



The Phillips Collection

cowboys and Indians, outlaws and heros, coyotes and cattle live in its archives

By CHARLES LONG
Photos by John Yack

OKLAHOMA'S heritage and growth embraces so much of the American West—from European exploration in the 15th Century past statehood in 1907, the removal of Indian tribes to remote regions, man's dash on horseback to free land, the establishment of military forts and posts, the beginning of agriculture, cattle and oil industries, railroad expansion, gubernatorial races—that there is little wonder why large numbers of historians, writers and students seek out O.U.'s Bizzell Memorial Library for delving into the past.

On the fourth floor of the library stands The Frank Phillips Collection in Oklahoma and Indian History, a noted athenaeum rapidly emerging as the leading center of western study. Founded 37 years ago as a gift from the late Frank Phillips and the Frank Phillips Foundation, Incorporated, in Bartlesville, it now contains over 18,000 rare books, pamphlets, diaries and other documents.

The collection has many valuable pieces in its archives. It contains the first history of Oklahoma ever published (1890), a crisp characterization of the land's occupation by Spain and France, its sale to the United States, its opening to settlement in 1889 and the meeting of the first territorial legislature. A similar book, *Illustrated History of Oklahoma*, also published in 1890, gives original pictorial descriptions of "The Land of the Fair God."

There is the "Boomer" type of literature, including pamphlets published by early town sites to encourage settlements and rare biographical accounts of famous Indian leaders like Sequoyah, Stand Watie and Elias Boudinot and infamous outlaws such as Jesse James, Belle Starr and the Dalton brothers. The titles of some literary pieces

make interesting reading in themselves, e.g., *A Narrative Of The Captivity Of Mrs. Horn, And her Two Children, With That Of Mrs. Harris, By The Comanche Indians, And who was ransomed by the American Traders, and brought by them from Santa Fe to New Franklin, Missouri, in the fall of 1838*. Only two or three other copies of this book are known to be in existence.

One book of special significance to the Phillips Collection is a first edition of *The Banditti of the Plains* (1894), a story depicting the epic campaigns of the range wars in Wyoming (and a source for the making of the motion picture *Shane*). Relating the "invasion of Johnson County by the cattle barons of Wyoming and their Texas mercenaries in the spring of 1892," author A. S. Mercer spells out in his book crimes ranging from genocide to subornation of perjury and accuses several men of high position with murder. Outraged cattlemen and politicians thoroughly and ruthlessly suppressed the book, burning the author's printing press and ordering him out of Wyoming. A local court in Cheyenne ruled that the book be destroyed; however, a few copies were stolen and smuggled by wagon to Denver, Colorado, and out of the court's jurisdiction. The scarcity of *Banditti* is not only due to its impounding, but also to the fact that for several years members of the Wyoming Stock Growers Association would destroy any copy they found. Copies in the Library of Congress even disappeared.

Perhaps the most prized possession among the sketches and paintings at the University library is an original by Charles Russell, considered with Frederic Remington as the greatest among western artists. Russell's ink drawing of *Man on Bucking Horse* hangs in a prominent place in the Phillips Collection. It was presented

as a gift from Dr. Paul R. Eldridge, an O.U. alumnus and former faculty member who currently is professor of English at the University of Nevada.

The collection also owns over 2,000 irreplaceable letters of the Cherokee Ridge-Watie-Boudinot family, type scripts of the messages and papers of the principal chiefs of the Five Civilized Tribes, some 800 glass plates and prints originally belonging to Dr. Hume (an early U.S. Indian Service doctor at Anadarko, whose wife was an amateur Indian photographer and whose son was one of the first two graduates of O.U.), the commission of General Stand Watie signed by the Confederate Secretary of War and approximately 120 volumes of Indian-pioneer papers.

Continued



Dr. Arrell M. Gibson, curator of the collection, is an authority on the West and author of several books about Indian tribes.

An original sketch at left, *Man on Bucking Horse*, by the famous cowboy artist Charles M. Russell is included in the Phillips Collection.

many western writers mosey over to the collection for research

For obvious reasons, most of the Phillips holdings are behind locked doors. As a means of protection and preservation, it is not a circulating library; its books are never taken out of the rooms in which they are stored. But with the help of O.U.'s Alumni Development Fund, microfilm and fast-copying machines provide many correspondents with easy and safe duplication of written and illustrative materials. Publishing houses from across the nation acquire reprints and facsimiles from the collection almost daily. This being one of the leading libraries in the world for bed-rock materials—the bits and pieces from which books are written—large volumes of both printed and non-printed literature are separated and catalogued on the basis of subject matter, author, etc., allowing anyone to discover the collection's contents quickly and exactly.

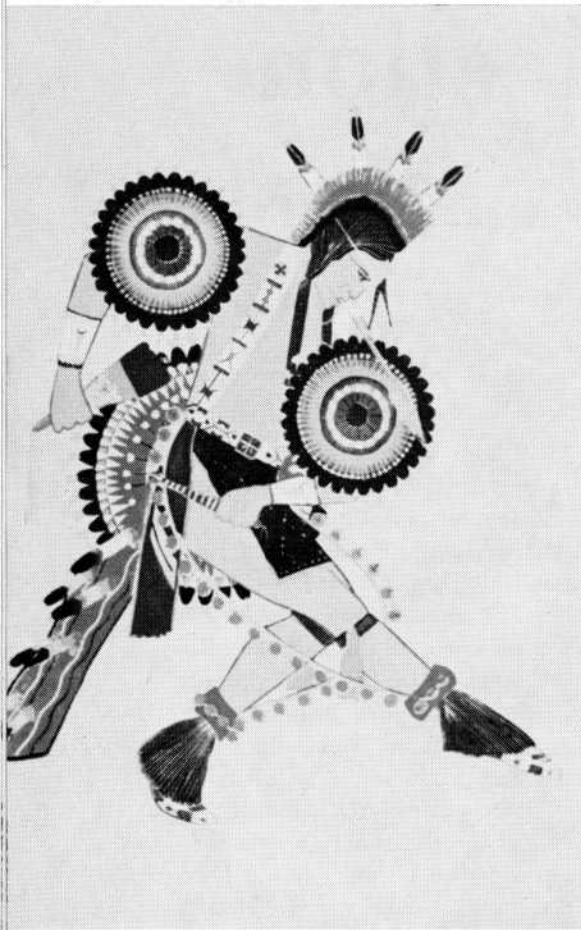
It would take the average reader more than a lifetime to cover the vast amount of subjects now on hand, but not too long ago this was a different story. Through the interest and energy of Dr. Edward Everett Dale, research professor emeritus of history, the collection was started in 1927. As head of the history department, he realized the impending need for such a study center two years before when the University inaugurated its graduate degree program in history.

"We had about 100 graduate majors in history," Dr. Dale says, "but there just simply weren't adequate library facilities for them at the time. I thought that the best advantages for writing master's theses was in western and Oklahoma history, so I started looking around for financial means to set up a special library for our students."

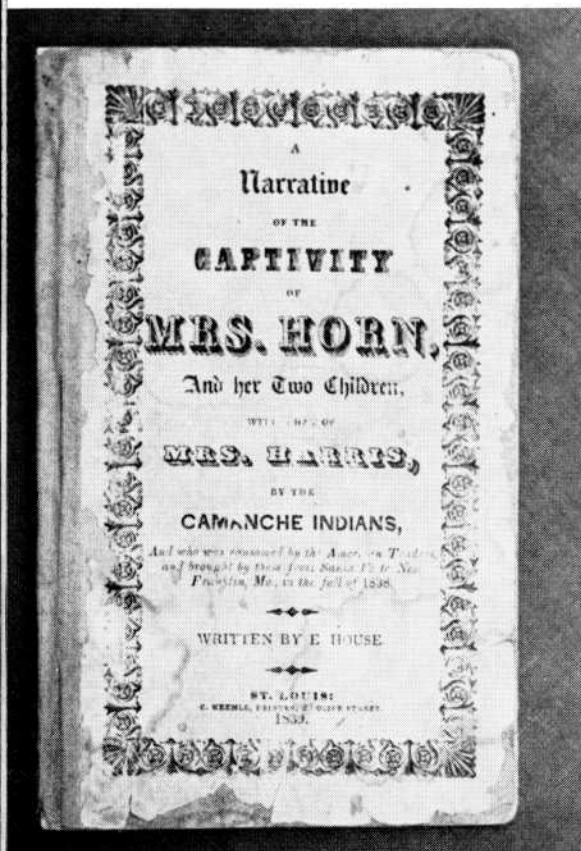
Dr. Dale, a pioneer in Oklahoma and Indian affairs, contacted a long-time friend of the University, General Patrick J. Hurley (whose public papers were presented to the O.U. manuscripts division upon his recent death). General Hurley in turn arranged a conference between Dr. Dale and Frank Phillips, and shortly thereafter, a broadly written contract was prepared for the assembling of materials dealing with Oklahoma and the Southwest. The original contract called for the naming of three trustees—University President William Bennett Bizzell, Dr. Dale and General Hurley—and \$2,000 a year for five years from Phillips, later extended to 10 years.

"I remember going to a second-hand book store in Oklahoma City," says Dr. Dale, "and buying an armful of books for about \$50 or \$60. I put them on a shelf in my office, and that was the beginning of the Phillips Collection."

In his search for rare and unusual literature, Dr. Dale also was a bargain hunter. He wanted to make the collection as avail-



Modern Dancer, by Allen Bushyhead, is one of many works by Indian artists in the collection.



A rare book with a rather formidable title tells of an 1838 kidnapping by a Comanche band.



Some towns printed pamphlets extolling the virtues of life in Oklahoma to encourage settlement.

ble to as many people as possible, and, as more and more books came in, it was later moved from his office to a big room in the basement of the Law Building and then to a browsing room in the old portion of the library. The years went by, and despite the Depression and a world war, the collection continued to grow. Long after it had been firmly established, Dr. Dale retired as the original curator in 1952.

Dr. Dale's successor as curator is Dr. Arrell M. Gibson, associate professor of history, who also serves as head of the library's manuscripts division. He too is an authority on the business of collection, and, in addition to having a wide knowledge of Oklahoma history, is the author of several prominent western books. His most recent work is *The Kickapoos: Lords of the Middle Border*.

According to Mrs. Alice Timmons, library assistant, over 3,000 persons visited the collection last year, including representatives from 19 foreign nations. Main users of the collection are an active University population, particularly graduate students.

The most frequent visitors among non-academic people are popular fiction and non-fiction writers. Some come to do extensive research, while others look for simple ideas for novels or short stories. In return, new literature by authors such as Fred Grove, a 1937 O.U. graduate and winner of the 1961 short story Western Heritage Award of the Cowboy Hall of Fame, also have their place in the collection. Anyone is welcome to see the Phillips library, and a few persons come just for the plea-

sure of reading about the American West.

Financial support for the Phillips Collection comes from several sources. The University library budget allows for staff and technical costs and a limited fund for buying books, but the art of collection is such a popular subject among private collectors that Phillips must compete for many of its purchases. Dozens of catalogs listing collectors of substantial means who do nothing but study the West are issued periodically. Sometimes, the price on a private collection goes so high that it is out of the University's reach.

"Some of our best sources have come from Alumni Development Fund help," says Dr. Gibson, "help that allows us to acquire equipment and collections that otherwise we would not stand a chance of getting. Aid such as that from the ADF is a godsend. It gives us a much greater latitude for developing a great collection.

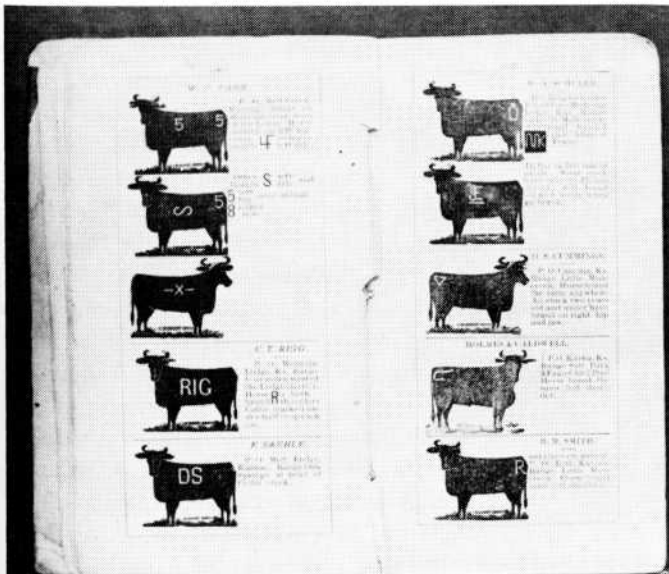
"Every year we receive hundreds of gifts in the form of books and sometimes money for the purchase of books from individuals. From time to time, we also receive large gifts for special purposes, such as grants from the Phillips Foundation and the ADF."

Very substantial additions were made recently to the collection. One was the acquisition through the auspices of the Phillips Foundation of the Ferguson family materials, probably the best collection on Oklahoma history in private hands (and a source for Edna Ferber's *Cimarron*). Assembling was begun by Thomas B. Ferguson, last full-time Republican governor

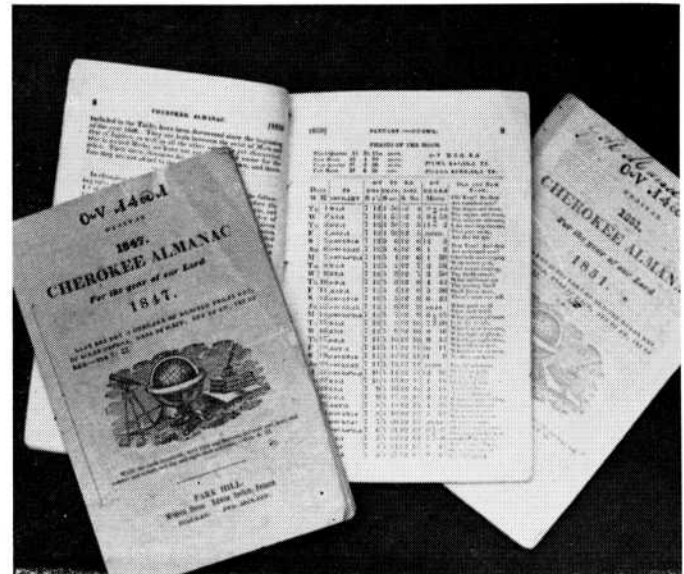
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Kiowa artist Steve Mopope's *Evil Dance* is another selection in the extensive art category.



This book is filled with the brands used by Cherokee Strip ranchers.



The collection contains these almanacs printed in Cherokee in 1847.

1962-64

2nd Lt. Jerry W. McNeely, '62bus, Norman, was presented the Daughters of American Colonists Award as distinguished graduate of his aviation cadet navigator training class at James Connally Air Force Base, Texas. Lieutenant McNeely is in the Oklahoma Air National Guard unit at Will Rogers Field.

Gerald E. Baehler, '62eng, recently rejoined North American Aviation, Tulsa. Baehler is married to the former Dawn Rahlfs, '62. They have a daughter, Sonja Renee, 2.

Henry Chennault, '63ma, is pastor of the First Baptist Church, Davis. He and his wife, Reba Maxine, '62, previously lived in Lindsay.

Jay S. Lee, '63bs, Medway, Ohio, received the eagle insignia of a colonel upon his promotion in the United States Air Force. Colonel Lee, formerly the director of the Department of Aircraft Maintenance Training at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas, now is assistant deputy commander of the 3750th Technical Training School.

Nancy Spradling, '63fa, played the heroine of the Oklahoma City Mummies Theater production of *Antigone* which ran through November 24. Nancy is the wife of Dave Spradling, O.U. graduate student.

Margo Williams, '63journ, has been named news editor of the Canyon (Texas) *News*. She is former news editor of the *Oklahoma Daily*.

Army 2nd Lt. James D. Smith, '63bus, is assigned to the U.S. Biological Laboratories, Fort Detrick, Maryland. Lieutenant Smith entered the Army last July after graduation from the University.

2nd Lt. Gaylon A. Lee, '63bus, Lawton, Oklahoma, provided support in Germany for a NATO field training exercise, a part of Operation Big Lift, which ended November 5. Lieutenant Lee is assigned to the 60th Ordinance Company near Stuttgart, Germany.

Army 2nd Lt. Jerry L. Brust, '63bus, Midwest City, Oklahoma, was assigned to Headquarters, Eighth U.S. Army in Korea, early in November. Lieutenant Brust is a message control unit officer in the adjutant general section.

Nina Hinson, '63fa, Dallas, Texas, sang the role of the foreign princess in the Los Angeles premier of Dvorak's opera, *Rusalka*, presented in early December by the University of Southern California Opera Theater. Miss Hinson has won several awards for singing, including a Metropolitan Opera district competition. She leaves in January for a four-month tour of Europe and Israel with the U.S.C. Chamber Singers.

Robert Hale, '63m.ed, returned to the campus to give an hour concert in Holmberg Hall Auditorium October 29. Hale is on an eight-concert tour under sponsorship of the National Association of Teachers of Singing. He won the association's "National Singer of the Year" award in the spring of 1963.

Michael R. Doyle, '63bus, Abilene, Texas, has been commissioned a second lieutenant in the Air Force upon graduation from Officer Training School at Lackland AFB, Texas. Lieutenant Doyle is being reassigned to Sheppard AFB, Texas, for training as an accounting and finance officer.

MARRIAGES: Jane Ann Steadley, Oklahoma City, became the bride of Ens. Thomas Clifford McKee, '63eng, Port Hueneme, California, November 15 in the First Presbyterian Church of Oklahoma City.

Carolyn Jean Lyons, '63eng, Oklahoma City, and Bruce Edwin Armour, Los Angeles, California, were married November 23 in St. John's Episcopal Church at Norman. The couple will reside in Downey, California.

The Phillips Collection

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of Oklahoma Territory, and continued by Mr. and Mrs. Walter Ferguson and their children. Included are some 900 framed photographs of prominent early-day Oklahomans, some 1,600 valuable and often rare books and pamphlets about the territory, extensive files of early newspapers and an estimated 75,000 manuscripts.

In western history, the famous Rose col-

Mat Brats

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time that an opponent's shoulders must be held in contact with the mat to constitute a fall. The time has been cut from two seconds to one second. The Olympic free-style rules also will move to one second from the "flash" fall which required that the wrestler's shoulders merely touch the mat for a fall.

Evans believes his youngsters will lose four, maybe five, of the 17 dual meets. Two of those losses will be to that doggone Stillwater bunch and another to Iowa State, probably the second best team in the nation next to you-know-who. How the youngsters will perform in the Big Eight meet and the NCAA is anybody's guess, but they are a year away from being a real threat to take national honors although the way they have been surprising people all year would shake any so-called expert's confidence. They opened the season with a lovely little jaunt East, defeating Lehigh, Rutgers and Army, with Holm pinning all three of his opponents. The beardless ones then defeated UCLA and Kansas State at Norman before being turned every way but loose by OSU, 21-3. The sophs wrestled like sophs and O.U. could manage only four takedowns all night. Lam was the only Sooner to win although Stanley and Karel Blubaugh came close. The team bounced back with meet victories over Michigan State at Norman and Iowa and Mankato State on the road before dropping their second dual to Minnesota, 14-12, at Minneapolis.

Evans likes OSU to win the national title with Iowa State second. "All I can say about us is that we'll be there," says he. It might be a good place to come of age.—PAUL GALLOWAY

lection of 2,100 negatives of early western scenes was acquired, as well as the Bartholomew collection of books and journals. A program of buying microfilm of Indian archives in Washington, D.C., continues through the use of special funds. Important purchases have also been made in recent months in areas of Indian history, for significant additions on the history of the livestock industry and in general histories of the West.

The American West has many dimensions, and because they are all tied up with Oklahoma history, enduring purchases like these all help to make the University a greater institution.

"From visiting numerous libraries across the nation and corresponding with various individuals, I am convinced that the status of a great university comes not only with its faculty and research centers but also from great collections," Dr. Gibson says.

And it was through the vision of such men as E. E. Dale and Frank Phillips that the whole sweep of the West can now be practically at the fingertips of anyone who visits the Phillips Collection.

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