to the University of Oklahoma Alumni Association. I recently donated \$1,000 to the University of Oklahoma Healthcare Foundation, but I am not likely to support the University in the future in any way.

Temp Patterson, M.D., '96 med res
Burley, Idaho

Ballroom Memories

I have always been interested in ballroom dancing but I never learned much about it until after I graduated in 1950. I went into debt to take some lessons. Since then I have learned a lot more. The instruction enabled me to get a lot of enjoyment from ballroom dancing. When I looked through the spring edi-

tion, I glanced at the picture [page 7 ["They're Dancing!"]] and began to think back and remember how much fun I had at the big band dances at OU. Looking over the picture for a familiar face, I suddenly saw one on the sidelines, which was my usual place at the dances. The would-be dancer in the lower left corner is me. (I remember the shiny hair.)

I called [my sister] Susan [Carpenter Pettit, '54 bs ed] and asked her to look at the picture and identify the person. She laughed and said, "It's you."

Some campus organization brought a lot of enjoyment to the students by bringing in big bands for the dances. I especially remember Harry James and his band. We had other bands of equal caliber, but I can't remember any other names. A lot of the dances were held in the gym on the south campus, formerly U.S. Navy training buildings.

Thanks for the memories.

Donald D. Carpenter, '50 bs mech engr
Frierson, Louisiana

A Question of Credit

Re: Spring '04 *Sooner Magazine*:

I have read your featured article, "They're Dancing!"

I am entertained.

I am amused.

I am nostalgic.

I am appalled.

2 hours of college credit for taking a dance class?

That is sort of like giving college credit to someone for playing tennis. Or golf. Or b-a-s-k-e-t-b-a-l-l.

Donald Smith, '56 ba soc
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Dance Makers by Another Name

CORRECTION: The spring 2004 cover story, "They're Dancing!" misidentified adjunct professors Michael Pone, Gina Macias and Gary Bramlett's Oklahoma City studio as Dance Masters rather than by its correct name, Dance Makers. They are, nonetheless, masters of their trade.