

CAPT. PAYNE'S HOME IN OKLAHOMA.

CAPTAIN D. L. PAYNE.

They Never Took 'No' for An Answer

Boomer literature in its many forms is a colorful part of state history

Captain Payne, the Boomer leader who did not live to see Oklahoma open to settlement, advertised his proposed colony with posters such as this one from the O.U. library.

EIGHTY-FOUR years ago, a large colony of pioneer families appeared along the Kansas border and opened one of the most colorful chapters in Oklahoma history. By assigning themselves land in the Oklahoma Indian territory long before the government had any such intent, they set themselves squarely against the law, but they also caught the imagination of the land-hungry population of the United States. The early Boomers were unsuccessful in grabbing the land for themselves, but they pried open the door just long enough for others to see what was inside. Then there was no holding the tide of homesteaders which soon swept into Oklahoma in the legendary runs. Boomer literature—including original broadsides, posters, advertisements, pamphlets, sketches and photographs—is an important part of state history which is recorded in the collections of O.U.'s Bizzell Memorial Library. Most significant of these collections is the Frank Phillips Collection in Oklahoma and Indian History, the source of the Boomer sketches on the following pages. These sketches, acquired for the Phillips Collection by Dr. E. E. Dale, the curator emeritus, are actual mounted clippings from *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* of 1881-1889.

Continued

The Time is Short!

.....
OKLAHOMA
.....

THE LAST CHANCE!

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The Kiowa, Comanche, Apache and Wichita Reservations will soon be opened to settlement. These lands consist of about 3,303,610 acres; bounded on the north by Oklahoma, on the west and south by Texas, and on the east by the Chickasaw Nation. The famous Wichita Mountains, said to contain gold, silver, lead, copper and coal, are located near the center of this country. The topography of this country is level and undulating; it has sufficient timber for all farm purposes and is the best watered country I ever saw; its streams and tributaries abound in fish, with plenty of deer, turkey, chicken and quail left for sportsmen. The soil of this country is black loam, sandy loam, mulatto and red, all of which are very productive. A greater diversity of crops is raised here than in any country on earth. Cotton, corn, wheat, oats, barley, rye, Kaffir corn, sorghum, broom corn, millet, alfalfa, castor beans, etc., are successfully raised. All vegetables simply grow in abundance. The rainfall in Oklahoma is from 35 to 45 inches, and in this new country from 43 to 55 inches, insuring a crop every year. Oklahoma has had but one substantial crop failure in twelve years. The Great Rock Island Railroad runs along the entire eastern border of this country, giving an outlet to the north, east, west, and the gulf on the south. This company also has a line running from Chickasha west, through the northern part of this country, into Texas, and a line running from Anadarko south, to Fort Sill. When this country opens, it becomes a part of Oklahoma. The exemption laws of Oklahoma are as liberal as those of any state or territory. Any kind of farm work can be done here every month in the year. Stock run on pasture the year round, without shelter or feed, and do well. This is a healthful climate; many invalids come here and regain their health.

All the Reservations in this Territory have been opened by "Race or Run." This manner of opening, for various reasons, has grown in disfavor, and the prevalent opinion now is that this opening will be made by the President without date, so the exact time is not known. Under the law, it has to be before August 6, 1901. Under the law, the rights of soldiers, sailors and marines have not been abridged. They can file their declaratory through an agent. This can be done for less money than it would take to pay railroad fare here, to say nothing of delay, hotel bills and other expenses. Besides, those away from here would not know when to come. And, again, this country will be opened when you are in the midst of your crops. After your selection is made by an agent, you have six months in which to get to your claim and transmute. You will find unscrupulous parties flooding the mails with unwarranted statements, who have no interest in you, other than to get your money. Of such, I caution you to BEWARE. I have practiced law for over 30 years, and have practiced before the courts and United States Land Offices of this Territory, and before the departments at Washington. I have never done any crookedness to be censured for. I have been in this country since the opening. I am a Past Post-Commander of Kingfisher Post No. 2. I have filed hundreds of Declaratories for my comrades, and given general satisfaction. I am familiar with the land to be opened to settlement, and can make you as good selection as any one, for less money than those who have no interest in your welfare. The comrade who fails to get 160 acres of this fine land, for a home in his old days, misses the best opportunity of his life. Give this Circular to some Comrade.

For Terms and Particulars write me. Always inclose postage for reply. I have a few sectional maps of Oklahoma and the country to be opened to settlement. Will send you one for 20c in stamps.

Correspondence Solicited. Send for blank Declaratory Statement.

Yours in F. C. and L.

M. M. Duncan,
Kingfisher, Oklahoma.



ARKANSAS.—OKLAHOMA BOOMERS LEAVING ARKANSAS CITY.—SEE PAGE 211.

FRANK LESLIE'S
ILLUSTRATED NEWSPAPER
May 16, 1885

The United States Grand Jury having returned indictments against a considerable number of individual "Oklahoma boomers," and a general indictment against the whole colony, these redoubtable squatters are growing disgusted. A large portion of them have left the camp at Arkansas City for fresh fields and pastures new, and no arrests under the indictments are as yet reported. They are wise to give up their little plan of general defiance, and further carry out the determination, so quaintly expressed in the legends blazoned on some of their wagon tents, of "Going West, by thunder!"

Their actions had set the Boomers squarely against the law. Life was hard; waiting was almost unbearable. But the advertisements had convinced them that the Indian lands of Oklahoma were worth every sacrifice.

Continued



SUNDAY SERVICE IN CAMP.

KANSAS—THE LAST INVASION OF THE RED MAN'S HOME—THE SETTLERS' RAID ON OKLAHOMA.—FROM SKETCHES BY CHARLES SILVERTON.



A "BOOMER'S" WIFE.

THEY NEVER TOOK 'NO' FOR AN ANSWER

the troops waiting at the Kansas border had orders to intercept the trespassing settlers

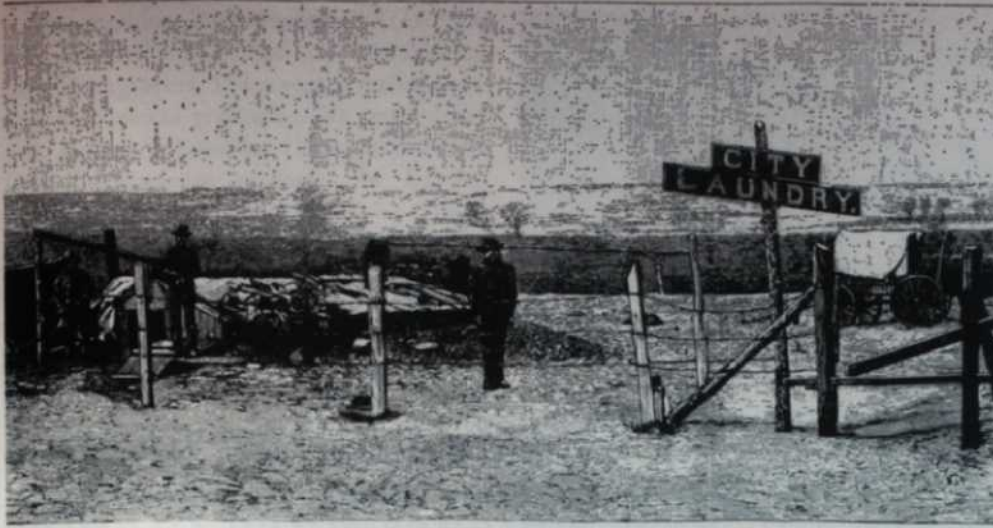
FRANK LESLIE'S
ILLUSTRATED NEWSPAPER
April 4, 1885

The camp at Arkansas city is just now a point of interest to the entire West, the popular sympathy being largely with the boomers, and this interest is not likely to abate so long as hope remains that the coveted Territory may be occupied. Recent reports are to the effect that the Oklahoma country is being populated by would-be settlers and homesteaders in spite of the fact that General Hatch is holding Couch's colony in check on the Arkansas River; and if the boomers continue to escape the eyes of the military authorities it will soon be necessary for troops to again eject them by

force, as they will never leave without it. On the 21st instant a meeting of about 1,000 farmers, stockmen and colonists was held at the Arkansas city camp, and the proceedings showed clearly, that in the face of all the disheartening reports which had been spread abroad since the President's proclamation, the interest and enthusiasm of the colonists have not abated one iota. They are as earnest in their determination some day to go to Oklahoma as they were before General Hatch appeared on the scene with his troops.

The United States troops are encamped in a most favorable location on Chilocco Creek, in the Indian Territory, about six miles south of Arkansas city, and two from the Kansas line, on what is known as the

Cherokee Strip. The command is composed of seven companies of the Ninth United States Cavalry (colored), in the immediate command of Major Benteen, a well-known Indian fighter, who was with Colonel Reno on that terrible day in June, 1876, when General Custer and his troopers were slaughtered in the Black Hills by Sitting Bull's band. General Edward Hatch has personally assumed command of the troops engaged in keeping Captain Couch and his boomers out of Oklahoma, and has his headquarters at Arkansas city. For years General Hatch has been engaged in making treaties with and fighting Indians in Arizona, New Mexico and other portions of the West, and his military career has been one of continued success.



EVIDENCES OF CIVILIZATION AND CLEANLY HABITS AMONG THE OKLAHOMA BOOMERS—THE CITY LAUNDRY AT PURCELL, INDIAN TERRITORY.
FROM PHOTOS BY MITCHELL & DE GROFF.—1897.

but even while their immediate goal was being denied them, the Boomers were prying open the door to the new territory



INDIAN TERRITORY—THE OKLAHOMA BOOMERS—UNITED STATES SCOUTS TURNING BACK INVADERS.
FROM A SKETCH BY JAMES EGAN.—