

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

THE INDEX FOR *The Chronicles*, 1956

The Index for Volume XXXIV of *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, compiled by Mrs. Rella Looney, Archivist, is now ready for free distribution to those who receive the quarterly magazine. Orders for this Index should be sent to the Administrative Secretary, Oklahoma Historical Society, Historical Building, Oklahoma City 5, Oklahoma.

NEW ILLUSTRATED BOOKLET ON THE OKLAHOMA HISTORICAL
SOCIETY AND ITS COLLECTIONS

A new booklet has just been published by the Historical Society, illustrated by handsome photographs, some of them in colors, of many of the priceless relics and objects on display in the galleries of the Museum, in the Memorial rooms and the Archives of the Society. The descriptions and history notes in the text accompanying these beautiful illustrations form a brief review of Oklahoma's wonderful story. All those interested in Oklahoma history will be delighted to have this new booklet. It will be sent, together with two color post cards of painting in the Historical Building, post-paid for \$1.00 forwarded with the order addressed to the Administrative Secretary, Oklahoma Historical Society, Historical Building 5, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

SETTLEMENT OF THE SOUTHERN BOUNDARY OF THE PANHANDLE

The southern boundary line of the Panhandle—old No Man's Land—or that part of Oklahoma's boundary west of the 100th Meridian was in dispute between Oklahoma and Texas for many years, and was only settled by an Act of Congress in 1946. The bill (H. R. 3593) had been introduced in Congress by Hon. Ross Rizley, Representative of the Northwestern Congressional District in Oklahoma. Judge Rizley now serving as Judge of the United States District Court, Western District of Oklahoma, has kindly supplied the following notes on the history of this boundary dispute and its settlement, in a letter to the Editor, written on April 15, 1957:

"The dispute came about in this manner. The southern boundary of the Oklahoma Panhandle was fixed by what we call the "Old Clark Survey" and was fixed at 36 degrees 30 minutes, being the division line between free and slave territory. This line was estab-

lished by the planting of zinc pots at certain distances, some of which became obliterated either by storm or otherwise.

"Subsequently, in attempting to again mark the boundary line, a surveyor (Chauey and Smith survey, 1881) started at the Hundredth Meridian on the east and at 36 degrees and 30 minutes surveyed westward to what would now be the New Mexican boundary line. After proceeding westward for some distance, the surveyor apparently veered to the north for a short distance and as a result left a no-man's-land strip running for a width of zero on the east to as high as 200 feet in some places. My recollection is that he got back to the line before reaching the western boundary.

"As a result of this no-man's-land strip, Texas treated the northern boundary for tax purposes as the northern extremity of the new survey. However, in disposing of its land, it was careful not to go north of the true line at 36 degrees 30 minutes, but buildings were erected in Texas, Oklahoma, and at some other points and were claimed to be in Texas. Local assessors were assessing them in Texas and finally in Oklahoma which brought such a disturbance that it was necessary to settle the matter once and for all.

"Of course, there never was any doubt as to the true boundary line, but in order to get the matter finally straightened out and settled, it seemed necessary to pass a bill especially since gas in large quantities and some oil were discovered all along the Panhandle boundaries of the two states.

NEWS ITEM ON B. F. COLBERT IN THE *Denison Daily News*, 1875

The following notes on B. F. Colbert of the Chickasaw Nation and his new bridge across Red River at the site of old Colbert's Ferry were reprinted October 29, 1955, by his grandson, Cecil C. Colbert, founder-owner of the *Northwest Oklahoman* at Shattuck, Oklahoma, taken from the *Denison Daily News* for August 29, 1875:

Frontier Denison Diary

Denison Plans a Grand Ball for the City's Third Birthday

Friday morning the writer accepted a kind invitation from C. Washington to get into his buggy and take a drive in the Nation. This furnished an excellent opportunity to examine the new wagon bridge just completed across Red River, by B. F. Colbert. And as we had the pleasure of dining with Mr. Colbert, we learned from him many particulars regarding the cost of construction, etc., which may be of interest. The work was commenced July 1, 1874, and was completed and the bridge thrown open to business on July 1, 1875. It was erected by C. Baker & Co., of St. Joseph Mo., under the immediate supervision of Mr. Baker himself, and C. Washington. It is 577 feet long, and 10 feet wide, with a "turn-off" in the center for passing teams 24 feet wide. It cost Mr. Colbert \$40,000. This is a large sum of money for one man to put into such a work, but the value of the bridge to

the public can hardly be over-estimated. Those who are not disposed to give the Indian credit for being progressive must confess that in Mr. Colbert they have a remarkable exception. Mr. Colbert is a Chickasaw, a cousin of Gov. Overton. He was born in Mississippi and removed to the Indian Territory in 1848. He established a ferry on Red River, just below the new bridge, 22 years ago, which was continued up to the first of the present month. Mr. Colbert owns a very fine plantation on the river where he has resided for over 20 years. He has 850 acres in cultivation and will break up 150 acres more next spring. Altogether he has about 800 acres under fence, in this tract. He also owns a farm on the Washita of very rich bottom land. Thus he owns other tracts of several hundred acres each. At Colbert's Station he has erected a steam saw mill, grist mill and cotton gin—another illustration of the enterprise and public spirit of the man. Mr. Colbert is one of the few leading Indians in the Nation who are earnest advocates of throwing open the Indian Territory to settlement.

SOME HISTORIC AMERICAN FLAGS IN OKLAHOMA 1889 TO 1908

Many old drawings, lithographs and photographs show the United States flag floating over early military posts and other settlements in Oklahoma. Stories of flag hoistings are found in historical records. The governments of each of the Five Civilized Tribes held the Stars and Stripes as their national emblem. Old photographs show the American flag carried in the van of David L. Payne's "boomer" expeditions on their way to the Oklahoma Country. The story of the raising of a huge United States flag at Stillwater in August, 1889, reported in the *Oklahoma Standard* for August 31, 1889, is given in Dr. Berlin B. Chapman's book, *The Founding of Stillwater* (p. 102):

Several days ago Fred Kropp suggested that a subscription be raised for the purpose of erecting a large pole and flag in the center of the town. The boys thought it a good idea and went to work immediately, under Fred's directions: 75 yards of bunting was purchased, and four great poles cut down, trimmed and spliced together, and bound with heavy iron bands. The ladies of Stillwater made the flag, and they deserve credit for their work.

Wednesday afternoon the monster pole was raised, in the center of Ninth and Main streets, with the aid of a derrick and guy ropes. It is of cedar, and the total length is eighty-two feet, six feet under the ground and seventy-six above. After supper the flag, which is 28 x 18 feet, was sent up, and cheers arose from our citizens that could be heard a mile. Sam Gardner, the blacksmith, fired anvils thirteen times. The flag is a beauty and can be seen for miles in every direction. At dark a large red lantern was run up, and it will be kept there every night, to serve as a guide to beleated freighters.

Our patriotic citizens may well feel proud of their efforts. Stillwater is the first town in Oklahoma to unfurl such a flag—28 x 18 feet. Herald the news to Washington.

Though the Federal law on the National flag provides that the additional star for a new state is not included officially until the July 4th following a state's admission, a 46-star flag was quickly made by Oklahomans serving in Washington, and was flown atop the National Capitol immediately after President Theodore Roosevelt signed the Oklahoma statehood bill, on November 16, 1907. Congressman Bird S. McGuire brought the flag back to Oklahoma

and gave it over to the veterans of the Grand Army of the Republic who treasured it for many years.

Another most interesting story is that of Oklahoma's home-made official flag, the handiwork of ninety-two women at Guthrie, which was made at the request of the Philadelphia Betsy Ross Association. It was on this flag that Oklahoma's star appeared officially for the first time when the flag was flown from the flag-staff of Independence Hall in Philadelphia on July 4th, 1908. Today, Mrs. Ruth Eierman whose home is in Guthrie is the only one of Oklahoma's ninety-two "Betsy Rosses" living, and she loves to tell the story of this unusual incident in State history. She was the youngest of the ninety-two Oklahoma women, representing twenty towns in the new state, chosen by Governor Charles N. Haskell to carry out the suggestion and request of the Betsy Ross Association sent him by Mayor Reyburn of Philadelphia.

Governor Haskell received the request from Philadelphia on May 10, 1908, at the very time that the old territorial organizations of the Grand Army of the Republic were meeting at Guthrie to consider the merger of the Oklahoma GAR and the Indian Territory GAR as one statewide association, with William H. Hornaday of Lawton, a veteran newspaper man, and A. G. Centhorne, of Ardmore serving respectively, as the commanders of the two groups. Governor Haskell called the two men into his office in the Logan County Courthouse, used as the state capitol, and asked them to arrange for the making of the new flag. A few hours later, he named the following GAR members to take the flag to Philadelphia: Colonel Tom Soward, Guthrie; William Query, Tulsa; R. F. Gunder, Bristow; Moses Townsend, Ardmore; and Mr. Hornaday of Lawton.

At the suggestion of the GAR, Governor Haskell appointed the group of ninety-two patriotic women to make the flag and to report at Guthrie on June 16. They met on that day at 9:00 a. m. in the Guthrie Carnegie Library, and proceeded to make the first official flag for Oklahoma, two women for each of the forty-six stars to be placed on the flag, all completing their work that day. The flag was kept in the courthouse vault for safekeeping until Colonel Soward and his committee took it to Philadelphia in time to be unfurled on July 4. In the big celebration with its enthusiastic throng of people in the Quaker City, presentation of the flag was made by Colonel Soward and the response was given by Mayor Reyburn, the red, white and blue with the forty-six stars floating over Independence Hall all afternoon. The Oklahoma-made flag was brought back to the state by the GAR; it was later given to the *U. S. S. Oklahoma*, and is reported to have gone to a watery grave when that great warship was sunk in the attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941.

(M. E. W.)

ALONG THE WASHINGTON IRVING TRAIL IN OKLAHOMA*

In today's Soonerland, the open road and a drive across Oklahoma's hills and prairies offer many thrills. A special kind of tour is one combining all of the pleasure of modern driving with the following of a trail blazed more than a century ago by one of the most famous American men of letters, Washington Irving. No safari to today's farthest frontier wilderness could provide the excitement as well as personal hardship experienced by Irving and his companions, while on the world-famous *Tour on the Prairies*. Intended by them as a happy-go-lucky trek beyond civilization's borders, their month during the Fall of 1832 on Oklahoma's then uncharted and little known plains was almost more than bargained for by the travelers.

What took them a month to encompass may now be traveled in a day, with plenty of time for pictures and sight-seeing. It is fun to travel the exact route of Irving and his comrades, to see the same spots and landmarks that engaged their attention, and to trace from the comfort of the automobile the path they made on horseback, and sometimes on foot.

Washington Irving had spent a number of years in Europe, and had earned his spurs as the foremost American literary figure of his time. On the return voyage from Europe, he made the acquaintance of two fellow travelers, Charles J. Latrobe, and his young protegee, Count Albert de Pourtales from Switzerland. Rumor had it that Albert had just been disengaged from a bad love affair, and that his parents had arranged for Latrobe, a brilliant and popular Englishman, to accompany the young Count on a trip to America to forget it all. The three men became warm friends, and they agreed to stay together for further travels.

During the late summer of 1832, they were on a Great Lakes' steamer out of Buffalo, New York, when they made the chance acquaintance of Henry L. Ellsworth, just appointed by President Andrew Jackson as a special emissary to the Indians west of Arkansas, and charged with the task of helping certain of the tribes to determine the extent and areas of their newly designated lands. Ellsworth, a Yale graduate, and a lawyer from Connecticut, was the son of Oliver Ellsworth, former Chief Justice of the United States. The new task weighed heavily on his mind, and he was anxious to have companions on his distant and uncertain trip to the Far West. An invitation from him for the three travelers to go along and see the sights seemed to fit right into the plans of all, and before the steamer had docked, arrangements were made. Soon the four were off together for Fort Gibson, then a remote army post in the region

* Reprints of "Along the Washington Irving Trail in Oklahoma," by George H. Shick, published here are available for thirty-five cents per copy. Order from Oklahoma Historical Society, Historical Building, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.—Ed.

of the Three Forks, beyond Fort Smith. Three Forks was named from the fact this place is where the Verdigris and the Grand Rivers join the Arkansas. The region had long been known to traders and early settlers. In fact, Sam Houston, who later won everlasting fame in Texas, operated a trading post which he called "Wigwam Neosho" near the Three Forks, and the Government had located there the Agency for the western group of the Creek Indians.

The four men arrived at the Three Forks on October 8, 1832, in high spirits and anxious to be off for the wild and unknown West. They found that a detachment of Rangers, Uncle Sam's mounted infantry, had left a few days earlier for a scouting trip as far west as present Oklahoma City; and losing no time, word was sent ahead for the soldiers, under Captain Jesse Bean, to halt and await the newcomers. Since he was on official business, Ellsworth assumed command of the expedition. As the other officials had not yet arrived at Ft. Gibson, Irving acted as temporary secretary of the government commission, and in that manner he, too, served in an official capacity. Latrobe and Pourtales were welcomed along for the trip, and on the morning of October 10th, the four together with a small detachment of soldiers departed to overtake the Rangers for their memorable journey.

Irving's little volume, *A Tour on the Prairies*, became a best seller of its day, and is yet fine reading. Latrobe, too, left a journal of the trip in his *A Rambler in North America*. Both have been reprinted and are easily available.¹ Today's tourist would do well to review one or both of these accounts before starting out along the Irving Trail, and by all means, he should keep them in the car's glove compartment for ready reference. The entire circuit can be completed in one day, but actually it is more fun, with longer time for the sights, if two days are allotted.

The trip should start from Muskogee, for it was from nearby Fort Gibson that Irving departed. A stop in Muskogee the night before would insure plenty of time for an early start the next morning. With a few hours extra there are sights to see in Muskogee, such as Bacone College and the old Union Indian Agency. Then, too, on the way to Fort Gibson, a mile north of U. S. 62, just east of Bacone, is the site of old Fort Davis, with an ancient Indian mound at the center. This post was named for Jefferson Davis, and was one of the strongholds of the Confederate Army early in the War Between the States.

¹Two complementary reprints with illustrations and maps showing the day by day camp sites of the 1832 Tour in the Indian Territory are: (1) Washington Irving, *A Tour on the Prairies*, annotated by Joseph B. Thiburn and George C. Wells (Harlow Publishing Company, Oklahoma City, 1955); and (2) Charles Joseph Latrobe, *The Rambler in Oklahoma*, annotated by Muriel H. Wright and George H. Shick (Harlow Publishing Company, Oklahoma City, 1955). A 1956 reprint of Irving's *Tour on the Prairies* (University of Oklahoma Press, Norman) evaluates this classic in Oklahoma history as a literary production with an introduction and annotations by John McDermott, the well-known Missouri author.—Ed.

Here follows in these pages, a detailed route of the tour, giving each stop made by the Irving party as accurately as is known today, all planned for your comfort, with a minimum of unpaved roads, and with all necessary instructions for staying close to the path of Irving's famous loop through the western wilderness. Some nice day should be selected when it is certain that the roads would be dry and at their best.

—George H. Shirk

On Irving's Tour Today

Go east from Muskogee on U. S. 62 to Fort Gibson, staying on the highway through the main part of Fort Gibson until the highschool is reached on the left. There, the Oklahoma Historical Society marker tells of the Fort and its post; turn left at the marker, and follow the black-top up the hill to the site of the army post. Almost at the foot of the water tower, and due east of the old barracks building, is a stone marker telling that it marks the site of Irving's tent. Legend records that while waiting to start his tour, Irving pitched his tent encampment at this spot. At this stone marker our tour will start. It took Irving 28 days to make the circuit, and today it may be accomplished in less than the same number of hours.

After a look at the army post, go down the hill to the old stockade. A stop here is important. It is a faithful reproduction of how this early military post looked during the days of Irving, Sam Houston, and other notable Americans. A marker at the front entrance gives more of the details on Irving and his three friends. By all means, you should have a camera for a shot or two of each of the Irving markers that are now to be encountered along the route of *A Tour on the Prairie*.

After a visit to the stockade, cross the Missouri-Pacific Railroad tracks, turn right, go down the gravel road to the river bridge and across. This is almost the identical spot where the old government ferry was located, and it is where Irving and Blinworth crossed Grand River. After crossing the bridge, follow the gravel road to the town of Okay. The route is easy to follow. Just keep the same road for a short distance along the tracks; then one and one-half miles west, one mile north, a half mile west, and again one and one-half miles north to Okay. At the town, two left turns bring you to the Verdigris River bridge and the Three Forks marker. The historic details of this site are on the stone, placed there by the D. A. R. It was here that Latrobe and Fairbanks joined the travelers from Fort Gibson. On the east side of the river was the Western Creek Agency, while just across the stream on the west bank was the Osage Subagency. From this spot after lunch on October 10th, they started west to overtake the Rangers.

Be sure the mileage part of the speedometer is in good working condition, as it will be a vital necessity in following the turns and the road here laid out for your trip; Do not plan to rely solely on the modern highway map, for Irving did not have one either. A careful eye on the speedometer mileage is all that is needed.

Cross the Verdigris River bridge near the D. A. R. marker, and follow the black-top on its curve to the left for 1.4 miles. Then, make a turn to the right and go due west across two railroad tracks. The turn is a little hard to see, so don't hurry past it. Follow the good gravelled road west for four miles, with the Katy Railroad tracks to the left, coming upon U. S. Highway 60. Continue across Highway 60, and there State Highway 513 takes off to the west. A sign on the railroad tracks reads Anchor, Oklahoma. This is Irving's exact route to the west, so for sure you are on his trail. An even mile west of Anchor, in a grove of trees on the right is the site of Tallahassee Mission,

founded by Alice Robertson's father, and the place where Oklahoma's first Congresswoman spent many of her childhood years.

Highway 51B turns right 1.5 miles west of Ancher, and at this point the Irving pilgrimage turns left, or south. Go one-half mile south, and turn right at the section line road. A nice farm home is at the corner just beyond the turn. On their first day Irving's group traveled almost due west, so you must leave 51B for it would take you too far north for the trail. Now, go west on the farm road for exactly five miles. There is one slight jog to the right and then back, but this will cause no trouble.

At the end of the fifth mile is the town of Clarksville. It was in this vicinity, perhaps a little further west, that Irving spent his first night. Here his party came upon a frontier farmhouse, owned by a settler named Berryhill. In whose farm yard the travelers pitched their tents and settled down for a night's rest.

With an eye on the speedometer, at the end of the fifth mile turn right to the north, and proceed 2.5 miles north and rejoin Highway 51B at Porter. There, turn left, then through town on the main street, following 51B, as it turns west. Go almost seven miles, until the road reaches the Arkansas River. From there, follow the gravel road as it turns to the north. At the turn, the town seen to the right on the left is Redbird; it was along this same route that the travelers journeyed during the afternoon of October 11th, 1882. Across the river to the west may be seen the "beautiful champion country, of flowery plains and sloping uplands, diversified by groves and clumps of trees," admired and described by Irving. About two miles beyond the right turn at the river's bank is the Irving camp site for the night of October 11th. The explorers camped on "a fine stream of water close by," and several likely creeks are near, any one of which could be the one mentioned.

Four miles after the turn north on State 51B, the tracks of the Katy Railroad are encountered on the right. Stay on the gravel road as it leads into Coweta from the south. Without doubt the travelers passed very near to the site of Coweta, and in this neighborhood they turned more to the west. The town was named for the old Creek Indian town of Coweta in Alabama. The site of the old Koweta Mission, established in 1818 by the Presbyterians, is just east of the town on State Highway 51, and is worth a stop for a visit.

Highway 51B comes into Coweta from the south. Halfway along Main Street, at the two water towers by Voss Service Station, leave the highway and turn left to the west, on the black-top. Go three blocks west, then turn right, and go north a half mile. Then, following the gravel road, turn with it as it swings to the left. Here again the modern road will follow very closely to the Irving route. Except for a jog to the right around a hill, the road is due west for six miles, and by using Shaban Baptist Church and Wilson Chapel as guide markers, you are sure that you are on the right path. The view south across the Arkansas River is a fine one, greatly admired by the travelers. Without doubt your road is within short distance of the path made by Irving's party.

At the end of the sixth mile, a black-top road mark the county line of Tulsa County is encountered. Here turn right and go north one mile, and then turn left to the west at Sellar's Grocery onto an asphalt road. Approximately two miles west on this road, you will pass very near the Arkansas River. It was at this location that the travelers stopped on the river bank to water their horses. The county road now followed is at places certainly within yards of the Irving trail. This route passes along some of the state's finest fruit orchards. How such a sight would have amazed Irving and his friends!

After exactly six miles driving to the west, a paved county road runs to the north. There turn right. This places you on old U. S. Highway 64, its

location before the new bridge was built north of Wisby. Somewhere near your turn, is the site of Irving's camp for the night of October 12th. His party had travelled farther than planned that day, in their unsuccessful effort to overtake the Rangers. The order to make camp was welcome. All were so tired that the rain during the night did not disturb them.

Go two miles north on old U. S. 84, now bearing the name of "Mingo Road," then jog one mile west to present U. S. 84, turning north onto it. This route takes one as close as possible to the camp-site and to the route followed by Irving the next morning.

After reaching U. S. Highway 84, Memorial Road, go north four miles to the junction with State Highway 51, and there turn left to the west. In this mileage, Irving's path on his way to reach the Rangers had been crossed again.

Upon turning left at the State Highway 51 junction, go west five miles to where the pavement ends at the river's edge. Just after the fourth mile and immediately before the Riverside Drive-in Theater, Jim Creek is crossed. It was on this creek, probably within a mile of your car, that Irving overtook the Ranger detachment under the command of Captain Dean. There the united expedition made camp for the night of October 13th. Here they found a large tree with a comb of wild honey in its hollow trunk. The small ridge mentioned by Irving could be any of those seen north and east of the drive-in theater.

Back again to the trail: West of the drive-in, turn north to the right, and proceed north for two miles on Peoria Street. At the intersection of 51st Street, travel a few blocks to the west, and then take Riverside Drive north into Tulsa. All of this is very close to the Irving trail for the 14th, which was the day the party passed over the site of the future "Oil Capital of the World," Tulsa. Keep on Riverside Drive to the north and pass under the second bridge, and then make a slight curve to the right, only a few degrees, up the hill and onto Denver Street. With this direct route through Tulsa, proceed north through the business district, using the railroad underpass, and go north to Edison Street. There, turn left, and drive due west. A few blocks after the turn, a pause must be made to see a unique marker in the center of the pavement, showing the corner of three Indian Nations--the Osage, the Creek and the Cherokee. The street is wide at this point, and there is no trouble in securing a good look at this remarkable memento of Oklahoma's past.

From the Three Nations marker, proceed west for several blocks to Quanch Street, turning left at Quanch for a short detour to see Tulsa's fine Washington Irving monument. After driving south on Quanch for several blocks, turn right at Easton Street. To the west at the top of the hill in the center of the parkway will be seen the state's most imposing memorial to Irving and his friends. Use any of the cross streets to jog back north to Edison Street. Upon again reaching Edison, turn left to the west, and you are again on the trail.

After a mile or so west on Edison Street by keeping eyes sharp to the right, there are several glimpses of Bald Hill, lifting its bare knob up through the trees and other obstructions. This was a famous early day landmark and was well known to all. Its mention by one of the travelers establishes that Irving passed nearby. Follow Edison Street about three miles and follow its turn south through a portion of Sand Springs. After about a mile to the south, cross the falls and turn right onto U. S. Highway 84. At this time and for the next several miles, you are again very near the Irving Trail. Follow U. S. 84 all the way to Keystone.

There is no bridge across the Arkansas River near Keystone, which fact require today's only major digression from the trail, but not having a boat,

nothing can be done about it. West of Sand Springs, the Arkansas makes a bend to the north, and it was doubtless at this point that the Irving party again reached the river. They had determined to cross the stream above its confluence with the Cimarron, which in Irving's day was called the Red Fork. The party had been unable to reach the Arkansas before dark on the 14th, so their camp for that night was probably a mile or so west of Sand Springs.

The Arkansas River was crossed on the 16th of October amid much excitement, and for a while they were not certain that all would be successful in the crossing. As one drives west between Sand Springs and Keystone along U. S. 64 south of the river, the heights across on the north bank are easily seen, and it is fun to speculate how the flats our route traverses must have appeared to the travelers from their vantage point across the river.

Proceed through Keystone on U. S. Highway 64 crossing the Red Fork on this highway. Just north of the bridge the paved road swings sharply to the left. Here one must leave the pavement in order to pick up the trail once more. To make certain of everything, check the speedometer carefully just as you leave the pavement and follow the country road to the north and east. After exactly 1.2 miles, a shallow scooped-out cut will be found on the ground, running at right angles from the road and east to the Arkansas River. This is the site of U. S. Crossing, an important and well known ford where many years later a ferry was operated across the river. This crossing was used by part of the Irving expedition. Now, again following the same country road north for a distance of exactly two miles from where you left the pavement, and at a small bridge, a deep ravine will be seen extending into the woods on the left toward the west. This is Bear's Glen, the site for the camp of October 15, 1832, and is the "wild, rocky dell" described in great detail by Irving and his friends. The large rock at the head of the Glen may be the one mentioned by Irving as that which overhangs the spring and where he amused himself "by watching the changing scenes" in the canyon. Again, cameras should not be overlooked.

From the Glen you must retrace the road to U. S. Highway 64; and at the pavement turn right and follow the highway as it leads away north from Keystone. After the Rangers left the Glen on the morning of the 16th, they followed a "too northerly course." Today's traveler must follow the trail north along the paved highway to keep in the exact path of the Irving expedition. Watching the speedometer from the point where you came back upon the pavement, follow U. S. 64 for 2.7 miles. Then, just before reaching the bridge over Bear Creek, and at the Flindley farm place, turn left to the south, upon a section line road. It was about at this point that the members of the expedition realized they were pointed too far north, and decided to alter their course more to the south. From the turn off U. S. 64, proceed one mile south, turn right (the wires along the road turn left) and travel one mile west.

Here the road turns to the left and comes out upon a better quality gravel county road. At the junction, turn left to the south, and follow this country road running between Maunford and Cleveland. Go 2.4 miles, following in places close along the west bank of the Cimarron. The Irving Trail is probably a mile or so to the right, but your car is as close as possible. Then turn right due west, and proceed an even mile; then turning again south to the left, drive in that direction for a little over a half mile; then turn sharp right to the west, and cross the Frisco Railroad tracks. Driving west on this road, you are on the line between old Oklahoma Territory and Indian Territory. Now, Pawnee County is on the right, and Creek County on the left.

Less than a mile after crossing the railroad, you will come to a large bridge with a sharp turn to the left just beyond. This bridge is over House

Creek, and somewhere near this place, in the fine flat on either side of the road, the explorers made their camp for the night of October 10th. Irving describes the spot as "a beautiful peninsula, made by the windings and doublings of a deep, clear and almost motionless brook, and covered by an open grove of luffy magnificent trees." After camp was made a day of rest was decided upon. All next day was devoted to hunting, and the preparation of a bison for those believed in too poor health to travel further. Captain Bean issued an order permitting the soldiers to hunt any game up the creek, but not down the river, and designated twenty of his men, the best marksmen, to replenish the larder.

Now to take up the route followed after the extra day at the rest camp. From the bridge on House Creek, proceed half mile south, and then turn right to the west, and drive for two miles. During the first mile, after the turn, a fine view of the Clinarron may be had, well worth a snap shot, and it is the same view that was so much admired by Irving and his friends. This road turns left, goes a half mile south and then again right to the west. Upon this last turn, the road after a mile passes a pretentious, but abandoned school building which will be reassurance that you are on the right trail. It was in this area, with the "poor hungry soil mingled with sandstone" as Irving recorded, that his horse suddenly went lame, forcing this man of letters to walk for the remainder of the day's march. How Irving would marvel if he could see visitors today in horseless machines gliding swiftly along his route of weary, footsore travel! Several miles beyond the school, the road joins or comes to a dead-end at a cross road. Here the turn is to the right, and two more miles to the west will bring you suddenly up a sharp hill and to State Highway 99. Don't miss the stop line!

For the last two miles before the pavement is reached, following along on the left is Lagoon Creek. It has some fine fishing holes, and along its banks, west of the present highway, the party camped for the night of October 18th.

Turn left to the south, on State Highway 99, and within half a mile Lagoon Creek is crossed. Irving's camp for the night of the 18th was some where on this creek, two or three miles west of State 99. State Highway 51 is reached a half mile south of the Lagoon Creek crossing. From there, follow the curve to the right, towards Yale. You are now several miles south of the 1892 route of march for October 19th. It had been a bad day for the travelers, with heavy rain, and everyone was wet to the skin.

Follow State Highway 51 into Yale, and by the time Yale is reached, you are again very close to the Irving Trail. Just before entering Yale, the municipal park may be seen to the right, north of Highway 51. In the center of the park grounds is a plaque marking the camp site for the evening of the 10th.

After crossing the railroad tracks at Yale, continue due west with the paved highway curving away on the right. Go up over the hill, heading straight west. From the top of the hill straight ahead is a fine view of the Twin Mounds, a remarkable landmark, well known in Oklahoma history. Oddly enough, none of the travelers mentioned these Twin Mounds, so they must have been on a course that by chance did not afford a good view of the mounds. Two miles after leaving State 51, there is a large stream called Salt Creek. The camp pitched during the afternoon of October 19 was near its east bank. Again it had been a disagreeable day, with plenty of rain and low spirits; and in Irving's words, they spent "a gloomy and weary night."

A mile and a half after crossing Salt Creek, you come upon a paved cross road, State Highway 18. There turn left to the south. After crossing Salt Creek, the 1892 travelers marched southwest, so your own trail today must be in that direction. Go south one mile on State Highway 18, and then

turn right to the west, on the section line county road. After the turn, drive west seven miles to a point just beyond the scattered buildings of the town of Ingalls. Five miles on the way after leaving State 18, another large stream has been crossed. This is Council Creek, and is the one that the Irving party had to follow for a mile along its north bank before a crossing could be located.

Now a modest little town, the present appearance of Ingalls beguiles the fact that it was the scene of one of Oklahoma's worst out-law encounters. On September 1, 1903, a posse of five United States marshals engaged the notorious Dalton gang in a desperate gun battle. Two marshals, Hick Speed, and Lefe Shadley, were killed, and the Dalton gang of ten was badly shot up but none was killed. That day marked the beginning of the end of Oklahoma's outlaw days. Any old-timer is glad to relate the circumstances of Ingalls most famous fight in history, and a stop there is worth the time.

A half mile west of Ingalls, and an even seven miles from State Highway 18, turn south on the section line road. The views are fine, with the "immense extent of grassy, undulating, or, as it is termed, rolling country, with here and there a clump of trees" that so much excited the appreciation of Irving and his comrades.

Two miles after the turn to the south, the road goes up over a hill, and ahead on the right is a large pile of unusual and oddly shaped rocks. This is Irving's renowned Cliff Castle, or as the other members of the party named it, "Irving's Castle." It reminded Irving, and for that matter, you will have the same impression today, of "the ruins of some Moorish Castle, crowning a height in the midst of a lovely Spanish landscape." The cedars on the north side of the Castle were planted in recent years, and while they are picturesque, they detract from the exact appearance seen at the time of the Irving visit. Too, the rocks have weathered and some have been hauled away for modern building, so the pile is not as prominent as it was more than a century ago. However, a stop for photographs is important, and a request to the landowner, whose home is to the south, will secure permission for a visit. Standing on the highest rock, today's visitor will have at least one view that surpasses even Irving's finest descriptive pen, for to the northwest, rising just above the horizon, may be seen the towers of Oklahoma's A. & M. College.

Our trail on the section line runs south for a total of four miles from the turn west of Ingalls. About one and one-half miles south of the Castle, turn right to the west upon a black-top road. About two miles east of this turn, the Cimarron River makes a wide sweeping bend to the north, swinging several miles away from a straight-line course. This is what brought Irving "once more in sight of the Red Fork, winding its turbid course between well wooded hills, and through a vast and magnificent landscape." After the turn west onto the black-top, the pavement ends two miles further on. Continue straight west across the Santa Fe Railroad tracks and through Mehan. The point where the black-top ends, one half mile east of the railroad tracks, is very near the location where the Irving party encamped the night of October 20th. Camp for that evening was in "a beautiful grove watered by a fine spring and rivulet." Just to the south is Berry Ford, a well known crossing on Stillwater Creek, and may have been the crossing utilized by the expedition on the following morning.

Irving records that his companions had traveled only a short distance on the morning of the 21st when they were delayed by a large stream, the creek now known as Stillwater Creek, where they were required to reconnoiter for a considerable distance before they found a fording place. Even then the crossing was difficult because of the steep, crumbling bank with thick undergrowth and brambles. The crossing caused plenty of excitement. A low hanging grape vine "as thick as a cable" pulled Irving from his horse into the

mad. For those who care to compare today's appearance of the ford with Irving's vivid description, to determine if it is indeed the same place, only a few minutes hike is required. By turning south on the section line a half mile east of the railroad tracks, where we mentioned the black-top ends, you can drive to the road's end at the tracks. There a hike down the rails for a hundred yards or so to the trestle will be rewarded with a good view of the crossing area on the left, or the downstream side.

Back again to the road and west into Mohan. The route now runs due west six miles to State Highway 40. If the timing is right, there is a detour to the right into Stillwater for a visit to the College would be worth while, especially if meal time is near. After this stop, return and rejoin the trace of the Irving route. Somewhere along State 40, probably a mile or more north of its junction with State Highway 23, you will have crossed the line of the Irving march, and it is interesting to speculate about the exact spot where the two paths have crossed. Here is the "vast and glorious prairie" that so delighted Irving.

At Terkins Corner, turn west and follow State Highway 23 as far as Coyle. Three miles west of the turn-off from State 40 is a schoolhouse on the left. At the northwest corner of the school grounds is a marker telling of Irving's camp for the evening of October 21st. Almost a mile west of the schoolhouse State Highway 23 crosses a fine creek, and Irving's camp site is believed to have been less than a mile to the north.

This was the "Camp of the Wild Horse." Even today the creek bears the name of Wild Horse Creek, honoring that long ago visit and the story told in the evening around the camp fire, about the famous gray horse that by legend had ranged the prairies of the neighborhood for six or seven years. The evening was climaxed for certain when Beatts, the guide, brought to camp in the flesh, much to the excitement of all, a fine two year colt just captured from among a herd of six wild horses.

The next morning the visitors altered their entire route to the south, but today's travelers prefer the highway in crossing the Cimarron, so stay on State 23 and cross the conventional way at Coyle. Just west of the crossing of Wild Horse Creek, the highway is within a mile of the Cimarron, and at that point along the river Irving and his friends crossed the Red Fork in single file. Their path into the stream had been marked for them by Beatts landing his captive of the night before by the bridge.

Today's trail, however, crosses the Cimarron six miles higher up the stream, so you will take the "thick cane brake, which at first sight, appeared an impervious mass of reeds and brambles" which gave so much trouble on the south bank of the Cimarron. After passing through Coyle, about a half mile west of the town, leave the paved road and make a half left turn to the south onto a section line road. Driving due south, in a short distance, you will pass a large highway marker, square in the center of the road, and marking the town of Langston. Faded paint on this now unweared for shaft tells of the days when it marked the main route from Guthrie to Stillwater, and for old-timers the large letter "S" will recall the Stapleton Trail.

From this marker, drive due south for seven miles on a good section line road. This road is the Indian Meridian, the line from south to north across Oklahoma that divides all of the land surveys in the state, except those in the Pottawatomie. On the right of the Indian Meridian are the "West" ranges for the land calls, and on the left are "East" designations.

A seven mile drive to the south brings you to the town of Meridian, and nearby is the site of the "Alarm Camp" where the Irving travelers camped for the night of October 22nd. That was a wild evening. Excitement from a prairie fire had hardly passed, when a new alarm, this time "Pawnee!"

Pawnees!" placed the camp in an uproar. Rumors flew back and forth thick as the brush of the surrounding blackjacks, and soon the campers believed they were surrounded by three hundred red skins. A state of siege was effected, but all for naught, as the cry of "Pawnees!" had turned into a false alarm.

At the south side of Meridian, just seven miles from the marker at Langston, turn right to the west, and drive in that direction for five miles. A half mile west of Meridian, a rather large stream is crossed, now known as Bear Creek. It was on this stream that the Irving party found a fine beaver dam "containing several families of that industrious animal, though not one showed his nose above water." Three miles west of Bear Creek, Irwin School is passed and if there were just one more letter in the name, it might be assumed that it is the namesake of the famous traveler who once passed so near.

At the end of the five mile drive to the west, turn left to the south, and drive south on the section line for a distance of six miles. Then, turn west again to the right, and drive west two miles, two miles south; and again three miles west brings you to U. S. Highway 77. By now you are in the heart of the "Cross Timbers." How thankful is today's visitor when he glances at the side of the road and knows that he need not thread a trail through the dense and difficult "rust iron blackjerk" which gave the early day travelers so much concern.

Upon reaching U. S. 77, turn south to the left, and follow the road to its junction with U. S. Highway 90. There, turn left to the east. Irving's march for October 23rd was fourteen miles in length, and camp for the evening was pitched just east of U. S. 77, and about three miles north of U. S. 66. Camp that evening was a section one, and after long consultation, the members of the party decided to alter their course to the east, and not go farther west as originally planned. Later events proved the decision to be a wise one, for even with this they experienced great hardship on the return to Fort Gibson.

On October 24, the party traveled almost due east, the trace now paralleling U. S. 66 to Arcadia. There, probably in the fine field just east of Arcadia, the adventurers camped for the night. Irving records that the day was spent "along a gentle valley" and this stream is now named Coffee Creek, flowing into the Deep Fork near Arcadia. At the junction of the two streams was a beautiful grove of elms on the site of an abandoned stage encampment. On U. S. Highway 66, east of Arcadia, are two markers, commemorating the visit of October 24th. Irving refers to their camp for that day as the "Buffalo Camp."

For today's trail, drive east on U. S. 66 from the two markers one mile, and then turn south on the fine country road that runs on the east side of Lake Illwacoos. This is actually a mile too far east for the Irving path, but if you try to follow his route more closely, you will find it blocked by an obstacle unbeknownst to Irving: the Turner Turnpike. Four miles south of the turn off of U. S. 66, turn right to the west on another county paved road, called Memorial Road. This is followed for two miles, and exactly at the end of the second mile, turn south on the section line road. Just a few hundred yards south, you will suddenly come upon a fine, beautiful valley, lying up from the north bank of the North Canadian River. The first glimpse is an unexpected and as exciting as it was to the long-age travelers. Here it was that they spent a great day in sport, "Killing the Wild Horse."

Grazing on the green on the right was a fine herd of wild horses, and likewise on the left, was a small herd of buffalo. Plans were completed by Irving and his friends for the "great hunting mammoever" and several horses were captured.

Now by all means, a stop is essential at the point just as your automobile descends into the flat, and from this vantage may be pointed out the location of each of the high moments of the exciting day. To the school child of almost a century ago, this was one of the most famous spots in America. The chapter "Ringing the Wild Horse" from Irving's volume was reprinted many times in school readers and exercise books. Ringing the wild horses was glorious sport, but how peaceful and civilized by comparison the same fields of alfalfa appear now.

Upon resuming the journey, proceed straight south and across the North Canadian, and turn to the left at the first cross road. After a one mile drive east, turn south again to the right. A drive south of two miles brings the traveler under the Frisco Railroad tracks, and onto the county pavement from Jones, in Oklahoma County. After a turn to the right, follow this road through Spencer and to Northeast 23rd Street, east of Oklahoma City. Irving camped for the evening of the 25th "in a valley, beside a century pool, under a wellwood grove of elms, the upper branches of which were fringed with tufts of the lustrous mistletoe." This site is somewhere just north of Spencer, and yet today plenty of mistletoe remains to mark the general vicinity.

After reaching Northeast 23rd Street, proceed west for one half mile and then turn left, to the south, on the paved county road leading to Midwest City. A mile south of Northeast 23rd Street is Crutcho Creek. Here on its banks, the party spent three days in their "foul weather encampment" so well described by Irving. Soon after they had camped for the afternoon of the 26th, a "drizzling rain ushered in the autumnal storm that had been brewing." Three nights were to elapse before the travelers were able to resume their march, and then only after a complete soaking and a thoroughly disagreeable experience.

About ten o'clock on the morning of the 28th, they resumed their march. More than likely they passed directly over the area of the great run-ways and ballfields of Uncle Sam's Thicker Field. What an experience that would have been, if they could have in some fashion visualized what some day would be found at the point where they emerged "from the dreary belt of the Cross Timber."

Upon reaching Thicker Field at Southeast 20th Street, turn right and drive three miles west along the fine double-lane highway. At Sunny Lane Cemetery, turn left to the south, and drive down Sunny Lane Road to its intersection with old U. S. 77, at Hollywood. The second bridge or culvert south of Hollywood crosses Little River. It was on Little River farther up stream to the northwest that the Irving party camped for the night of October 29th.

This route is one that passes to the east of Moore, but a turn-off seven miles south of Southeast 20th Street, for a two mile detour to Moore would permit a visit to the Washington Irving marker in the grounds of the Moore High School. If this detour is made, old U. S. 77 may be utilized south to the Hollywood corner to rejoin the route.

The next day was destined to be an exciting one. It was spent by the travelers ranging all up and down the "Grand Prairie," so far south perhaps as Noble, hunting buffalo, without regard to distance or location. When evening came, it was discovered that young Count Fourtates was lost, necessitating an extra night at the same camp with hours spent in search for Latrobe's friend. Fortunately the next day a party of Rangers found the lost and frightened young Sober, who had climbed high into a tree and there had completely abandoned himself to his fate.

From the junction of U. S. 77, drive south two miles to the north corner of the Norman I. O. O. F. Cemetery, and there turn left, to the east. This route makes sure a close following of the Irving Path, but precludes a visit to

Norman. As at Stillwater, a detour is in order, so that a visit may be possible to the campus of the University of Oklahoma in Norman.

If the turn to the east is made at the Norman Cemetery corner, proceed east four miles, then turn right to the south, and drive two miles to the paved road of State Highway 9; whereas if Norman is decreed on the route, leave that City eastbound on State 9. Follow State 9 due east to Earlsboro.

Seven miles east of Norman, State Highway 9 crosses Little River. It was near the west bank of this stream, possibly a mile north of our present highway, that Irving camped for the night of October 31st. After the buffalo hunt, and the "Courtiers' near-disaster, it was decided to reach Fort Gibson as quickly as possible on the return journey. More miles were traveled each day, the distances were greater and there was little seen along the way that aroused the interest of the tired and weary travelers. Little River was forded early on the morning of November 1st, and the route for the day lay almost directly east. State Highway 9 follows the trail closely and lies not more than a mile to the south of the hurried trace made by Irving and his friends.

Slightly more than five miles after your Little River crossing, Little Axe School will be seen on the left. Using this as a guide marker, exactly two miles east of the school is a detour one mile to the south for a visit to an Irving marker hidden in the brush of the Cross Timbers and now almost forgotten. Turn south exactly two miles east of Little Axe School, and drive one mile. Then turn right, and on the right, near the road and perhaps fifty yards west of the turn, is a shaft marking that Irving once passed near by. Almost desolate in its setting, the marker looks out upon a terrain that would appear very familiar to Irving could he return.

Camp for the evening of November 1, 1832, was somewhere quite near Tecumseh. It was there, lying awake under the stars, that Irving recalled "to mind the exquisite text of Job, "Quint thou bid the secret influences of the Pleiades, or loose the bonds of Orion?" State Highway 9 enters the then fearsome Cross Timbers between present Norman and Tecumseh. There the travelers noted with displeasure the point where they left the "Grand Prairie" and again traveled among the brambles and brush of the blackjacks.

At Earlsboro turn north, to the left, on State Highway 9A, and drive five miles to the intersection with U. S. Highway 270. There turn right to the east, and continue due east for about seven miles to a junction with State Highway 90. Within a mile after entering U. S. 270 leave the pavement when it makes the turn to the right. Care should be made that the driver does not follow U. S. 270 towards Seminole, rather than keep in due east direction, as one must here leave the pavement for the gravel road. Shortly beyond this point the jog to the left marks the old boundary between Oklahoma Territory and Indian Territory. Considering the Seminoles as a Nation, this line was in fact an "international" boundary.

At State 90, turn left to the north, and continue on the pavement through the village of Little, and continue across the North Canadian. This is the river that Irving by inadvertence refers to in his notes for November 2nd as the "North Fork of the Arkansas." His camp for that evening was on the south side of the river, in the vicinity of Little, and the traveler today has crossed his trace at least twice between Earlsboro and Little. The Rangers had difficulty in finding a good camping place, and it was late before a suitable site was selected.

After the North Canadian is crossed, proceed north for a mile and a half, stopping at the Keokuk Falls historical marker, seen on the right of the highway. One of Oklahoma's true ghost towns, this once thriving place was located in the extreme southeast corner of Oklahoma Territory, with the

Creek Nation less than a mile to the east, and the Seminole Nation across the river to the south. Little remains to show for the many saloons and taverns that once made the place famous. A few yards south of the marker enter the section line road to the east and drive two miles. Those wishing to make the visit to Keokuk Falls should turn right to the south at the two mile point, and in less than a mile the foundation stones, relics and some fine old trees will mark the townsite.

The Irving Trail however, turns left to the north, at the two mile point, as you must return there to resume the journey. A mile north from the point brings you to Giles Cemetery, and there turn right. A few hundred yards to the east, the road jogs to the left, and this marks the line between the "Twin Territories" Oklahoma and Indian Territories, this time with the Creek Nation on the east side of the boundary. From the boundary, drive east on the gravel for one and one-half miles; then one mile north; then one mile east; and again one mile north; then turning right to the east, just before you reach an old iron bridge. The creek is now crossed on a fine new county bridge. From the last turn, drive east two miles; then drive almost two miles north to the junction with U. S. Highway 62.

Irving and his party crossed the North Canadian on the morning of November 3rd somewhere near Keokuk Falls, and continued the march to the northeast, very close to your zig-zag route north and east from the North Canadian crossing. The Rangers made camp soon after noon that day, so they could use the afternoon for hunting, in hope of replenishing their depleted provisions. Their camp for that day was somewhere near where you came upon and entered U. S. 62, between Huley and Paden.

Upon reaching U. S. 62 turn right and continue east on this highway to its junction with State Highway 27, just west of Castle, exactly 9.5 miles east of the point where you first entered U. S. 62. There take State Highway 27 to the north for exactly three miles, and turn right to the east, at the section line road crossing the pavement at a fine school building. On the morning of November 4th, the Irving party traveled north and east, and their path came within a very short distance of the point where you turn east away from State Highway 27. After the turn, proceed two miles; then one mile north; and then five miles east, through Morse, to State Highway 50.

After this last turn to the right, and after a drive of one mile east, you will come upon one of the finest vistas of your entire trip. Ahead is seen the "fine champaign country" mentioned by Irving as "a noble prospect, over extensive prairies, finely diversified by groves and tracts of woodland, and bounded by long lines of distant hills." A mile east from this view is the crossing of Buckeye Creek, and the driver should be careful to take the jog to the right, so as to keep on the section line road headed east. Turn left onto State Highway 50 at the Morse Baptist Church corner. This route from Huley to Morse keeps you very close to the line of March for November 4th, a march described by Irving as "a forced march of twenty-five miles, that had proved a hard trial to the horses."

After reaching State Highway 50, turn left, and continue on this highway to Okmulgee. Four miles north of Morse, the highway turns east at Haydenville; and about three miles east of this turn is the crossing on Nuyuka Creek. It was probably on this creek, not more than a mile south of the highway that the Ranger party made camp for the night of November 4th. For several hours after the camp site was selected, the stragglers continued to come in, with each looking more exhausted than ever before. A heavy rain was experienced during the night, and the "morning dawned cloudy and dismal." Eight miles on State 50 after the turn at Haydenville, is the historical marker for old Nuyuka Mission. The Mission was founded in 1822 through the efforts of Alice Robertson, later to be remembered as Oklahoma's first woman representative in Congress, and her sister Augusta.

One of the mission buildings remains, and a detour one mile north and a half mile west from the site of the marker is worth the extra time.

Five miles east of the Nayaka Mission corner, State Highway 66 bends and curves to make room for Lake Okmulgee, and a mile east of the Lake to the crossing on the Deep Fork. On the west side of Deep Fork, perhaps very near to the highway, the Rangers camped about four in the afternoon of November 5th, and there spent the night. The heavy rains that the group had experienced while weathering the storm on Crutcho Creek were now having their effect in the Deep Fork, and they found the stream very high and hard to cross. Stragglers continued to come up until late that evening; and the night "was cold and unruly."

By remaining in this camp until noon of the next day, the Ranger had time to hunt and persuaded the others to devise a means of crossing the river. A number of trees were felled, with hope that they would fall across the stream and make a bridge, but with little success. At last the travelers waded across on half submerged logs, with a good soaking on the reward for their efforts. Some of the horses were too weak to attempt the swollen stream, so a party of twelve soldiers was ordered to remain at the camp for their care. It was afternoon before the march was resumed on November 6th.

Continuing on U. S. 62 through Okmulgee, with a stop if desired for a tour of the Indian Museum and the Old Creek Capitol Building. Five miles east of Okmulgee, the paved highway turns due south to Morris. At this turn, continue east a few yards, and then turn left to the north at the first section line road. It is a good gravel road, and with an eye on the speedometer, drive exactly four miles, and then turn right to the east. After the turn, proceed east five miles through Pumpkin Center; then north for one mile, and then again turn east to the right, and continue east five miles; then north to the left two miles; and then right again to the east, for two miles until U. S. Highway 62 is reached.

The path of the hungry wayfarers in their haste to reach security and civilization has thus been followed closely. The stream at Pumpkin Center is Cane Creek, and perhaps is the one described by Irving as "one of the tributary streams of the Arkansas" where the party camped for the night of November 6th "amidst the ruins of a stately grove that had been riven by a hurricane." Here was the hunger camp, and with their supplies, even salt, exhausted, the meal that evening was a frugal and dismal one. Breakfast the next morning consisted of turkey bones and a cup of black coffee.

On the present route from Pumpkin Center to rejoin the U. S. 62, Anderson School is passed and four miles later, Cole School; the pupils of each should have a special interest in reading *A Tour on the Prairies* because its author passed within a mile of their schools on the morning of November 7, 1832.

After entering U. S. 62, travel north two miles, and follow the highway as it turns east at Jamesville toward Muskogee. Headed toward Muskogee, the village of Teft is passed. It was in this vicinity that Irving found hospitality in the frontier home of a settler named Bradley, whose wife produced, to the great delight of all, plenty of boiled beef and turnips. Only a hungry person could ever describe as Irving did the effect produced by the sight of hot food. After the hearty meal, Irving decided to push on to the Orange Agency at the Falls of the Verdigris, while most of the Rangers determined to remain at the Bradley place for the night of November 7th.

For today's trail, about four miles east of Teft, on U. S. 62, the Muskogee Cemetery is passed, and just east of the main gate, take the first section line road to the left (turning north). Being faithful to Irving and his route, one should not take unfair advantage and stay with the paved roads and thereby leave his trace afeld. After a drive north two miles, turn right, to



Oklahoma Betsy Rosses and the official flag showing Oklahoma's 40th star, flown over Independence Hall at Philadelphia, July 4, 1906. Old print of photo taken at Guthrie, published in *Saint Louis Globe Democrat*, June 28, 1908.



Mr. and Mrs. F. O. Korman, at their Golden Wedding Anniversary

the east, and three and a half miles later is U. S. 69. Somewhere on the left, driving east, is the spot on the Arkansas River where Irving crossed the stream, with the help of friendly Creek Indians. About a mile upstream from the present bridge was located a well known Indian ford, and it may have been at this point that Irving and his comrades made their way over to the north bank.

Driving east, before coming to the junction with U. S. 69 on the left is the fine, wonderfully landscaped home of Mr. Jack Benno. A short distance to the rear, and on the grounds of his premises is the site where the Western Creek Agency was located from 1853 to 1875. Mr. Benno is most hospitable, and upon request, one will always be rewarded with permission to visit the exact spot where the Agency and its buildings were situated.

After crossing the Arkansas River on State Highway 69, drive north to the intersection with State Highway 511, and use Road B3c. Irving and his party is again on the outward route. Five miles to the east is the Falls of the Verdigris, near the town of Okay. It is a thrill to be back in the point where the *Tour on the Prairies* had started. The route back to Okay, and from there to Fort Gibson, is already well known.

A trip that required a month for Irving, Ellsworth, Captain Benn with his Rangers and the others may now be accomplished in a day. The landmarks, the streams, the vistas, and even Irving's Castle, are all the same, they are readily identified, and with a careful eye on the mileage indicator of the speedometer, the trail may be followed without mishap or difficulty. No one should be concerned too much if he cannot locate the exact site for each day's camp, for chances are that if Irving or any of the others were in the car, they would be unable to guide the driver to each halt and the location of every stop. Those details are not too vital, but the really important thing is that upon the return to Fort Gibson, today's traveler has made the same circuit, and has seen the same countryside with its rolling prairies and wooded hills, the east iron blackjacks and the "champaign country," as that seen and enjoyed by Irving and his comrades in the days before highways, motor cars and barbed wire.

The fact that Oklahoma's section lines run in squares requires the driver to make right angle turns and to zig-zag rather than to go straight across the country; but, it is safe to say, not counting the exact sites such as Bear's Glen and Irving's Castle, that the trail laid out here for today's traveler will cross and recross Irving's path, wherever its exact line may be, at least fifty times. That surely is sufficient; and will be considered good enough to know that you too have had your own *Tour on the Prairies*.