

**Address of**  
**HON. CHARLES N. HASKELL**

*The following is the address of Hon. Charles N. Haskell delivered in the Auditorium of the Oklahoma Historical Society building, upon the occasion of Oklahoma's Silver Anniversary, November 16, 1932. This address is of special historical interest and value inasmuch as Charles N. Haskell was the first governor of the state and a man who had much to do with uniting the two territories into one great sovereign state, Oklahoma.*

Here we are meeting to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of Statehood. Twenty-five years this morning about 9:00 o'clock, we received a telegram from President Roosevelt announcing that Statehood Proclamation had been issued. The world proclaimed Oklahoma as the baby State of the Union. Correctly stating Oklahoma was the baby State (Number 46), but the baby in its day of admission only. In all other respects, population it was the 23rd, agriculture the 5th, cotton raising State the 8th, wheat and corn; the 8th in railroad mileage within its borders, the 3rd in oil production and about the 9th in coal mining. Our 1,411,000 population of active citizens, the creator had given us a good average soil, and better than average climate and it remained for our people to continue their developing efforts. The greatest State in population in all the previous history of our country at the time of its admission had been the State of Washington, with less than one-fourth the population of the so called baby State of Oklahoma. And the protection of Oklahoma began ten minutes after President Roosevelt had signed our Proclamation. Officers elect of the new State had been waiting on this specified Proclamation day, by advice weeks before from President Roosevelt fixing the date and the hour that his Proclamation would be issued and hence looking ahead for the welfare of the new State, with our eyes and ears open, we knew that

positive and prompt action would be necessary for the future welfare of Oklahoma.

Oklahoma was then one of the greatest of gas producing states, then particularly in Indian Territory region. It came to our knowledge a few days before that some of the larger manufacturing towns in nearby states had their plans made to pipe Oklahoma gas by long distance pipe lines to certain of these manufacturing centers and supply and maintain their manufacturing at such towns. In the new State of Oklahoma we had very little manufacturing and very few towns above 2,500 population. Without waiting litigation questions after action had been taken, those entrusted by the people of Oklahoma with the protection of our State, decided that a fair policy to the gas producing states should be, don't take the gas to distant factories, bring the factories to the State that produces gas, hence they were watchful, they knew that preparation had been made to lay a gas pipe line across the State line, in the three hours estimated to intervene between the ending of Federal control and coming of State Government and by quick action get some legal recognition on "vested rights." These promoters of taking the gas long distances to the factories, instead of bringing the factories to the gas, called for decisive action, do it now without delay; they had dug the ditch, distributed the pipe and their men ready to lay the pipe, had spent the night before in their tents at the State line. This was new to Oklahoma, but proper officials prepared for a sheriff with suitable deputies to be sent to the camping place with notice that they would have a quick telegram from the State officials, and it was quick, in less than ten minutes after President Roosevelt in Washington had signed the proclamation the necessary state officials had been sworn into office, issued the order, notified the sheriff, who walked to the trench and proclaimed that any man who climbed down into the trench to lay a joint of gas pipe would be taken to jail. It was entirely too quick for those who would have tried to get advantage of the new state to do anything. They never laid a joint of pipe, and the question of whether we were right or whether we were wrong in the future declaration of the Courts was too slow to get results. We took the policy of "bring the factories to the gas instead of pipe the gas long distances to the factories," and what is the result? A large number of

very beautiful, attractive and industrial towns like Bartlesville, Shawnee, Enid, McAlester, Ardmore, Chickasha and the greatest of all Oklahoma City and Tulsa are to-day a very good illustration of using your raw material in your home state. In comparison, for example Kansas is a similar state to Oklahoma, greater in area by 10,000 square miles, greater in population by one-fourth of a million people on the morning that Oklahoma was a baby state, has grown some while Oklahoma has grown enormously. In our last census Kansas had increased 200,000 whereas Oklahoma had increased almost 900,000 people and this increase is largely due to diversifying the interests of the state, agriculture, mining and manufacturing interests have all been busy. I guess that in strict legal conclusions, long afterwards courts may have reached the conclusion that there was a little extreme in Oklahoma's first attitude in the piping of gas but that has never bothered Oklahoma, that decision came too late, the factories had been brought to the gas. And from Oklahoma's standpoint our own people, whether they were land owners or manufacturers found the results were beneficial and that was all Oklahoma was interested in.

But Oklahoma was particularly fortunate in the character of its people, no matter what other state may have been the place of our birth, when we moved into Oklahoma Territory or Indian Territory we became and are yet, loyal Oklahomans, even politics must take second place with the people of our country, we are first, loyal Oklahomans and afterwards our religion and our politics are personal questions. I have often thought and speak from personal experience that when the welfare of Oklahoma is at stake we have a maximum of harmonious effort and loyalty and only a minimum of political strife. So much evidence is there of this sentiment among the people of Oklahoma that we revive and approve the old saying "do unto others as you would they should do unto you" and following this policy we have many occasions to realize that this policy promotes unity and "in unity there is strength," harmony of action is the best assurance of good results. There was no delay, no embarrassment or obstruction in the progress of Oklahoma as we remember it. Office holding was not considered a hard job nor slow in its good results. I do not recall a single incident of consequence wherein anybody, regardless

of politics, hesitated to respond when called to aid in the promotion of public welfare. If some expected to be backward if not obstructive it was a complete remedy to set the example "do unto others as you would they should do unto you" and all hesitancy would fade away. Ordinarily difficult Governmental questions made official life an easy job, a delightful undertaking and a thrill of joy. And let us mention some of those more prominent and influential in this, that might have been troublesome with ordinary people. Take first, our great President, who had complete power to issue or refuse to issue our Statehood Proclamation. We know him to-day as that great American, Theodore Roosevelt. We did not know him personally at that time, in fact never had seen him. We have always imagined that he assumed Oklahoma people were ordinary folks with the same sentiments usually found in other states.

A personal controversy came on, the President submitted the question to the District Attorney of the Eastern Oklahoma District, Mr. Gregg who was an Oklahoman, he investigated and made a report to Washington that there was no grounds for complaint. But the President being a somewhat determined character substituted an Assistant Attorney General for Mr. Gregg. Unfortunately this Assistant Attorney General was just an ordinary man and he wasted two years at an expense of \$80,000.00 to the Government trying to make a case where District Attorney Gregg had said there was no case. He fell down, their case was defeated in 1910, but the thing that I remember now which created a great admiration in my mind for Theodore Roosevelt was, that seven years after their case had been defeated, to-wit on the 30th day of March, 1917, President Roosevelt did a manly thing that no other President of the United States ever did as a matter of fairness to any man. Now mind you Roosevelt was a fighter, determined and aggressive so aggressive that in the very beginning in the Campaign of 1908 he had written a letter to the then candidate, afterwards President Taft, urging Mr. Taft to center his fire on myself as being the weak spot in Bryan's campaign, where a personal attack would aid Mr. Taft. He even said in that letter, "I would charge Haskell with heretofore having been a representative of the Standard Oil Company, and he will doubtless be able to have the Standard Oil Company aid

Mr. Bryan with campaign funds," this insinuation was simply the desperation of a fighter in a pretty fast fight. But the credit to Roosevelt is that after almost seven years of time had elapsed, he became convinced that he had been in the wrong in that fight, he made a personal apology to his opponent for having caused the taking of time and expenses to win the victory in 1910. But the manhood of Roosevelt was shown by his declaration "I fought Haskell and I was wrong, and I am not going to delay an apology for the wrong we did him, it won't be long until I will be gone and it will too late to do the manly thing." Having made his personal apologies he said, "it will not be a lasting apology unless I can get it into the official public records of the Department at Washington, and that I am determined to do." Roosevelt being out of office could not get into the public records himself, but he called on his bosom friend and appointee, M. L. Mott to come to New York to prepare a written apology and get it into the records through his act as an Attorney appointed by Mr. Roosevelt and from that direction and effort the public apology went into the record March 1917, and is there as public record to-day. The apology reads as follows:

After the history of the case.

"As Mr. Haskell was Governor of the State of Oklahoma at the time of this prosecution his prominence naturally gave the prosecution great publicity and notoriety. In addition to that it was in the nature of things a great burden to him financially and no doubt a source of much mental anguish and mortification to himself as well as to all members of his family and friends. I participated and co-operated with the Government in the procuring of these indictments and prosecutions and for this reason have felt more deeply the obligation resting upon me to make a statement concerning the matter and to repair the wrong so far as lies in my power that I feel satisfied was done him in the prosecutions.

"Holding these convictions as to this entire transaction I have felt it my duty as man to man to make this statement, which I am pleased to have an opportunity of doing, and I am sending Mr. Haskell a copy of this letter which he is at liberty to use as his pleasure may suggest. —M. L. MOTT."

Filed in the office of the Secretary of the Interior through the Honorable Commission of Indian Affairs. March 30th, 1917.

And is conclusive evidence of the genuine manhood and high character of both Roosevelt and Mott. Evidencing the fact that they would be good citizens even in the high standard of Oklahoma citizenship. In short I am told that in the whole history of the United States no official nor ex-official in the office held by President Roosevelt has ever apologized to a single citizen of the United States for any of their acts and therefore this Oklahoman looks with pride on this conclusive evidence of the high character of these gentlemen so complete were they that following Mr. Roosevelt's apology, William R. Hearst who was then co-operating with Mr. Roosevelt joined in the apology for such tales as the Standard Oil representation so that Mr. Hearst who demonstrated he could make a manly apology and it was coming forthwith, so that with all the early day fighting it goes back to the old rule of "do unto others as you would they should do unto you." And the last more than two years of President Roosevelt's life we were intimate friends with frequent and cordial meetings.

Now I recall many good citizens and include among those here as beautiful examples in our own State of Oklahoma, such men as Dennis Flynn, whose great free homes and many other benefits to Oklahoma, make them dear to our memory, likewise Congressman McGuire, Senator Brownlee, Judge J. R. Thomas, Harper Cunningham and a multitude of other Republicans. We never talked politics with each other but time and again we have talked public welfare for Oklahoma, always in a spirit of mutual effort no hesitation. And with my memory it is a pleasure to remember these people and a multitude of the Oklahomans of that type and policy to whose mutual effort is due the unprecedented progress of our state, these people were a blessing to Oklahoma.

And through all these twenty-five years Oklahoma has well earned the reputation of being a progressive, prosperous and ever improving state. With a foundation of Statehood our State Constitution, first doubted by many older states has since had more, probably by adoption of its language or policies into the basic laws of other states than that of any of the older states. The Governmental policies of Oklahoma

have been investigated and approved by Congress of the United States on more questions than any other state. And the writing of that Constitution was the work of a model commission. Its rules welcomed every person who desired to lobby his ideas and secure the approval, if possible, of that Convention, but while it made all free to speak, it emphatically required them to speak in public hearings and not otherwise, and well do we remember the definite enforcement of that lobbying regulation. It said, in substance, "You may be heard in an open, public and candid manner, but secret lobbying, no, never" and the firm way in which Mr. Ledbetter, chairman of the Judiciary Committee, construed and enforced these regulations guaranteed its complete success. In our Internal affairs no state in the Union has improved the high character and the useful policies of its newspapers, from the greatest daily to the smallest weekly journal, than has been accomplished in Oklahoma, and the people of the state have given more attention to entrusting its Governmental affairs to men of ability, integrity and efficiency than has Oklahoma. So we have a minimum of mistakes and a maximum of efficiency in our Government.

But Oklahoma still has things to do that will greatly improve our possibility for a more prosperous state. There is a principle in state activity that must not be forgotten. It is, the State is but a representative of its people and their interests and industry. One of the leading industries of our state is oil production, and that happens to be the industry next to agriculture in general volume and value to the state. As agriculture is suffering from the misrule of the money changers, so is oil embarrassed by the doings of the oil monopoly. Crude oil is only the beginning of the monopolistic effort which carries on to transportation, manufacturing and distribution after its production, and the monopoly care not for profits on production that would be in competition with the independent producer. Hence the monopolist strives for low price on crude oil and high price on by-products. And to that end, monopoly develops competition with foreign crude oil production. It resolves itself into the state's duty and the duty of the United States to promote protection to the landowner for his royalty interest, to American labor, vast in numbers and needy in employment, and to furnish this protection the

available route is an ample tariff to protect the home production. No one else is interested except the producer and his cooperating interests against the monopoly. The consumer of the by-products is not a beneficiary of low price crude oil, and by reason of the general benefits all our country, except the monopoly, is vitally interested in home protection. It will be just as important to encourage oil production in our home country as it was in bringing factories to the Oklahoma gas.

Remember the old saying, vinegar never catches flies and besides the policy of "do unto others as you would they should do unto you" has a wonderfully beneficial effect upon all people. We cannot be proud if we have lost our temper and lost our fairness to our neighbor and in our selfishness have done our neighbor an injustice. But just remember this there probably was never an instance in the history of the human family where anybody ever remembered with pleasure or personal satisfaction his doing of this to the contrary. Hence what has proved a success on all occasions is a good thing to follow, "do unto others as you would they should do unto you."

And is it a surprise then that my love for Oklahoma when we delve into its history is greater when I realize that President Theodore Roosevelt gave birth to our State.

I claim no unusual adherence to the Golden Rule, its observance is almost an Oklahoma principle. For myself, my inclination to remember the Golden Rule was inherited from my Mother and my foster Mother. First, Mrs. Jane Haskell and later my foster Mother, Mrs. Lydia J. McConnell (afterwards Mrs. Thomas J. Miller). Lydia J. McConnell, a farm girl school teacher and Sunday School teacher, there is where I met Lydia McConnell, as one of the small boys in her Sunday School class. My mother was very fond of Lydia, although Lydia was much younger; married at about twenty-one years of age, her baby boy died; a few weeks later Lydia came to my mother and asked that I go home with her to relieve her lonesome spirit. I had been for a season or two the prize winner in her class. In those days it was a custom for the widowed mother to bind out her children; mother had five children when she became a widow, from nine days old to twelve years of age, but while she was mild, strictly a mother in all those words imply, when she became a widow she was very positive in her conclusion and when the neighbors as-



sumed she would follow the custom and bind out her children as the Court would approve Jane Haskell said "no sir, I will keep my own family, I will support them, none of them shall ever be bound out children," and when Lydia McConnell asked a few years later that, the then ten year old Charlie should be given to her, I don't believe a similar request from anybody but Lydia McConnell would have attracted her attention, but she was fond of Lydia and said, "my home is Charlie's home and it must be, he can go home with you with the understanding that whenever he gets homesick he may return." Thus the home with the foster mother began and continued more than ten years until Charlie was an adult and ready to leave the farm and go to the county seat to practice law. Both these mothers were much the same type, they were religious, they were strictly temperate and they were genuine mothers. The real mother continued in active life thirty years longer and the foster mother still lives in her Ohio country home. They were unwavering advocates of such good policies as the Golden Rule, it was the example they set which gave me the admiration for everything that I have since admired in life, and the Golden Rule is one of them.

There is another old saying by thoughtful people that we are bound to appreciate and should always follow: It is human nature to feel grateful for appreciation of our earnest efforts in life and as the saying is distribute your flowers when you feel appreciation due and don't withhold the flowers simply to decorate the graves of those you feel are entitled to flowers. And in this I am taking a moment, with the permission of those assembled to express my personal gratitude in one particular.

Some way or with some good fortune I have had more good luck in my life time to this date than is often accorded deserving people, and that good luck is this: All along people have helped me, have rendered the most friendly and frequent co-operation and if I have had any successes they are due to the help of others. I would probably not have reached the dignity of a country school teacher except for the untiring help of Lydia Miller and the encouragement of my real mother, but what I have in mind now is a gift from a multitude of Oklahoma people. Can you realize any compliment that would appeal to you more sincerely than that fond mothers and fathers should honor me by adoption of my name as a

given name for their new born girl and boy. And there is nothing that fills me with more pride and appreciation than the fact that over thirteen hundred of the now young men and women of Oklahoma bear my name as part of their given name. That sort of compliment can have no origin except that the proud parents are real friends of mine and as the years have passed and there are now something like thirteen hundred both men and women of probably twenty or twenty-five years of age bear that name, and nothing in my whole life is dearer to me than these young people. Just a few days ago at the closing of the recent campaign it was suggested that I have a radio greeting of these young folks as a party inspiration, I believe the whole thirteen hundred will agree when I asked that such greeting should not be mingled in a political campaign, rather at a meeting like the present one, non-partisan celebrating the united efforts of the whole people of Oklahoma. I could think of no suggestion more fitting than, yes, with the vast number of namesakes I realize that both Democratic and Republican parents had honored me and that it would be indelicate for me to take political advantage of this opportunity to try and urge political sentiment. I personally feel that the greatest pride I can have in these young men and women of to-day is that they have grown to manhood and womanhood with sufficient intelligence and energy to formulate their own opinions as to their political choice without any dictation from me as to their personal conclusions, hence we do not even ask their politics, we just look upon them as the most gratifying compliment to me and a very lasting appreciation and desire to aid them in the affairs of life, and always remembering the great compliment their fathers and mothers bestowed upon me. I shall hope to meet them all from time to time as the opportunity may afford, but let us all remember the first duty is to be a useful and influential citizen of Oklahoma, that politics and religion is your own choice in life.