

THE CHOCTAWS

The story of a resourceful tribe in its Oklahoma home—*Yakni Achnukma, the Good Land*

By DR. A. M. GIBSON

ON THE EASTERN fringe of the Cross-Timbers, sandwiched between the Canadian River and the Red River is the Choctaw Country. There nature ran riot. Tumbled land forms distorted the orderly prairie plains and from the geological scramble the Kiamichi range, the Jack Fork, Winding Stair and pine-clad Sans Bois humped above the Choctaw flats. Sparkling waters tumbled from highland springs, fused into tributaries and in lowlands formed the Mountain Fork, the Kiamichi and the Blue. These rivers cut deep and their banks were laced with oak, walnut, maple and hickory forests, which blended with pine and cedar stands on the summits.

Bison, deer, bears, fur-bearing animals, turkeys and wild horses abounded on its prairies and in the forest glades. Rich beaver harvests on the Mountain Fork, and muskrat, raccoon and bobcat in the Kiamichi Valley made the Choctaw Country a

This is the second of a series on the Five Civilized Tribes of Oklahoma by DR. A. M. GIBSON, curator of the Phillips Collection, head of the manuscripts division and associate professor of history. In cooperation with Dr. Gibson, Sooner Magazine is making reprints available. To obtain one, write Dr. Gibson, Manuscripts Division, OU.

trapper's paradise.

In the Choctaw language there are two words: *Atukko*, meaning haven and *Yakni Achnukma* for good land. These were the most common terms used to describe this domain in earlier times. Small wonder the Choctaws were so enthusiastic over this country, willingly exchanging their swamp-riden Mississippi home for *Yakni Achnukma*.

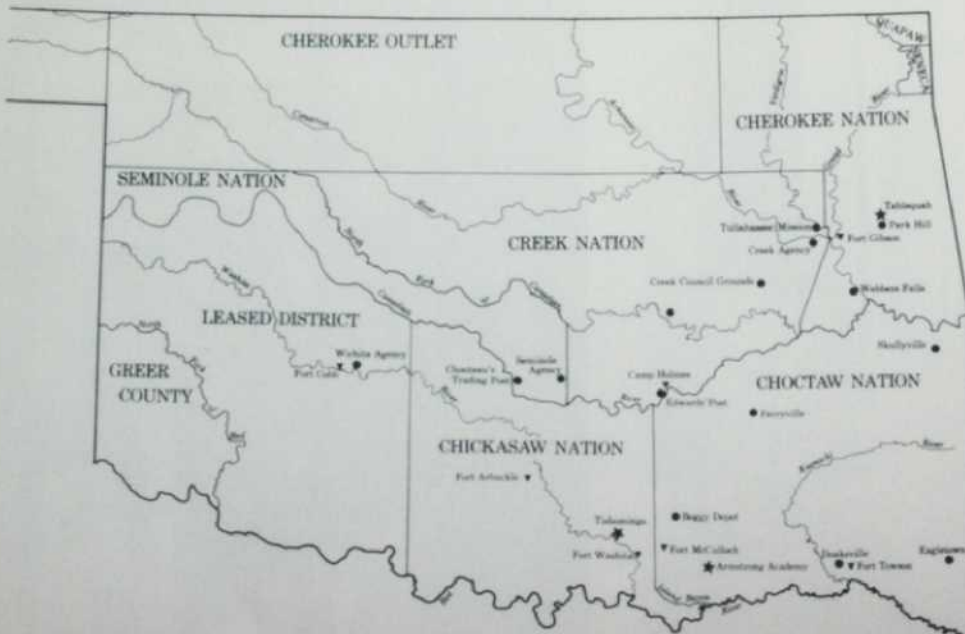
The Choctaws, to whom the country between the Canadian and the Red and west of Arkansas had been as-

signed, were of Muskogean linguistic stock. Early in the history of American discovery and exploration they caught the notice of Spanish, French and British adventurers for their remarkable economic development, tribal valor and integrity, and their intriguing folklore. De Soto's gulf expedition in 1540 found the Choctaws occupying the fortified town of Mabila (Mobile) and ranging across Alabama and Mississippi. The Choctaws managed to stay free of Spanish involvement.

Before the impact of Western civilization made heavy inroads on Choctaw culture, this tribe had a most intriguing set of customs and folklore. The Choctaws lived in villages and farmed adjacent lands. The lands were held in common, ownership being in the tribe and not in individual title. The Choctaws were regarded as the best agriculturalists of the Five Civilized Tribes. Their Mississippi and Alabama cornfields yielded bountiful harvests, which were traded to neighboring tribes. In addition, Choctaw farmers produced melons, pumpkins, sunflower seed, wild fruits, nuts and berries.

Besides a stable economic life, the Choctaws had a rich folklore. The most basic feature concerned the story of Choctaw origin and depicted a deity who descended into the midst of a muddy plain and erected a high hill. This he named *Nanih-waya*, which means "productive mountain." When the Choctaw creator had finished this sacred mound, he drew from its vitals the Choctaw people.

The native Choctaw religion was an interesting compound of the *Nanih-waya* and other traditions; homage to certain elements, especially sun and fire; propitiation of good and evil spirits by fasting, dancing and spells;



From Historical Atlas of Oklahoma, by John W. Morris and Edwin C. McReynolds. Copyright by the University of Oklahoma Press.

This map shows the boundaries of the nations of the Five Civilized Tribes from 1855-66.

and various superstitions concerning witches, demons, and signs. The Choctaw religious lore was preserved by medicine men, the *Alikchi*, to whom were ascribed special powers of controlling evil spirits, conjuring and healing.

Choctaw religion included a belief in the Great Spirit and in an afterlife. Their funeral customs, reflecting this belief, included erection of a burial platform near the dwelling of the departed one. Upon this was placed, besides the corpse, his weapons, tools, ornaments, food and water. Fires were built around the scaffold to supply light and comfort for the departed. The warrior's remains might be on the platform for half a year "the stench . . . so great that mourners, appearing at frequent intervals . . . sometimes fainted."

Caring for the Choctaw dead became an elaborate ritual involving several groups of specialists, including bone-pickers.

Besides the elaborate care given to the Choctaw dead by bone-pickers, the tribe also had an unusual practice called the funeral cry. Christian missionaries assailed most of the Choctaw religious beliefs, and one by one these pagan practices were abandoned. The funeral cry, however, survived until recent times. Little grief was exhibited at time of death, and the funeral sermon might not be preached for a year following death. During this interval, the widow sent invitations to relatives and friends now and then to come to the grave for a cry. This was preceded and followed by a feast and was always well attended.

The Choctaws' ancestral home in Mississippi was coveted by land-hungry planters soon after 1800. By a series of treaties, beginning in 1820 with the Treaty of Doak's Stand and ending in 1830 with the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, the Choctaws surrendered their eastern lands and received title to a vast domain west of Arkansas, extending to the 100th meridian, bounded north by the Canadian and Arkansas, and south by the Red.

The Choctaws knew this country fairly well, for hunting parties had ventured up Red River into Oklahoma long before 1800. In 1807 Pushmataha led an expedition to the mouth of the Verdigris where he met and de-

feated Joseph Bogey's French Canadians and Osage allies. Encouraged by the favorable reports that Pushmataha and other leaders brought back, small parties of Choctaw settlers started moving into the southeastern portion of their new country in the 1820's.

The big movement of the Choctaws, however, began after 1830 and extended over a period of three years. While some Choctaws came by steamer as far as Little Rock, most of the migrants came on foot in parties of 500 to 1,000 persons each. Tribal leaders, missionaries, and U.S. agents and officers accompanied each group.

Blizzards, cholera epidemics, exposure and lack of supplies caused hundreds to die on the trail, and the Choctaw exodus rivaled the Cherokee Trail of Tears for misery and hardship. The cost in human life is evident from the statistics. Just before removal in 1831, the Choctaw population numbered 20,000. In 1843, the missionary, Cyrus Byington, enumerated 12,690 Choctaws in the West. These figures reveal the losses attendant to removal.

Settlers were attracted to three areas in the Choctaw Country. One big Choctaw settlement was established northeast along the Poteau River in present LeFlore County and along the Arkansas River in Haskell County. Another string of settlements ran southeast along the tributaries of Little River into the Red in present McCurtain County. The third settlement area ran west from the Kiamichi River into present Choctaw County.

Trading towns mushroomed around strategic water and land points. Eagletown, Doaksville, Towson, Skullyville, Boggy Depot, Tamaha, Perryville and Mayhew served as important trade centers before the Civil War. Each of these towns had a post office, a market center for livestock and agricultural produce, stores stocking a variety of commodities, blacksmith shops and hotels. Several towns published newspapers both in English and Choctaw. The most notable was the *Choctaw Telegraph-Intelligencer*, published at Doaksville, and edited by David Folsom, a Choctaw mixed-blood.

The full-bloods usually settled in the hills and mountains away from the stream of commerce and industry. Living in crude cabins, they farmed small subsistence patches and hunted and fished for a living. The more aggressive mixed-bloods, besides operating businesses in the towns, established stock ranches, farms and plantations along the fertile river valleys. Even on the cotton plantations, the curse of the one-crop system was avoided, for besides cotton, they planted orchards, cultivated corn and other crops, and ran herds of cattle, hogs and horses. Each operator sought to be as self-sufficient as possible.

As had been their custom in the East, lands in the Choctaw Country were held in common, title being vested in the tribe. A Choctaw could settle anywhere in the nation and take over as much as he chose as long as he did not trespass on a fellow

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A group of special law enforcement rangers, the Choctaw "lighthorsemen," pose in 1893.

tribesman's holdings. He could bequeath or sell all improvements made on the land but not the land.

Cotton was the most important export from the Choctaw nation, and by 1860, probably as many as 30,000 bales were shipped to New Orleans annually. In addition, the Choctaws exported hides, grain, honey, furs, pecans, lumber products and salt.

Much of the Choctaw economic success in the ante-bellum period was due to tribal interest in education. The first educators among the Choctaws were missionaries. About 1800 the tribe received the interest of Protestant missionary groups, and by the 1820's the influence of their teachings was evident in various facets of tribal life. The general pattern for missionaries was to establish a mission and a school, based on the simple and practical objective of educating the heart, head and hand of Indian students.

Basic subjects taught by the missionaries imparted the rudiments of Western learning. Vocational education, supplied through the school farm and shops, was aimed at making the Indian children competent to earn a living as adults. Besides attending mission schools within the nation, Choctaw youths could continue their education at Choctaw Academy at Blue Springs, Ky., established in 1824 by the Baptist Missionary Society.

The Choctaw Nation helped support these schools through appropriations, and each year sought to increase the number of local or neighborhood day schools. Adult education to increase literacy in the tribe among those above school age was undertaken, too. Missionaries set these adult classes up as "Sunday Schools," and the program was subsidized by tribal appropriations. Whole families came and camped near the church or schoolhouse, attended school on Saturday and Sunday, and received instruction in the rudiments of arithmetic and reading and writing in the Choctaw language. Missionaries had reduced the Choctaw language to the Roman alphabet, and in less than 25 years following removal, the Choctaws, young and old alike, had become a literate people.

Besides achieving a remarkable in-

tellectual success in the Choctaw Country, missionaries also induced many tribesmen to accept the Christian religion. This was done by missions and churches, visitation, circuit preaching and the ever-popular camp meeting. Everyone in the community enjoyed the annual camp meeting and anticipated it with considerable preparation, for a camp meeting in the Choctaw Country was a social as well as a religious event. Frequently the meeting, held during the summer and lasting from 10 to 20 days, was interdenominational, involving Baptists, Presbyterians and Methodists. Choctaw families camped on the edge of the clearing, where brush arbors had been constructed around a permanent log church. Each day after a series of hymns, sermons and testimonies, the worshippers shared in a feast of beef, pork, yams, tam-fula (Choctaw hominy) and coffee.

The impact of the missionary on Choctaw culture is readily apparent. In terms of number of converts, by 1861, 25 percent of the tribe was Presbyterian, Methodist or Baptist. Choctaw tribal law required Sunday observance—ball games, horse racing, gambling and hunting were forbidden on the Lord's Day—and the Choctaw Council opened and closed its sessions with prayer.

Whiskey, the scourge of the Indian, was a problem in the Choctaw Country, and missionaries carried on a lively temperance program, working it into the adult education system. The Choctaw Council supported this aim by law. In discussing one session of the Council, Angie Debo wrote:

... many speeches were made against the evils of drink, and it was voted by acclamation that any citizen who should introduce intoxicating liquors into the Nation would be punished by 100 lashes and the destruction of his stock. The law, however, was not made retroactive, and after adjournment the members of the Council began to realize that liquor would continue for some time until the stock on hand should be exhausted. Accordingly, they decided to drink up the available supply, a feat which they accomplished in two hours. The immediate effect upon those who performed this necessary public service is said to have been rather appalling.

Missionary influence temporized the old tribal application of law of vengeance, the Choctaw *lex talionis*, and substituted public punishment for

offenders. Witchcraft and tribal superstitions gradually fell before the enlightenment of mission school education. Polygamy, a long-standing practice in the tribe was abolished by tribal law in 1849, again showing the effects of the incessant campaigning of missionaries and Christian teachings.

In no field did the Choctaws show greater skill than in politics. In 1826 the Choctaws replaced their old common law and tribal government with a written constitution. Very similar to the U.S. Constitution, the Choctaw document provided for a bill of rights, including trial by jury, and three coordinate departments of government. Also, the nation was divided into three districts, with a chief elected from each district to serve as the chief executive. This comprised a sort of triumvirate similar to the classic Roman system. The Choctaw legislature, a bicameral body called the Council, was supreme in governmental affairs, for besides regular law-making powers, the Council also had general oversight powers over the executive and judicial branches.

The area administered by the Choctaw government varied through the years as the Choctaw Country was gradually reduced in size. When the Choctaws arrived in the West in the early 1830's, their domain extended from Arkansas to the 100th meridian. In 1837, the Choctaws agreed by the Treaty of Doaksville to share their country with the Chickasaws. Soon the latter grew restive under a government dominated by the more numerous Choctaws. To quiet Chickasaw complaints, in 1855 the Choctaw domain was reduced by about two-thirds. The center of the Choctaw Country was granted to the Chickasaws. The western third, extending from the 98th to the 100th meridian, was taken over by the U.S. on a lease basis to provide a home for the plains tribes.

Law and order were maintained, and life and property were protected in the Choctaw Country by the Indians themselves. A domestic tranquility in the ante-bellum period, which would compare favorably with that of the best-ordered eastern states, was created by the establishment of county and district courts with a supreme court for appellate work only. A

grand jury system was used for indictments and a petit jury for trials. Each Choctaw county had a sheriff and a courthouse. Jails were seldom used, for Choctaw offenders followed a code of reporting to authorities at the appointed time. A perverse criminal might be chained to a tree on the courthouse green as a precaution.

Besides county enforcement officers, the Choctaw Nation maintained a system of lighthorsemen. These were rangers who were vested with extraordinary powers and who served as messengers, guards and special agents to enforce liquor laws and apprehend criminals that local sheriffs couldn't handle.

Punishment in the Choctaw Nation explains in part the remarkable order that prevailed there. Public whipping on the courthouse green was common punishment for minor offenses like theft, and on first occasion the offender received 50 lashes on his bare back. A second offense brought 100 lashes and a third offense, automatic death. Thus there were few habitual criminals. Homicide brought an automatic death penalty. The rifle, rather than hanging, was used for execution because "Choctaws regarded hanging with superstitious horror as a mode of death that condemned the spirit to eternal wandering."

If Choctaw executions were sordid, they had their dramatic side, too, for a condemned Choctaw was seldom

imprisoned, but presented himself quietly on the appointed day. There are cases where executions were delayed so that the condemned could help his team play a scheduled ball game, or to enable him to harvest the crops and make provision for his widow-to-be. On the appointed day he appeared at the execution post, a small piece of black paper was pinned over his heart, and then, hoodwinked with a black neckerchief, he faced the executioner's rifle.

The advancement of these people of the Choctaw Country in government, economic prosperity, religion and the arts was suddenly interrupted by the Civil War. The persuasiveness of the Confederate cause promoted by Albert Pike, special commissioner to the Indian Territory, helped induce the Choctaws to align with the South. Pike's treaty with the Choctaws was signed on July, 1861. Whereas in the Cherokee, Creek and Seminole nations there was indecision, wavering, and disunity, the Choctaws almost to a man sided with the Confederacy. Choctaw regiments served with valor in the Indian Territory.

The Choctaw Country did not feel the brunt of war until a massive Union offensive smashed through Fort Gibson and Fort Smith late in 1863 and penetrated the northern fringe, destroying Perryville and Skullyville. Thereafter roads throughout the Choctaw Country were clogged with

Cherokee, Creek and Seminole refugees, fleeing the terror of Union reprisal.

For more than two years the Choctaw Country was hard pressed to provide means for feeding these unfortunates, but somehow the hospitable Choctaws managed to furnish the refugees with the basic essentials for survival. The Civil War ended officially for the Choctaws on June 19, 1865, when Principal Chief P. P. Pitchlynn surrendered all Choctaw forces to Federal officials in Doaksville.

Following the Civil War, the Government of the United States undertook to punish the Confederate states and territories by an elaborate process called reconstruction. The vindictiveness of the government at Washington toward the states of the Confederacy extended to the Indian Territory.

Reconstruction for the Indian Nations formerly allied the Confederacy meant loss of territory, the abolition of slavery, adoption of freedmen into tribal citizenship and amnesty for northern sympathizers. Federal Commissioners forced the surrender of the Leased District and a general agreement to consolidate all Indian tribes of the territory under one government.

The pride of the Choctaw Country was its schools, and early in the post-war period, the Choctaw Council turned to the problem of education.

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Women's fashions were missionary-inspired.



From a tent in Smithville the federal government pays for the sale of town sites in 1906.

LAST LEGAL EXECUTION IN THE CHOCTAW NATION



DAVID L. PAYNE
 Choctaw leader who was in jail at Fort Smith awaiting trial for trespassing on Indian lands. Despite the bitter offensive waged by the Choctaws to preserve the integrity of the Choctaw Country, a more powerful and merciless government, spurred on by national farm, railroad and business lobbies, moved relentlessly toward dissolution of the Choctaw Nation.



THE LAST LEGAL EXECUTION
 The last legal execution in the Choctaw Nation took place before a firing squad in 1894. The man lying on the stretcher is the condemned man, and the men surrounding him are members of the firing squad. The scene is set outdoors, and the men are dressed in military uniforms.

The last legal execution in the Choctaw nation took place before a firing squad in 1894.

Concerned about a generation of children growing up without education, the Council spent most of its annual budget between 1866 and 1870 replacing burned and wrecked buildings, purchasing books and supplies, hiring teachers and gradually upgrading scholastic standards. By 1870, 84 neighborhood schools were in operation, the major Choctaw academies and seminaries had been reopened and advanced Choctaw students were attending colleges in the States.

The most disturbing and persistent problem facing the Choctaw Country in the post-Civil War period was the ever-increasing influx of whites. Not only were these immigrants leasing farm and ranch lands, but they were also developing lumber mills and coal mines. Whites also served as tenants on Choctaw farms and plantations and several opened stores, shops and banks.

Railroad building north and south through the Indian Territory increased white migration, for railroads afforded ready access to lumber, coal and agricultural products and easy transportation to markets north and south. The first line through the Choctaw Country was the Missouri-Kansas-Texas line (MKT or Katy) which entered from the north in 1872, and within a year crossed the Red River into Texas.

Commercial coal mining began at McAlester in 1872, and the Choctaw government leased the coal fields to eastern operators in return for a royalty on each ton of coal mined. The coal companies, finding Choctaws

unwilling miners, imported workers from the East and from Europe. Mining camps mushroomed over the coal beds, and McAlester, Hartshorne, Haileyville, Krebs, Alderson and Lehigh became the sites of some of the heaviest coal production in the U.S.

By 1889 more than 15,000 miners and their families lived in these camps, most of them foreign-born and including Italians, Swedes, English, Welsh, Germans, Lithuanians, Slovaks, Poles, Magyars and Russian Jews. By 1907 the mining-camp population of the Choctaw Nation was nearly 25,000 and thereby exceeded the number of Choctaws.

The last 25-year period in the Choctaw Country was a troubled one, exceeded possibly only by the Civil War and its immediate aftermath for confusion and tribal difficulty. Strikes in the coal camps and increasing white migration created disorders unknown before in Choctaw Country. But even greater trouble was in the offing. About 1879, well-organized Boomer groups began a campaign to force the opening of the entire Indian Territory to settlement. Various government officials encouraged the Choctaws and other tribes to abandon common ownership of land, accept allotments in severalty and sell all surplus lands to the government to provide homesteads for settlers.

The Choctaw Council refused to discuss the subject of breaking up the Choctaw Country. A well-instructed delegation was maintained in Washington at all times to lobby against proposals to break up the Choctaw

Country and to carry out the allotment program. The Choctaw Council condemned the Boomers by resolution, and in 1880 appropriated \$1,500 to insure prosecution of the Boomer leader, David L. Payne, who was in jail at Fort Smith awaiting trial for trespassing on Indian lands. Despite the bitter offensive waged by the Choctaws to preserve the integrity of the Choctaw Country, a more powerful and merciless government, spurred on by national farm, railroad and business lobbies, moved relentlessly toward dissolution of the Choctaw Nation.

In 1890, Congress passed the Organic Act providing for the organization of territorial government for Oklahoma Territory. A provision in this act extended the laws of Arkansas to Indian Territory. This meant that all legal matters, except those of a strictly local character, were no longer under the dominion of Choctaw, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Creek or Seminole jurisdiction.

Next came the Dawes Commission. Appointed in 1893, this group was assigned the task of preparing rolls for each of the Five Civilized Tribes, having the Choctaw Country and other nations surveyed, assigning each enrollee an allotment and preparing the tribal governments for dissolution, thereby making statehood for the Indian Territory only a matter of time.

In June, 1898, Congress passed the Curtis Act, a measure which set forth the steps for carrying out the allotment program and bringing tribal affairs to a close. Before the passage of this act, the Choctaws had joined at Atoka with the Chickasaws to sign the Atoka agreement, whereby the two tribal governments agreed to abolish their tribal governments and permit allotment of their lands. The chief value of the Atoka Agreement was that it insured that each enrolled man, woman and child would receive a fair and equitable share of the Choctaw Country.

As it worked out each enrolled Choctaw was to receive an allotment of 320 acres of average land, and each Choctaw freedman 40 acres of average land. In each of the Indian nations conservative elements refused to cooperate with the allotment program, holding that the Great Spirit had fore-ordained that the Indians should hold

roll call: news events in the lives of Sooner alumni

This month's Roll Call is limited to news of alumni from the Class of '50 to the present. The pre-1950 portion will appear in the annual Honor Roll edition of Sooner News-Makers to be mailed in August. The issue is devoted entirely to news about alumni and will contain a special Roll Call section.

1950-52

Robert W. True, '50eng, has joined Kerr-McGee Oil Industries as assistant for operations in the drilling department. *Grier D. Zimmerman, '49eng*, is drilling department manager.

John M. Sheehan, '50Law, has been elected president of the Lawyers Club of Oklahoma City. Other officers are *Paul G. Darrough Jr., '47ba, '49Law*, vice president, and *Kenneth J. Wilson, '48Law*, secretary-treasurer.

Dr. Edwin L. Lyle, '50m.ed, '56d.ed, has been named dean of the School of Education at Seattle Pacific College, Seattle, Wash.

Irving Trachtenberg, '50journal, has been named local sales manager at KATU television in Portland, Ore.

Earl Charles Lairson, '50bus, Houston, Tex., has been elected president of the Houston, Tex. chapter of the Administrative Management Society.

William M. Beard, '50bus, partner in the Beard Oil Co., has been named a director of the Founders National Bank of Oklahoma City.

Garner Allen, '50journal, is news editor of the Stuttgart (Ark.) *Leader*. The editor and publisher of the newspaper is *Calvin Mannen, '38journal*.

Bob Graves, '50journal, formerly of Austin,

land in common. In the Creek Nation civil war nearly erupted around the Crazy Snake movement.

The Choctaw government, an empty shell after 1900, continued to exist until the eve of statehood, when Indian Territory and Oklahoma were merged. Thereafter tribal government was largely an empty, honorary operation, with the offices of Principal Chief, national attorney and mining trustee supervised by the Department of the Interior. END

Tex., has been made manager of press relations for Beech Aircraft Corp. in Wichita, Kan.

Gordon Price, '51bus, has been named general private line rate engineer for Southwestern Bell's St. Louis office.

Bill G. Lowe, '51Law, has been named president of the Exchange National Bank of Moore.

Dr. Keats R. McKinney, '52d.ed, has been named first dean of Metropolitan State College in Denver.

Robert L. Lord, '52bs, '56ms, with Atlantic Refining Co. at Dallas, Tex., has been named one of 45 recipients of the Alfred P. Sloan fellowships for a year of study at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

DEATH: *Dr. William T. Wright, '50-med*, Grove physician, died April 3.

1953-59

Richard A. Cranford, '53bus, has joined the American Hospital Association in Chicago as staff associate in the department of research and education.

Edward M. Evans, '53eng, White Plains, N.Y., has been promoted to senior engineer of Socony Mobil Oil Co.

W. DeVier Pearson, '53ba, '57Law, Oklahoma City attorney, has been named chief counsel of the joint committee on the organization of the U.S. Congress and has moved to Washington, D.C.

Don C. Coldiron, '53bs, '54ms, has been named recipient of one of 45 Alfred P. Sloan fellowships at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Coldiron is with Continental Oil Co. at Lake Charles, La.

Lyndell Tucker, '53geol, has promoted to division geologist for Continental Oil Co. in Oklahoma City.

Buel Garvin, '53m.ed, Altus high school teacher, was named Teacher of the Year for Jackson County by the OEA chapter there.

Dick Bowman, '54bus '59m.ed, has been named head football coach at Knox College, Galesburg, Ill.

Tom L. Dyer, '55bus, has been named manager of Southwestern Bell's East Tulsa District.

Burt P. Shores, '55bus, has joined Champion Molded Plastics, Inc., Bryan, Ohio, as manager of administration.

Paul Babick, '55ed, '60m.ed, has been named superintendent of schools of Washington (Okla.), succeeding *T. C. Beare, '52m.ed*, new superintendent of schools in Antlers.

D. L. Frankel, '56bus, Quincy, Ill., has been elected assistant secretary and treasurer of Gardner-Denver Credit Corp.

Capt. H. Simmons Taylor, '56bus, has been awarded the Bronze Star for his service in Vietnam. *Capt. and Mrs. Taylor (Stana Young, '56ba)* and their two sons are now living at Ft. Sill, Okla.

James P. Dixon, '57bus, received the master of business administration degree from Tulsa University in June.

Mrs. Estelle Boler, '57m.ed, Pauls Valley elementary teacher, has been named Garvin County Teacher of the Year.

Tom Hilmer, '58eng, has been named manager of Star Manufacturing Co. district headquarters in Memphis, Tenn.

William G. Kerr, '59ba, '62Law, Norman, has been elected to the board of directors of Penn Square National Bank, Oklahoma City.

David Swank, '59Law, assistant professor of law, has been named OU's representative to the Big Eight Conference and the NCAA.

James D. Elliott, '59ba, Tulsa, has been promoted to assistant cashier at the First National Bank & Trust Co. of Tulsa.

BIRTHS: *Judge David Rambo, '58geol, '62Law*, and *Mrs. Rambo (Cheryl Blankenship, '60ed)* of Norman are the parents of a daughter, *Vickie Sue*, born April 14.

Dr. John H. Rempel, '59bs, '62med, and *Mrs. Rempel (Anne Lowe, '58pharm)*, Mission, Kan., are the parents of a daughter, *Karen Elaine*, born March 26.

DEATH: *Marilyn Ruth Richardson, '59-ba*, died March 23 in Philadelphia, Pa. A former Fulbright Scholar, Miss Richardson had been coordinator of services for the Center of International Visitors for the past two years.

1960-65

Ben T. Williams, '60ja, has been named art director by McRae & Bealer Advertising of Atlanta, Ga. succeeding *Herb Boston, '50-ja*, who has taken a position with another Atlanta firm.

Donald M. Page, '60pharm, has joined Eli Lilly & Co. as a sales representative in Enid.

Richard Hedge Holley, '61bus, was ordained to the priesthood of the Episcopal Church. Holley has been curate of St. John's Episcopal Church in Norman since July.

Thomas D. Aitken, '61bus, '64Law, has become associated with Fellers, Snider, Baggett & McLane, an Oklahoma City law firm.

Lt. Bryce L. Patterson, '62ba, '64ma, serving with the Army in Germany, has been selected to teach political science for the overseas division of the University of Maryland.

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