



NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

Research Center Collections

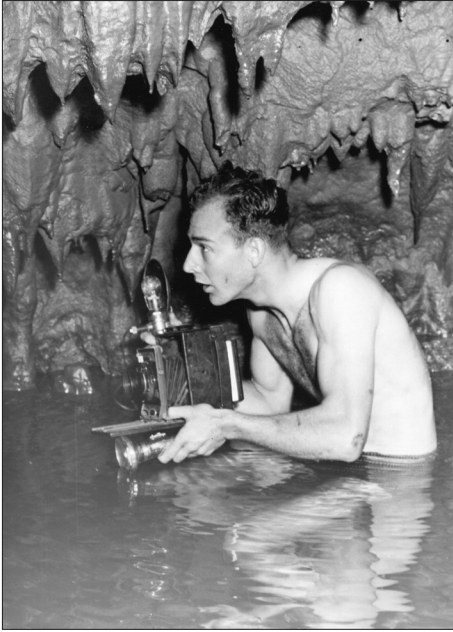
By Larry O'Dell

The Oklahoma Historical Society's Research Center has been fortunate to acquire outstanding collections over the past decade. Finding aids for the collections may be viewed on the Research Division's online catalogue called "CuadraStar," available on the OHS web site at <www.okhistory.org>. The originals in each collection may also be accessed in person in the Research Center, on the first floor of the Oklahoma History Center in Oklahoma City.

The **A. Y. Owen Collection** (2009.90) showcases the work of one of Oklahoma's more talented native sons, a professional photographer. A. Y. Owen's papers reveal the formation of an internationally respected career, dating to childhood through semiretirement. The collection could be of interest not only to historians. As a photographer, Owen covered many interesting Oklahoma events, and researchers interested in business, the twentieth century, and the arts will find informative and useful images in his work.

Owen, born in 1915 at Cheyenne, Oklahoma, graduated from Oklahoma City's Classen High School. By 1936 he had begun his career as a staff photographer for the *Daily Oklahoman* and for the *Oklahoma City Times*. During World War II Owen served in the Forty-fifth Infantry Division and in the U.S. Army Air Corps. After the war ended, he returned to his profession, and by the mid-1950s he had published photographs in *Life*, *National Geographic*, *Fortune*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Time*, and other national publications. In 1968 he married Daphne Davis and in 1972 opened a commercial studio in Oklahoma City. A. Y. Owen died on September 16, 1991.

The collection's personal correspondence and family papers date to 1911 and also include Owen's school papers and report cards. The personal papers continue to 1989 and include business letters and assignments. Many of the assignments are listed by magazine and



*A. Y. Owen
(OHS Research
Division photo).*

date. The collection also contains stationery, forms, and paperwork related to his commercial studio. Many, if not most, of the magazines that printed his photographs appear in the collection. Some of Owen's photographs have also been donated and are still being processed.

The **Abe Herskowitz Collection** (85.93) relates not only to early-twentieth-century military and business records, but also to the life of a Jewish merchant in pre-World War II Oklahoma City. In 2008 OHS volunteer Dan Ambuehl inventoried the large, fifteen-box collection. Herskowitz, born in 1886 in New York City, migrated to Oklahoma City in 1891. He had a long military career, serving in World War I and World War II, and was attached to the Oklahoma National Guard between the two conflicts. He mainly held the military position of Special Services Officer. From 1926 to 1934 Herskowitz operated the Celect Mills Hosiery business. He also managed the Herskowitz Estates, which included the Herskowitz building at 25 West Grand in Oklahoma City. Abe Herskowitz died in August 1957. The collection holds military records accumulated by its creator from 1926 into 1948, while he was on duty during the

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A Herskowitz store (OHS Research Division photo).

war and in Oklahoma with the National Guard. These also include personal correspondence. There are also detailed accounts of the hosiery business from 1926 to 1934. Also included in the collection are personal papers, Herskowitz Estate papers, other business documents, and religious texts in Hebrew and English, as well as a small number of photographs.

The Oklahoma Historical Society relishes the opportunity to preserve the records of the state's true pioneers. That is the case with the **Hannah Atkins Collection** (2007.114). In 2005 Atkins donated more than twenty-three cubic feet of material to the Society. From this, researchers may choose among a plethora of topics to study in the collection, including politics, women's issues, education, Jazz, and Civil Rights. Born Hannah Diggs in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, in 1923, Atkins attended Saint Augustine's College and the University of Chicago, before moving to Oklahoma in 1952. She worked as a librarian for the Oklahoma City Public Libraries and then at Oklahoma State Library. In 1968 Oklahomans elected Atkins as the first African American woman to the state's House of Representatives. In 1980 President Jimmy Carter appointed her as an ambassador to the United Nations. In 1983 she served as assistant director for the Oklahoma Department of Human Services and in 1987 as Oklahoma Secretary of State. Throughout her career she has been active in several organizations, including the American

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Civil Liberties Union, NAACP, National Association of Black Women Legislators, and the Democratic National Committee. She founded the Oklahoma Black Political Caucus and co-founded the Oklahoma Chapter of the National Women's Political Caucus. Atkins' papers cover her career, including her time as a legislator and in other offices, and date from 1950 to 2005. Included are notes and ephemera from numerous conferences and organizations in

*Hannah Atkins
(OHS Research
Division photo).*



which Atkins participated. Some of these are the 1997 African American Summit, the 1975 Black Child Development Institute, 1981 Black Women's Summit, 1972 National Black Political Convention, and the 1997 Inter-Faith Alliance. The collection also contains Atkins' correspondence, with the bulk of the letters between 1990 and 2005. Included are several items and documents of Charles Atkins, Hannah's husband. The OHS research Division also has an oral interview with Atkins.

Corporate histories are fascinating. Correspondingly, archival business collections that cover a company's life are also insightful; they can relate an infinite number of historical and socio-economic details about a region and people. The Oklahoma History Center

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A C. R. Anthony store (OHS Research Division photo).

has several collections that relate to companies, including Kerr-McGee, OTASCO, Griffith Amusement Company, and Lee Way Motor Freight. The **C. R. Anthony Collection** (2009.20) is a good one to focus on. In 1922 Charles Ross Anthony, after spending four years as vice president with the J. P. Martin Company, opened the first store in Cushing. He named his first outlets Dixie Stores. By 1926 the chain expanded to thirty-three stores in Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas. At the end of World War II Anthony's encompassed sixty-eight stores. On the corporation's fiftieth anniversary, in 1972, it held 325 outlets in twenty-one states. In the late 1980s the company faced financial hardships, and in 1997 sold its story to a Texas based company. For seventy-five years Oklahomans have shared the experience of hearing the catchy Anthony's commercials and buying their clothes at the local store. The collection, around eleven cubic feet, contains material covering nearly seventy years. An interesting portion of the management records are the indexes and histories of 395 stores, which were compiled in 1988. There are several programs from stockholder meetings and annual reports.

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There are several boxes related to the records of different store managers, many covering their careers through retirement. One of the jewels of the collection, and useful with any business history, is the in-house newsletter, "Trading Post." The publication began in 1938, and the Society has copies into 1964. These give not only the direction that management took the company, but personal information on employees. The OHS Research Division has not just the aforementioned business collections, and others, but also a multitude of oral histories related to the subject.

The **Samuel W. Brown Collection** (92.01) is a rare assemblage of manuscripts that encompass many important aspects of Oklahoma's history, and in a variety of media. It follows two generations of American Indian leaders who held high-ranking positions in the Creek and Yuchi (also spelled Euchee) nations. It covers not only Indian politics but statewide political contests. The large collection not only contains papers, but also offers several photographs and maps. Samuel W. Brown, Sr., was born in 1843 at Van Buren, Arkansas, to U.S. Army Lt. S. W. Williams and Suttah, the sister of a Yuchi chief. In 1867, after Samuel moved to the Creek Nation, the Yuchi named him to be chief. The next year he married Neosho Parthena Porter. Brown also held several positions in the Creek Nation, including superintendent of Creek Nation schools. In 1894 he founded Euchee Boarding school near Sapulpa. In 1916 his son Samuel W. Brown, Jr., ascended to the position of Yuchi chief. Brown, Sr., remained active in tribal affairs until 1935, when he



*Sam Brown, Jr.
(OHS Research
Division photo).*

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died. Brown, Jr., showed an interest in the record of his people, collecting many histories. The Browns also held several interests in the oil industry, providing them with a comfortable existence. On December 31, 1957, Chief Samuel W. Brown, Jr., died. The Brown Collection holds correspondence of Samuel Brown, Sr., Samuel Brown, Jr., and other family members. The papers also include legal documents relating to personal business and to tribal affairs handled by the two men. Several items report on Yuchi and Creek history, biographical materials, and newspaper clippings related to the family. There is material on Oklahoma history as well as political ephemera. The photographs represent family, prominent Oklahomans, state scenes, and postcards of places and events. The maps relate to tribal lands, business, and development of the Jesse Chisholm Trail memorial. The collection, dating to 1865, is contained in thirty-eight document boxes, not including maps and photographs.

Oklahoma is a young state, and its true pioneers can excel in genres that many would not consider traditional. The **Ned Hockman Collection** (2009.100) illustrates this, not only through the films that he made, but also in the accompanying manuscript collection.

*Ned Hockman
(OHS Research
Division photo).*



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Hockman donated more than one hundred cubic feet of film and thirty boxes of manuscript material to the Oklahoma Historical Society.

Born in Carnegie, Oklahoma, Hockman attended the University of Oklahoma (OU), working for the radio station WNAD. As a soldier in World War II he trained at Hal Roach's studio for motion picture production. As a U.S. Army Air Corps correspondent he filmed several wartime events, including the first B-29 raid in Asia. When he returned to the Sooner State, he founded the motion picture production program at the OU. During the Korean conflict Hockman again returned to the military in a similar position. After the war and his return to OU, he continued his teaching and began to cover the school's sports, including directing the nationally syndicated Bud Wilkinson "coaches show." In 1962 Hockman directed and coproduced *Stark Fear*, his only theatrical film. In 1987 he retired from OU, and in 2009 Ned Hockman passed away.

The collection consists of a very large number of original films, which are still being processed and preserved. The papers are indexed and can be researched. They include scripts dating to the 1940s. These are affiliated not just with the university, but also with state agencies such as the Oklahoma Fish and Game Department, and also represent Hockman's work with commercials for private industries. Also included are materials related to his work with NASA and different professional associations. Several items deal with the production of Bud Wilkinson's sports shows and include scripts, correspondence, commercial scripts, camera logs, sound logs, and scene notes. Hockman also worked on Wilkinson's 1962 senatorial campaign.