

ANGIE DEBO IN HER OWN WORDS

Editor's Note

The 445-page document titled, “Angie Debo In Her Own Words” is a compilation of excerpts from Dr. Angie Debo’s writings, oral interviews, correspondence, and diaries all faithfully transcribed for use by researchers of the history of the American West and for anyone interested in the long life and remarkable career of a ground-breaking scholar considered by many as “Oklahoma’s Greatest Historian.” Her writings include her family’s history, genealogy, and their stories of pioneering on the frontier. The transcribed oral interviews are from a series of interviews conducted by scholars Glenna Matthews and Gloria Valencia-Weber in preparation for the documentary titled *Indians, Outlaws, and Angie Debo*, aired on PBS. Most of the correspondence consists of dozens of letters exchanged between Dr. Debo and her close personal friend and professional mentor, Dr. Edward Everett Dale, over a nearly fifty-year period from 1925 to 1972. Diary entries beginning with her first diary kept as an eight-year old girl in 1898 and continuing through 1949 offer insights into Dr. Debo’s struggles to come of age and to forge a career as an academic historian and author. Brief supplemental diary entries from 1953 reveal her pride and excitement as Oklahoma State University opened the library named for its first dean, Edmon Low, and to whose archives she bequeathed her papers. Additionally, “Angie Debo In Her Own Words” contains a brief biographical sketch, a timeline of her life, a chronology of her major publications, and a select bibliography of books, articles, and reviews that examine her life and scholarly legacy. Enjoy!

Kurt Anderson, PhD

Angie Debo: A Biographical Sketch

Angie Debo was born in Beattie, Kansas, on January 30, 1890, moved to Marshall, Oklahoma Territory, with her family in 1899, taught rural schools at age 16, graduated from Marshall High School in 1913 and from the University of Oklahoma (OU) in 1918 with a degree in history. She taught history at Enid High School for four years, received a master's degree from the University of Chicago in 1924, taught at West Texas State Teachers College from 1924-1933, received a doctorate from OU in 1933, and served as curator of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, Canyon, Texas, 1933-1934. In subsequent years she was primarily a researcher and writer of books on the Five Civilized Tribes, Geronimo, and the history of Native Americans and of Oklahoma. She also was a teacher, pastor, and director of the Federal Writers Project in Oklahoma. From 1947-1955 she was curator of maps at Oklahoma A&M College. After retirement in 1955 she wrote, lectured, traveled, researched family histories, served on the boards of directors of the Oklahoma Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union and the Association on American Indian Affairs, made surveys for the Indian Rights Association, and lobbied for land rights for Indians in Alaska and for water rights for the Havasupai and Pima in Arizona. She authored nine books, edited three, co-authored another, wrote many chapters, articles, and forewords, and presented numerous papers on Native Americans and Oklahoma history. She died on February 21, 1988, at the age of 98, and was buried in North Cemetery, Marshall, Oklahoma.

The Angie Debo Papers

Inclusive Dates:

1890-1987

Extent:

92.25 Linear Feet (59 records cartons, 3 document boxes, 13 oversized boxes, 10 map folders [all in storage]; 85 reels of microfilm [available through the Archives]; 593 books and furniture [in the Angie Debo Room, OSU Library]

Scope and Content:

The collection consists of research material, including manuscripts of publications and presentations by Debo and related legal papers, correspondence, notes, etc. Unpublished manuscripts include some by Debo as well as Grant Foreman's *The American Indian and the Law* and World War II correspondence, and memorabilia, diaries, articles, newspaper clippings, awards, books, maps, and photographs dealing with Debo's writings and personal life. And finally, there is some furniture from her home in Marshall.

Angie Debo: A Chronology

Originally authored by Heather M. Lloyd. Updated and expanded by Kurt Anderson, Ph.D.

1890 January 30. Born near Beattie, Kansas, to Edward P. Debo and Lina E. Cooper Debo.

1899 November. Moved to Marshall, Oklahoma Territory.

1902 Received common school diploma.

1906 Attended one year of high school.

1907-1910 Obtained teacher's certificate and taught in rural schools near Marshall, Oklahoma.

1913 Graduated from Marshall High School.

1913-1915 Taught in rural schools near Marshall, Oklahoma.

1915-1918 Student at the University of Oklahoma, Norman.

1918 Received Bachelor's degree in history from the University of Oklahoma, Norman.

1918-1919 Principal, Village School, North Enid, Oklahoma.

1919-1923 Taught history at Senior High School, Enid, Oklahoma.

1920 Inducted into Phi Beta Kappa honor society.

1923 Received Community Service Certificate, Enid, Oklahoma.

1923-1924 Graduate student at the University of Chicago.

1924 Received the Master's degree in history from the University of Chicago.

1924-1933 Member of the history department, West Texas State Teachers College, Canyon, Texas. Taught in a high school associated with the college. Studied toward her doctorate at the University of Oklahoma and worked on her dissertation.

1924 Publication of Debo's master's thesis, co-authored with J. Fred Rippy, *The Historical Background of the American Policy of Isolation*.

1927 Inducted into Pi Gamma Mu, national social science honor society.

1931 Death of her brother, Edwin Debo.

1933 Received the Doctor of Philosophy degree in history from the University of Oklahoma. Dissertation entitled *History of the Choctaw Nation: From the Close of the Civil War to the End of the Tribal Period*.

1933-1934 Curator of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, West Texas State Teachers College, Canyon, Texas.

1934 Publication of Debo's doctoral dissertation as *The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic*. Began a career as a freelance writer. Moved back to Marshall, Oklahoma.

1934-1936 Conducted research and completed manuscript for *And Still the Waters Run: The Betrayal of the Five Civilized Tribes*, funded in part by a grant from the Social Science Research Council.

1935 *The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic* was awarded the John H. Dunning Prize of the American Historical Association. Taught summer school at Stephen F. Austin State Teachers College, Nagadoches, Texas.

1937-1939 Researched and wrote *The Road to Disappearance: A History of the Creek Indians*, funded in part by a grant from the Social Science Research Council.

1937 Participated in editing and conducting interviews for the WPA Indian-Pioneer Project which resulted in the Indian Pioneer Papers.

1940-1941 Supervised the Federal Writers Project in Oklahoma.

1940 Publication of *And Still the Waters Run: The Betrayal of the Five Civilized Tribes* after some revisions made to the manuscript.

1941 Publication of *The Road to Disappearance: A History of the Creek Indians*. Publication of *Oklahoma: A Guide to the Sooner State*, a product of the Federal Writers Project in Oklahoma.

1942 Named state's "Outstanding Woman" by Theta Sigma Phi, honorary professional journalism fraternity for women, Oklahoma City chapter. Alfred A. Knopf History Fellow.

1943 Publication of *Tulsa: From Creek Town to Oil Capital*.

1944 Publication of *Prairie City: The Story of an American Community*, Debo's only work of fiction, based on the history of Marshall and nearby towns. Death of her father, Edward P. Debo. Licensed as a local preacher for the United Methodist Church in Marshall.

1946 Taught summer school at Oklahoma A&M College.

1946-1947 Rockefeller Fellow, University of Oklahoma.

1947-1955 Served on the faculty of the Oklahoma A&M College Library as curator of maps.

1949 Publication of *Oklahoma: Foot-loose and Fancy-free*, funded in part by the Rockefeller Fellowship. Conducted survey of social and economic conditions in full blood settlements of the Five Civilized Tribes for the Indian Rights Association.

1950 Inducted into the Oklahoma Memorial Association's Oklahoma Hall of Fame.

1951 Publication of *The Five Civilized Tribes of Oklahoma: Report on Social and Economic Conditions*.

1952-1954 Wrote a column entitled "This Week in Oklahoma History" for the *Oklahoma City Times*.

1952 Inducted into Gamma Theta Upsilon, national professional geographic fraternity. Initiated into Delta Kappa Gamma, national honor society for women teachers.

1952-1961 Book reviewer for the *New York Times*.

1953 Publication of Oliver Nelson's *The Cowman's Southwest: Being the Reminiscences of Oliver Nelson, Freighter, Camp Cook, Cowboy, Frontiersman in Kansas, Indian Territory, Texas, and Oklahoma, 1878-1893*, edited by Debo. Member of Phi Kappa Phi honor society.

1954 Death of her mother, Lina Debo.

1956-1966 Member, Board of Directors, Association on American Indian Affairs.

1956 Conducted a survey of the Relocation Policy as it affected Oklahoma Indians for the Association on American Indian Affairs.

1957-1958 Taught Oklahoma history at Oklahoma State University.

1958-1959 Edited *Oklahoma Indian Newsletter*

1958 Angie Debo Recognition Day, Marshall, Oklahoma. Traveled to Europe and the U.S.S.R. with European Seminar of the Council for Christian Social Action.

1960 Attended a summer seminar in Mexico.

1961 Awarded honorary life membership in the Oklahoma Historical Society.

1962 Publication of Horatio B. Cushman's *History of the Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Natchez Indians*, edited by Debo. Awarded a certificate of contribution to Oklahoma City by the Soroptimist Club of Oklahoma City. Traveled to Canada.

1963 Traveled to England.

1965 Taught at the Institute of American Indian Arts, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

1966 Traveled to Africa.

1969-1975 Lobbied for land rights of Alaska Natives.

1969 Prairie City Days (annual celebration), Marshall, Oklahoma. Traveled to Alaska.

1970 Publication of *A History of the Indians of the United States*. Received an “Okie” certificate from the state of Oklahoma. Received a tribute from the Oklahoma State Federation of Women’s Clubs.

1971 Received the award for best non-fiction from the Oklahoma Writers Federation.

1972 Honored by Navajo Community College, Tsaile, Arizona.

1973 Invited to participate in L.S. Ayers Tribute to the American Indian, Indianapolis, Indiana. Received Distinguished Service Award from the Oklahoma Heritage Association.

1974 Awarded life membership, Oklahoma Writers Federation.

1975 Appointed member of the Oklahoma Bicentennial Commission.

1976 Publication of *Geronimo: The Man, His Time, His Place*. Angie Debo Day declared in Canyon, Texas. Received the Henry G. Bennett Distinguished Service Award, Oklahoma State University. Received Pride of the Plainsman Award from Enid High School. Received Bicentennial Medal from the Oklahoma Library Association.

1977 Selected by the Border Regional Library Association of El Paso, Texas, to receive its Southwest Book Award for Biography for *Geronimo: The Man, His Time, His Place*.

1978 Received Honorary Doctorate of Letters from Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Received the Newsmaker Award from the Tulsa Chapter of Women in Communications. Received the Wrangler Award from the Western Heritage Association of the National Cowboy Hall of Fame for *Geronimo: The Man, His Time, His Place*. Received 1978 Book Award from the Southwestern Library Association for *Geronimo: The Man, His Time, His Place*.

1979 Received Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History. Awarded an honorary degree from Phillips University, Enid, Oklahoma.

1980 Reception held in Debo’s honor, Oklahoma State University.

1981-1985 Interviewed for oral history project by Gloria Valencia-Weber and Glenna Mathews, Oklahoma State University faculty.

1981 Received Award of Merit from the Western History Association.

1982-1986 Filmed and interviewed by Institute for Research in History to prepare documentary for PBS American Experience Series.

1982 History Department, Oklahoma State University, established the “Angie Debo Award for Oklahoma History.” Received honorary life membership in the Payne County Historical Society.

1983 Inducted into the National Cowgirl Hall of Fame, Hereford, Texas. Received Distinguished Service Citation of the University of Oklahoma Alumni Association.

1984 Inducted into the Oklahoma Women’s Hall of Fame by the Oklahoma Governor’s Advisory Commission on the Status of Women.

1985 Designated as an Ambassador of Goodwill by the Cherokee Nation. Received Certificate of Recognition from the Muskogee (Creek) Nation. Honored by the State of Oklahoma by hanging her portrait in the Rotunda of the State Capital.

1986 Received the Achievement Award from the American Indian Historians Association.

1987 Granted Award for Scholarly Distinction from the American Historical Association.

1988 Governor Henry L. Bellmon presented the Award for Scholarly Distinction at a special ceremony in Marshall on January 24.

1988 Angie Debo died on February 21, and was buried at North Cemetery, Marshall.

Angie Debo: Chronology of Publications

The Historical Background of the American Policy of Isolation,
by J. Fred Rippy and Angie Debo
(Northampton, MA: Smith College Studies in History, 1924)

The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic,
by Angie Debo
(Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1934, 2nd edition, 1961)

And Still the Waters Run: The Betrayal of the Five Civilized Tribes,
by Angie Debo
(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1940;
new edition, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984)

The Road to Disappearance: A History of the Creek Indians,
by Angie Debo
(Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1941; new edition, 1979)

Oklahoma: A Guide to the Sooner State
ed. Angie Debo and John M. Oskison
(Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1941)

Tulsa: From Creek Town to Oil Capital
by Angie Debo
(Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1943)

Prairie City: The Story of an American Community
by Angie Debo
(New York: Knopf, 1944; new edition, Tulsa: Council Oaks Books, 1986;
new edition, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998)

Oklahoma: Foot-Loose and Fancy-Free
by Angie Debo
(Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1949; new edition, 1987)

The Five Civilized Tribes of Oklahoma: A Report on Social and Economic Conditions
by Angie Debo
(Philadelphia: Indian Rights Association, 1951)

The Cowman's Southwest:
Being the Reminiscences of Oliver Nelson, Freighter, Camp Cook, Cowboy,
Frontiersman in Kansas, Indian Territory, Texas, and Oklahoma, 1878-1893
by Oliver Nelson, ed. Angie Debo
The Western Frontiersman Series 4
(Glendale, CA: A.H. Clark Co., 1953, new edition, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986)

History of the Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Natchez Indians
by Horatio B. Cushman, ed. Angie Debo
(Stillwater, OK: Redlands Press, 1962; new edition, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999)

A History of the Indians of the United States
by Angie Debo
(Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1970)

Geronimo: The Man, His Time, His Place
by Angie Debo
Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976/1982)

With Five Reservations
by Dell O'Hara, ed. Angie Debo and Harold H. Leake
(Aurora, MO: Creekside Publications, 1986)

Select Bibliography of Publications on Angie Debo

- Baird, David W. "Reflections of a Historian of Native American History." *Western Historical Quarterly* 30, no. 4 (Winter 1999): 441-444.
- Baird, David W. and Danny Goble. *The Story of Oklahoma*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994.
- Crum, Steven. "Bizzell and Brandt: Pioneers in Indian Studies." *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 66, no. 2 (Summer 1988): 178-191.
- Debo, Angie. "To Establish Justice." *Western Historical Quarterly* 7, no. 4 (October 1976): 405-412.
- Edmunds, R. David. "The Indian in the Mainstream: Indian Historiography for Teachers of American History Surveys." *The History Teacher*. 8 no. 2 (February 1975): 242-264.
- _____. "Native Americans, New Voices: American Indian History, 1895-1995." *The American Historical Review* 100, no. 3 (June 1995): 717-740.
- _____. "New Visions, Old Stories: The Emergence of a New Indian History." *OAH Magazine of History* 9, no. 4 Native Americans (Summer 1995): 3-9.
- _____. "Coming of Age: Some Thoughts upon American Indian History." *Indiana Magazine of History* 85, no. 4 (December 1989): 312-321.
- Fixico, Donald L. *Rethinking American Indian History*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997.
- Fogelson, Raymond D. *The Cherokees: A Critical Bibliography*. The Newberry Library Center for the History of the American Indian Bibliographical Series. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978.
- Gibson, Arrell M., ed. *Frontier Historian: The Life and Work of Edward Everett Dale*. With introductory essays by Arrell M. Gibson, Angie Debo, and John S. Ezell. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1975.
- Green, Michael D. *The Creeks: A Critical Bibliography*. The Newberry Library Center for the History of the American Indian Bibliographical Series. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979.
- Hoyt, Anne Kelley. *Bibliography of the Chickasaws*. Native American Bibliography Series, no. 11. Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1987.
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- Lansing, Michael J. Review of *Their Own Frontier: Women Intellectuals Re-Visioning the American West*, ed. Shirley A. Leckie and Nancy J. Parezo. *The Journal of American History* 96 no. 1 (June 2009): 295-296.
- Laubach, Maria, and Joan K. Smith. "Angie Debo: An Unlikely Educator and Scholar of Indian History and Culture." *American Educational History Journal* 43, no. 2 (2016): 167-179.
- Leckie, Shirley A. *Angie Debo: Pioneering Historian*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000.
- Leckie, Shirley A. and Nancy J. Parezo, ed. With an introduction by Shirley A. Leckie and Nancy J. Parezo. *Their Own Frontier: Women Intellectuals Re-Visioning the American West*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008.
- Limerick, Patricia Nelson. "Banning Writ Large." in *The Stories That Shape Us: Contemporary Women Write About the West: An Anthology*. ed. Teresa Jordan and James P. Hepworth, 216-232. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- _____. "Land, Justice, and Angie Debo: Telling the Truth To – and About – Your Neighbors." *Great Plains Quarterly* 21, no. 4 (Fall 2001): 261-273.
- Limerick, Patricia Nelson, Clyde A. Milner II, and Charles E. Rankin, ed. *Trails: Toward a New Western History*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991.
- Loughlin, Patricia. *Hidden Treasures of the American West: Muriel H. Wright, Angie Debo, and Alice Marriott*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005.
- Lowitt, Richard. "Regionalism at the University of Oklahoma." *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 73, no. 2 (Summer 1995): 150-171.
- McIntosh, Kenneth W. "Geronimo's Friend: Angie Debo and the New History." *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 56, no. 2 (Summer 1988): 164-177.
- McMurtry, Larry. "How the West Was Won or Lost." *The New Republic*, 22 October 1990, 32-38.
- _____. "A Heroine of the Prairies." In *Sacagawea's Nickname: Essays on the American West*. New York: New York Review of Books, 2001.
- Medley, Petrina Russo. "Angie Debo: In Search of Truth." Ph.D. diss., Oklahoma State University, 2000.

Mihesuah, Devon Abbott. *Choctaw Crime and Punishment, 1884-1907*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009.

_____. "Interpretations and the 'New Indian History': Comment on the *American Indian Quarterly's* Special Issue on Writing about American Indians." *American Indian Quarterly* 20 (Winter 1996): 91-108.

_____. *So You Want to Write about American Indians?: A Guide for Writers, Students, and Scholars*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005.

Nash, Gerald D. "Point of View: One Hundred Years of Western History." *Journal of the West* 32, no. 1. (January 1993): 3-4.

Perdue, Theda. "Angie Debo: From Progressive to Radical." Review of *Indians, Outlaws, and Angie Debo*. Produced by Barbara Abrash and Martha Sandlin. 50 min. Boston: The Institute for Research in History and WGBH Educational Foundation, 1988. *NWSA Journal* 2, no. 4 (Autumn 1990): 646-649.

Schrems, Suzanne L. and Cynthia J. Wolff. "Politics and Libel: Angie Debo and the Publication of *And Still the Waters Run*." *Western Historical Quarterly* 22, no. 2 (May 1991): 185-203.

White, Richard. Review of *Indians, Outlaws, and Angie Debo*. Produced by Barbara Abash and Martha Sandlin. 50 min. Boston: The Institute for Research in History and WGBH Educational Foundation, 1988. *Journal of American History* 76 (December 1989): 1010-1012.

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Wunder, John R. "What's Old about the New Western History: Race and Gender, Part 1." *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 85, no. 2 (April 1994): 50-58.

_____. "What's Old about the New Western History? Part 2: Environment and Economy." *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 89, no. 2 (Spring 1998): 84-96.

Debo Family Genealogy, 1972
(From the Angie Debo Collection, Box 7/folder 66)

HISTORY OF THE DEBOS IN AMERICA

THE DEBOS

The history of the Jacob and Peter Debo families in America begins with the immigration of the two brothers in 1853 and 1854 respectively; but its antecedents go back into European wars. After Napoleon extended the boundary of France to the Rhine by the Peace of Amiens in 1802, he encouraged French families to settle in the conquered region. Among the colonists was the grandfather of the two young American immigrants. Then after Napoleon's defeat and the division of his conquests in 1815 the family became unwilling subjects of the King of Prussia. A son, Nicholas Debo, married a German girl named Magdalena. Among their six children were Jacob and Peter, half German by blood, wholly French in feeling. Apparently the family home was at Besseringen, Kreil Merzig, Regierungs Bezirk, Trier, Rhenish Prussia. It is known that Peter was born there; however some records indicate that Jacob was born in Munich, Bavaria.

Probably Jacob had landed in New Orleans and had moved up the Mississippi and Illinois rivers to Peru, Illinois by the time the 20-year-old Peter came to New Orleans with his mother and his sister, Anna Maria; for there is a family tradition of his utter loneliness and desolation when the two died there of cholera shortly after their arrival. At any event, the brothers finally settled in Peru, where they married the sisters, Theresa and Elizabeth Hoppmeier. (This seems to be the correct spelling, although the name sometimes appears as Hobmeier, Hobbmeier, or Hoppmaier, as well as Hoppmeier.)

As far as known, their mother, Mary, had been adopted into a wealthy family and had married Hausel Hoppmeier. They had six daughters: Lena, Anna, Otelia, Theresa, Grazinzia, Elizabeth and one son, Balthazar. Apparently, Theresa was born in Munich, Bavaria and Elizabeth at Phening m Bundgericht Ebersberg – Alt Baiere (Bavaria). The family immigrated to America in 1855 and settled in Peru, Ill.

In "the old country" the father had made religious figurines to aid devout Catholics in their worship. To some he was known as "the Jesus Maker". He was never able to find the right kind of clay in America so he finally gave it up. He was a wealthy man, but his business in Peru is not remembered. The mother, Mary Hoppmeier, said there was a "Von" on her name and was accused, at times in fun, of "putting on airs" about it. What happened to the others in their family is not clearly known, but his son, Balthazar, did live in Peru at one time and apparently inherited his father's fortune.

The two Debo brothers engaged in aspects of the ice business. In those days before manufactured ice, it was cut from the Illinois River and stored in insulated buildings for summer use. Jacob began furnishing ice to the town, and according to his aged daughter, Mary Daft, his family was the only one engaged in this business throughout its history. Peter became the mate of a Mississippi River steamboat that pulled barges loaded with ice down the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers as far as New Orleans. It is known that his first daughter, Phoebe, and son, Edward, were

born on a house boat moored at Peru, while they lived there. Edward remembers that he learned to swim before he could walk, as his father let him down into the water, holding him up by a towel passed under his body. The family moved to the comfortable house that still stands at the corner of Second and Green streets. But Peter Debo continued the New Orleans route. When Edward was a teenager, he worked on the same boat as a deck hand, and as long as he lived he talked of those great days of Mississippi River traffic. Later, he worked in his uncle's ice plant.

The homes of the Debo brothers were only a short distance apart, and the double cousins – Jacob's eight children and Peter's nine – were very close in feeling. They had many other cousins also, children of the other Hoppmeier daughters. They were a lively group. For the boys, there was swimming and fishing in the Illinois River; and for all, winter skating and sledding down the hill that bordered the valley, and summer picnics at historic Starved Rock, now a State Park. German and an increasing use of English were the languages of the home; but Peter spoke French on his river trips and he must have used French endearments to his children, for his youngest son, John, always used "ma petite" and "mon petite chou" as pet names for his daughter, Shirley.

Peter Debo's children eventually scattered and their descendants are widely separated; but the descendants of Jacob Debo still live in and around Peru, where "Harry Debo and Son" is blazoned conspicuously on a big hardware store and 95-year-old Mary Daft, the only living member of the first generation, still keeps up the family tradition. But Peter Debo often said that there were many Debos in "the old country", and individuals of that name have appeared throughout the years, with no known relationship, but an interesting recurrence of given names.

In 1935 Edward's daughter, Angie, saw a linen shop in Houston, Texas with the Debo name on the front. Entering, she found that the proprietor, also named Ed, was a Syrian, French only in name. His ancestor had been one of the soldiers Napoleon abandoned in Syria in 1799 after his grandiose scheme of Eastern conquests was wrecked with the destruction of his fleet in the Battle of the Nile. Others of the name have made contact with Angie. Rev. Darrell Debo wrote from Burnett, Texas that his great-grandfather was one of several brothers who had come to Missouri from Virginia after the Civil War. Descended from those who remained in Missouri are William Bruce Debo of Devils Elbow, Missouri and Robert L. Debo of Columbia. Robert Bruce Debo "had a French professor at the Univ. of Missouri who once told me that our family started in this country with a Peter Debo from France (who) landed in Virginia and came to Missouri through Kentucky." In the official records of Bedford County, Va. are Debo names, beginning with a deed to Michael Debo in 1799, and later entries regarding Henry, John, Valentine, and Daniel. From another source appears a John Conrad Deboe reported by the Virginia Census of 1790 as living in Shenandoah County in 1785. (Conrad is a name indigenous to Lorraine, and the final "e" may have been added by the English practice of that day.)

William Bruce Debo also learned through Lewis (an un-French spelling) C. Debo of Ottumwa, Iowa of an Iroquois Indian named Debo living on a reservation near Quebec; and of Albert (Abdullah in Arabic) Debo of Altoona, Pennsylvania, who immigrated to the United States from Raskefa, Lebanon in 1921. The latter wrote, "The Debo family in Lebanon is very large," but "the only other Debo family I know of, came from Tripoli, Syria, and settled in Pittsburg, Pa. in 1900." This caused William Bruce Debo to comment, "I wonder how many Debos Napoleon abandoned?" Soon Angie received a letter from the son of Albert (Abdullah), and his name was

George! The latest Debo letter was written in 1970 by Mrs. Jasper Nall of Cedar Vale, Kansas, whose father was Ray Debo; her grandfather, John R. Debo; and her great-grandfather, William Debo. Among her relatives was an Emma Debo, who had lived around Bartlesville, Oklahoma.

A genealogist consulted by William Bruce Debo believes that the Debo's descended from the De Baux family of southern France, whose pedigree is clear from 900 on. (This is possible, while the guess sometimes made that the name was originally Du Bois is linguistically untenable.) But the change in spelling must have come early to account for the name left in Syria and Lebanon by Napoleon's soldiers. Also there is a lake, "Lac Débo," in the republic of Mali in former French West Africa. There the pronunciation [*sic*] is Dā'bō. In the United States it is almost universally pronounced Dee bo. A few younger members of the family have shifted the accent to the last syllable, and three of Peter Debo's children adopted the spelling DeBo. (The name appears as Dibo on Peter Debo's naturalization paper, but this is clearly a clerical error.) Whatever the spelling, Peter Debo was right in saying, "It was a common name in the old country."

HISTORY OF THE DEBOS IN AMERICA
(Box 7,/folder 59)

(Peter Debo Branch) STORY OF LISETTA DEBO – Line 3

(B) – THE TILDENS AND DEBOS AT BEATTIE

Angie Debo

My mother, Lina Cooper, came to the Beattie community with her father's family in the fall of 1883. There she met the young Tildens. They impressed her as the handsomest couple she had ever seen: "Billy", with a magnificent physique, straight, strong, and blond; Lisetta ("Lucy"), tiny, dark, and glowing. Sometime during those years my father, Edward Debo, came to live briefly in the family of his sister, Lisetta, while he shucked corn for his brother-in-law. He was a sturdy young man with almost fanatical energy who was known in the community as the "cyclone shucker". He set a record of husking, hauling, and cribbing one hundred bushels of corn, and kept it up throughout the season. A few incidents of that time have come down to me.

My father had used tobacco since his young boyhood, and his pockets were filled with the paraphernalia of his addiction. The first time Aunt Lisetta washed his clothes she emptied the pockets and placed everything in one pile. When he came in that night, she said:

"Eddie, what shall we do with this? You know our father never used tobacco, and neither does Willie, so I don't know how to take care of it."

He made a sudden resolve. "I don't care. Throw it away if you want to," he said. And he never touched tobacco again.

The last time I saw Aunt Lisetta, after my father died and my mother and I visited her in St. Joseph, Mo., she showed me some worn silverware. "Your father gave this to me for a Christmas present when he stayed at our house," she said.

Eventually my father and mother married and settled on a farm near Beattie. The Tildens were in Oregon and Washington for a time, but they returned when Ray and I were about a year old. From that time on, our families visited back and forth. Ray and I became inseparable. When my brother Edwin came along, Harry adopted him in spite of the differences in their ages. Harry never saw me, although no little girl ever looked at a "big" boy with greater adoration than I bestowed on him. It was a real shock to me when years later in St. Joseph I discovered that he was only two years older than I. He had seemed so mature and so masterful in those childhood days. One incident stands out.

Our family was visiting the Tildens, and we children were out at the woodpile. Harry was teasing Ray when his father came on the scene. Uncle Billy seldom punished his children. "I leave that to Lucy; she scratches them once in a while", he used to say. But that time he picked up a twig about six inches long (I can see it yet) and switched Harry lightly across the shoulders with it. Harry hunched his shoulders and danced a little (How well I remember that mannerism! The last time I saw him he leaned over the back of a chair and hunched his shoulders in that familiar way). Then he came over to us smiling, shrugging his shoulders, and saying it didn't hurt. I thought I had never seen anyone so brave. To take that awful beating – with a stick – and laugh it off.

I remember our association best the year I was four. We lived on a farm east of Beattie, and the Tildens lived about a mile north of us. I still remember the familiar road, even a red bull in a pasture that we passed – “the cow with the pretty, curly hair”, I called him. (I visited the place with my mother in 1948 and everything was as I remember it.)

Shortly after my fifth birthday my parents moved eighty miles away to a farm community called “Welcome” south of Manhattan. I was six when Ray died. It was close to Easter, and my mother was coloring eggs for us children when the letter came with the news. She told me later how sad it seemed to her to be doing things for her two happy children while Lisetta had lost one of hers. She loved Aunt Lisetta as much as she loved her own sisters.

Years later I read Aunt Lisetta’s letter. She began: “How can I tell you the dreadful news?” And she ended it, “It already seems to me that the time since he died is longer than the time he lived”.

The following fall, when apples were ripe, my mother took us children in the wagon back to Beattie to visit our Cooper and Tilden relatives, and pick up a load of apples for our winter eating. She admonished me not to stand around forlornly without Ray, for “that would make your Uncle Billy and Aunt Lucy feel bad”, but to play with the other children. But although I had the best intentions in the world, I could not spare his parents’ feelings. When we drove up, Uncle Billy lifted me from the wagon and sat me down. “Well, Angie –”, “Well, Angie –”, was all he could say as he turned away.

My mother told me later that on this visit Aunt Lisetta recounted the whole story of Ray’s sickness. He had been bilious for a day or two, so that she kept him out of school. Then he came down with an acute attack of what the doctor pronounced “inflammation of the stomach and bowels”, but which we now know as appendicitis. His suffering was almost more than his parents could endure. His father said, “Doctor, don’t kill him outright, but try to ease his pain even if it shortens his life”. And as his mother told it, “Lina, I got down on my knees and prayed for God to take him; and when a mother can do that, you know how he suffered” – and telling it, she broke into wild weeping. Then at the last his pain left him – one can see now that his appendix burst – and he passed into a pleasant delirium in which he mentioned every one of the family as he talked of imaginary happenings in his little boy world.

I did not have to stand around wondering what to do without Ray, for Emily took me up. I suppose she was about twelve years old, a serious conscientious child, and she petted me incessantly. I had attended school the previous term, children used to begin at the age of five, and had passed joyfully from one book to another in those days of one-room schools and ungraded promotions. Emily took me to visit her school and showed me off shamelessly, having me read for the other children. “Only six years old, and in the Third Reader”! they marveled. It is a wonder I ever settled down to ordinary living.

As for Edwin, who was then nearly five, Harry took him off the minute we arrived – just as he had always done – and the two stayed together in some kind of a man’s world of their own. Guy must have been around by this time, but I do not remember much about him. I have a faint

recollection of a quarrel between him and Edwin over his velocipede (early day tricycle), and I suppose that must have occurred at this time.

This visit ended our close family associations, but they are still vivid in my memory. In that last visit to Aunt Lisetta in St. Joseph I noticed an enlarged picture of Ray in the bedroom. I had not seen him since I was barely five and I had never seen a picture of him except baby pictures, but I recognized him instantly. I should have known him anywhere. Even in writing this, there are tears in my eyes when I think of him. And my affection for Aunt Lisetta and Harry and Emily continued throughout their lives.

Family History, TMs, 1970-1979
(Box 7/folder 59)

THE [Edward and Lina] DEBO FAMILY
(Published in *Logan County History*, Vol. I, Guthrie, OK, 1979)

The Debo family settled on their Logan County farm near Marshall on November 8, 1899. Edward Peter Debo (born in Peru, Illinois September 7, 1862) and Lina Elbertha Cooper (born in Kankakee, Illinois September 27, 1865) met in the Beattie, Kansas community, were married on February 19, 1889, and began their life together on a succession of rented farms in the vicinity. There their children were born: Angie Elbertha on January 30, 1890; and Edwin Forrest on October 24, 1891. In 1895 the family moved to a farm in the rural community known as Welcome in Geary County, about fifteen miles south of Manhattan, where they lived until they made the trip to Oklahoma.

During all these years the industrious young couple were accumulating cattle and other property looking forward to buying a farm of their own. The tract known as “Old” Oklahoma opened in the Run of 1889 offered them the opportunity. By the time they were ready this land had been patented, and Mr. Debo sold his cattle and bought a farm there (the NE ¼ of Sec. 20, Twp. 19N, Range 4W I M) for \$1400. The couple disposed of everything that could not be carried in two wagons – kitchen stove, bedsteads, chairs, the heavier farm equipment – and Mr. Debo converted his farm wagon into the famed “prairie schooner” of Western settlement.

He set the “top box” in place, and above this he fashioned the “overjets” – an extension on each side formed of a foot-wide board supported by brackets, and another board at each edge extending upward at right angles. The bows were then fastened to this second board. Mrs. Debo then stowed her canned fruit, the family clothing, books and keepsakes, her sewing machine and dresser, the table with its leaves folded, and her best dishes and cooking utensils in the bed of the wagon, fitting all so effectively that it formed a compact load level with the top box. Over the bows was stretched the oblong piece of canvas that formed the cover. This was pulled over at both ends and puckered by drawstrings. The back was tightly closed but a circular opening was left in front for the convenience of the driver, who would sit on the “spring seat” (standard equipment of all farm wagons), which rested on top of the wagon box.

In the extra width permitted by the overjets Mrs. Debo spread a “straw tick,” a feather bed, and plenty of comforters and blankets. The “straw tick” was the early day equivalent of a mattress [*sic*]. It had a buttoned-up opening through which the housewife could reach to stir up the straw each morning in making up the beds and replace it with a fresh supply at house cleaning time. Thrifty Mrs. Debo, however, regularly filled her “straw ticks” with the more resilient corn husks instead of straw.) Here the family was to sleep in comfort during the journey. Then under the seat Mrs. Debo placed the “grub box” with the utensils and supplies needed for preparing and serving the meals.

Meanwhile Mr. Debo spread a thick cushion of hay on his hayrack, and upon it he set his walking plow, his mower, and other small pieces of farm equipment. When all was ready he hitched Old Fred and Old Bill to this load and moved out. Mrs. Debo, with the two children

beside her, followed in the covered wagon, driving Old Nell and Old Topsy. She shed a few tears as she took her last look at the familiar scene, but the thoughts of the others ranged ahead.

It required about a week to make the journey. It involved a hard pull for the horses and responsibility for the adults, but to the children it was an unmitigated pleasure – to see new places, to jump down and walk two miles at a time beside the wagons, to eat meals cooked over a camp fire, to sleep under a roof of canvas. The camps were regularly made close to farm houses so that water was accessible and feed could be purchased for the horses. (The established settlers of that time were friendly to “movers.” A few of the women even invited Mrs. Debo inside their houses to cook on their stoves.) Except for one cold day the weather was ideal. Angie has never forgotten the warm, golden day on which the wagons lumbered past the lively, five-year-old town of Marshall and the level fields of greening wheat to the new home. While the parents unloaded, the children ran to the creek and picked out a location for their playhouse.

The years that followed were uneventful, but productive. Mr. Debo immediately bought lumber and enlarged the one-room shack of the original homesteader into a three-room shack. In the spring he set out a large orchard, which soon came into abundant fruitage. He built a barn and other outbuildings. Mrs. Debo raised turkeys to buy a reed organ and gave Angie music lessons. After a few years the couple replaced the shack with an adequate dwelling. Mr. Debo increased his land holdings. The family formed new friendships and new associations in church and community.

The children entered into new relationships, walking two miles to attend the one-room rural school. Eventually they passed a territorial examination (Angie at the age of twelve; Edwin, whose schooling was interrupted by farm work, at the age of fifteen), and received common school diplomas making them eligible to enter high school. Then they waited around on the farm until a high school was finally established in the growing town of Marshall, from which Angie graduated with the first class in 1913, Edwin two years later.

By this time the family had moved to town. They had prospered on the farm, but in 1912 Mr. Debo sold out and invested in a hardware store at Marshall. This proved to be a disastrous venture, but he continued in various business activities. Still young and energetic he was operating a produce house when he died after a brief illness on May 15, 1944. He was buried in the North Cemetery at Marshall. Mrs. Debo became so feeble in her later years that she spent her last months in a nursing home at Stillwater, where Angie was employed on the library staff of Oklahoma State University. She died there on June 11, 1954.

[AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL]

Kansas was a pioneer state and the town of Beattie was only twenty years old when I was born there on a farm in 1890. When I was five and my brother, Edwin, was three, our family moved to a rural neighborhood south of Manhattan, where some former railroad land was offered on easy terms to settlers. In the fall of 1899 we came in a covered wagon to a farm my father purchased from the original homesteader near Marshall, Oklahoma Territory, arriving on November 8. How well I remember the warm, golden day, the lively little town, and the green wheat stretching to the low horizon, the setting of my life for over seventy years.

Interviews with Angie Debo, #14

July 25, 1984

(Box 2/folder 15)

[ANGIE DEBO and the PRAIRIE LANDSCAPE]

About my relation to the prairie landscape, perhaps it was because there were only two of us children, so we couldn't have organized games. I don't believe that was the reason though. I didn't care about dolls when I was a little girl. In Kansas we roamed over the prairies. There was a hay field right across the road from our house and [we] roamed over that hay field. We studied the flowers, and we studied the birds' nests and we loved every foot of it. When we came to Oklahoma when I was 9 going on 10, and Edwin was 8, we had a creek on our farm, and so we added to our roaming the creek, and we added to that the climbing of trees. I think maybe my mother had to look up when she wanted – called – us to eat, because we'd be sitting in a tree somewhere.

Now my mother enjoyed the landscape as much as I did, and I'm sure my brother did. She told me once, rather with some hesitation, it was a beautiful day and we were driving through this wheat country and the wheat was ripe and the corn was tall and green, and the sky was blue the way Oklahoma skies can be, and she said with some embarrassment, she said: "When I look out on the country like this, the tears come to my eyes. I don't know why." Well I felt it just as deeply.

Now I don't know whether my father did or not. My father worked very hard, and he didn't talk about it, but my mother didn't either for that matter. I just remember that one incident. I do know that when my father was driving his horses to the binder when he was cutting his wheat and the birds nested in the wheat field just the same as they had nested in the tall grass of the prairie. When a bird would fly up from a nest, he'd stop the binder and carry the nest off to a place he had already cut. I don't know and he didn't know, he drove on, whether the bird found it or not. If it had eggs in it, whether the parent birds found it or not. If it had eggs in it or if it had young birds in it, he never knew, but I know he did save the birds that way. So maybe he felt the same way about the out of doors, I don't know.

Oh, yes I must go back – about my father, whether he loved nature or not. I told you he never talked about it, but I remember he did save the birds' nests. I should have told you back then and I'll tell you now how I loved to see my father plant a tree. When he came to this farm on which we moved in Oklahoma, the farm he bought from the original homesteader, he brought some elm trees up from the creek, and planted them for shade. The spring after we came there – we came there in November as you know – we arrived there on November the 8th, I remember. The spring after we came there, he went to the little town of Crescent south of us, and bought enough fruit trees for a commercial orchard, and planted fruit trees, planted a big orchard. I loved to see him plant a tree. He tucked it in. He just tucked – I have no other way of expressing the way he planted a tree [but] that he tucked it in. He didn't say anything to it, but he tucked it in so affectionately. Well now I believe that's everything.

I knew every wildflower so well, and my grandfather always knew so much about plants. He was very proud of me because I knew the life history of every plant that grew. I knew what kind of a leaf it had, I knew what kind of a root it had, I knew when it bloomed, and I knew all of its history.

That was true of the plants in Kansas where I lived until I was, I mean the wildflowers, where I lived until I was going on ten, or the different wildflowers, the new kind that I found in Oklahoma. But I knew every plant. And I was always interested in writing. When I went to school and learned to read it was a great joy to me. I loved books, and I loved reading. And because I loved reading, I thought it'd be nice to write a book. So when I was – my second term of school – when I was six years old, I was going to write, when I grew up, I was going to write a book about the wildflowers and the Kansas prairies. I was going to describe them. I made them in my very best penmanship, which was usually pretty bad, but it was pretty good on that page, I made the title page, but I never did any writing beyond the title page.

Now about walking. That was what I've already told you that we walked over the prairies, and we walked in Kansas, and we walked over the farm. We walked along the creek as we were growing up in Oklahoma. . . .

[1924-1934]

Now the questions you asked me about walking. When I was in Canyon [TX], the students there with whom I used to serve as required faculty, shall I say chaperone, whenever they went out on a picnic, which they did very often; and we did a lot of walking. I didn't have to guide them. They were the sons and daughters of pioneers, and they were used to the out of doors just the same as I was, only their fathers had been cowboys in early days. The pioneer settlers that I knew, the parents of the children that I grew up with were homesteaders. But anyhow they knew and loved the out of doors the same as I did. They used to take trips to the Canyon, and I would go along. I wore some jodhpurs and a skirt and some boots. We would carry food out there and have a cook out. I didn't have to go ahead with it, they knew how to do it. But of course, I could make a campfire. But I didn't direct their preparations. They went ahead and did it.

Yes, I watched the moonrise and sunset, and I want to tell you about one time when I was driving on the high plains south of Canyon. Unless you have seen the high plains, it's hard for you to realize how level they are. They don't drain except when some rivers cross. If it rains enough so that some water runs off it collects in little shallow ponds – little lakes. One time I was driving on the high plains early in the morning near Plainview, Texas, which is south of Canyon. Just as the sun came up, and the full moon went down . . . the sun shone across the plains and struck the moon. If I hadn't known already that the moon got its light from the sun, I would have known it then. It was just as plain as it is when you strike a match that that sun shone across and struck the moon. So that time I had a new experience. It wasn't the moonrise and sunset; it was the sunrise and moonset. But I had a new experience with the sky, and the thrill of that experience has never left me.

[AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL]
(Box 7/folder 59)

Only ten years before, the land where we settled had been virgin prairie, purchased from the Creek Indians by the government and opened to homesteaders. On the other side of Marshall lay the “Cherokee Strip,” purchased from the Cherokees and opened only six years before. Both tracts had been settled by the dramatic “Runs,” when the home-seekers waited on the border until a given signal and then raced in to stake their claims. Everything was new – the town, the churches, the schools, the sod houses, the frame shacks, even the few good dwellings of the farmers. “Where were you born?” was the question school children asked each other. Only the smaller ones had been born in Oklahoma.

Although our family arrived late – ten years or six years late – the incidents and the joy and excitement of pioneering entered into every adult conversation we children heard. Also we listened to family tales of earlier pioneering. Our father’s stories of his parents’ life in “the old country” and their immigration to America, and especially tales of the Mississippi, where his father was the mate of a river boat and where he himself made one trip to New Orleans as a deck hand. There were also my Grandfather Cooper’s stories of “When I crossed the Plains to California,” and of the Indians he saw on the way and the colorful life of all nations that flowed through the boom towns and the gold mines. . . .

FAMILY STORIES
(Box 7/folder 59)

When we were children, my brother and I enjoyed listening to family stories. Most of these were told by our mother, Lina Cooper Debo. As she was almost without formal schooling, these took the place of books and literature; but since she was born in 1865 and since some of these stories came from her parents and grandparents, they added up to a homely grass-roots history of the American adventure.

A Tragedy of the American Revolution

One of our ancestors was killed in the Revolution. . . .

The Ancestress Who Was Scalped by Indians

She went to the spring for water, and an Indian hidden there tomahawked and scalped her, then left her, apparently thinking she was dead. But she recovered consciousness and lived the rest of her life with a bare place on top of her head. That same day in 1927 I asked my grandfather about this also. He said that she was his grandmother and that he knew her very well when he was growing up in Clark County, Illinois. He could not remember her maiden name, but his grandfather was William Maples, born in Glasgow, Scotland. He thought that his grandmother might have been born there also, and that they were married before they came to America. His mother, Asenath Maples, was born in North Carolina and came with her parents to Illinois, where she married John Lloyd Cooper. This seems to place the scalping in North Carolina, for I am fairly certain that it did not occur in Illinois.

The Panther Whose Dinner Escaped

I am uncertain as to who figured in this story of my mother's. . . .

Another Indian Story

This one my mother got from her mother, Angeline (“Angey”) Willard Cooper, who was born at Adams, Jefferson County, “York State” in 1837. When she was a little girl, a peddler made regular visits to the home, as was the custom in those days, with household articles for sale. He was always welcomed and treated as a guest. He was a very old man. He used to take Angey on his lap and stroke her hair with trembling hands and say in his feeble voice (my mother used to imitate it), “Angee-line, Angee-line, I once had an Angee-line, but the Indians carried her off and whether she is living now, God only knows.” She had been his sweetheart when he was a young man, and he still spoke of her with grief and longing. As Angey grew older, she became embarrassed at sitting on his lap. One day some other girls were visiting her. She spoke to him affectionately, but excused herself to go and play with them. He looked after her and said in his trembling voice, “My Angee-line is getting to big to sit on the old man’s lap any more.” He was at that time very feeble, and he never came back again. The family supposed he had died.

One naturally wants to place the incident with the Wyoming Valley [July 3, 1778] or the Cherry Valley Massacre [November 11, 1778], but the dates are too distant to make that possible. The old man could hardly have been old enough for that.

Made in Vermont

My mother enjoyed telling stories of her grandfather, John Willard, whose hard sense, wry humor, and originality have passed into legend – also his quick temper and brilliant profanity. . . .

The Life of a Pioneer Woman

I believe my mother never met her father’s parents, but she always had great respect for her grandmother, Asenath Maples Cooper. Asenath was the only girl in a large family. Her brothers walked nine miles to school – I do not know whether in North Carolina or Clark County, Illinois. Her parents thought eighteen miles a day was too far for a girl to walk and they always intended to board her in town so she could attend school. But they never did, perhaps because she married so young, and she grew up illiterate, not able even to sign her own name.

She was fifteen [1848?] when she married John Lloyd Cooper and began housekeeping in a log cabin. The couple had ten children, born and reared in this log cabin. One boy died of croup at the age of two. All the others grew up and several lived to be very old. My mother always marveled at her grandmother’s good housekeeping, as revealed by the habits of her children. I myself remember how meticulous my grandfather was, even after he passed ninety. He was fastidious in his dress, careful in cleaning his shoes when he came into the house, and elegant in his table manners. The only other member of the family I knew, his brother George, had the same habits when he was

approaching ninety. My mother thought it spoke pretty well for the housekeeping of an illiterate fifteen-year-old bringing up nine children in a log cabin.

Apparently her husband helped, for my mother heard her father tell of the tedious task of preparing the flax for spinning and weaving. His father insisted on great care in every step of the process of soaking the plants, removing the woody stems, and preserving the fiber clean and strong for his wife's use.

Probably both parents were responsible for the moral upbringing of the children. My mother knew several of them personally. All nine grew up to be honest, sturdy, industrious people, capable of turning their hand to any kind of work. The two I knew, my grandfather and my great-uncle George, had brilliant minds.

Wildlife Was Part of the Picture

My mother heard stories from her father, Alfred Cooper, of the hunting when he was growing up in the backwoods of Clark County, Illinois. His father did not care for a gun (a serious defect in his eyes); but he got hold of one somehow and started hunting deer. His next brother, Amos, was "a coward," he said, but next-in-line George, four years younger than Alfred went along. The boys were about twelve and eight. My mother said she did not realize until she heard Uncle George tell the same stories in his old age what babes in the woods they were. The timber was full of bears (not grizzlies, but not pleasant for children to meet), cougars, and big timber wolves running in packs and known to kill people. Uncle George told of the time when "Brother Alfred" killed a deer and went home to find a way of bringing it in, leaving him to watch. It was growing dark, but Alfred put him in a tree so he would be safe. One child twelve and the other eight! My grandfather kept count and he told me once how many deer he killed during those years; it was a substantial contribution to the family living.

There was much visiting back and forth among the numerous Cooper and Maple relatives in that pioneer community. Once one of them shot a big turkey gobbler and invited some of the others to help eat it. (This could not have been a Thanksgiving dinner, for it was long before President Lincoln's proclamation, and far from Puritan tradition.) One of the relatives slipped up and stole it from the place where it hung on a tree outside, and invited the party to his house. That time the turkey got dressed before it was stolen by another relative, who gave another invitation. Then after it was roasted it was stolen again! It was finally placed on the table and eaten at the fourth house.

I think it was my grandfather's Grandmother Maple, who found a fawn hidden near the spring where she went for water. She caught it and put it in her apron. It struggled so that it took all her strength to hold it, and she finally gave up and turned it loose. To her surprise it followed her to the house and she brought it up as a pet. As it grew up it became mean. Once it reared on its hind legs and struck a grandchild on top of the head because it wanted a piece of bread and butter the child was eating. The family finally had to get rid of it.

Early Day Chicago

I do not know whether John Lloyd Cooper moved his family to Will County, Illinois or whether my grandfather went there as a young man away from home. It was in the Plainfield vicinity that Alfred Cooper courted and married Angey Willard. They were married September 4, 1857. My mother told me of her father's memories of early day Chicago. The men used to drive their hogs there for sale, herding them along on the open prairie. And he said that all the area around Chicago was swampy, with wild geese nesting there in great numbers. Once I asked my grandfather how large the town was in that time. He said it was smaller than Marshall (which had a population of about 450) but that it had an immense trade.

In 1924 I talked with a woman who was said to be the oldest native born resident of Chicago, and her memory reinforced my grandfather's. She said that her father hauled water to the families of the town for household use. The families kept it in barrels and dipped it out as needed. Because of the surrounding swamps, wells were impracticable. She told me another interesting story. She and Frances E. Willard were students together at Northwestern. (I thought she meant Northwestern University at Evanston; in fact, I am fairly certain that she did, but the encyclopedia says she [Frances E. Willard] attended Northwestern Female College.) "Frank" as the girls called her was the most high spirited of a group living in a two-story house. There was a stove on the first floor, and the stovepipe went up through the ceiling and warmed the upper floor. I can't remember whether Frank on the first floor was so full of fun and so noisy that the girls upstairs used to bang on the pipe to make her keep quiet so they could study; or whether Frank upstairs used to bang on the pipe for the fun and noise of it, to the distress of the girls below. In any case she was a study hazard.

Remote Contacts with Abraham Lincoln

My mother told me that she heard her father tell an incident received from a woman who had worked in the Lincoln home. (Coming to me third hand.) Mrs. Lincoln announced that she had bought a certain horse from a certain person, expecting of course that her husband would pay for it. He answered, "Well, if you have bought a horse, that's up to you. I haven't bought any horse." My mother, a practical feminist, who believed a woman working fulltime at keeping up the home was entitled to an equal use of a joint account, was very disapproving of Lincoln's action. "The money belonged to her as much as it did to him, and she had a right to spend it," was her verdict. Once I heard my father mention the name of a woman to my mother with the query, "Did you know she worked in Abraham Lincoln's family?" I forget whether my mother said "Yes" or "No." He went on to say, "She liked Lincoln awful well, but she didn't like Mrs. Lincoln at all." To me, this seemed to make the Lincolns Illinois neighbors.

Once my grandfather told me that he went to hear one of the celebrated Lincoln-Douglas debates. (The year was 1858, the year after his marriage, but I do not remember that my grandmother went along.) I was impressed by the great crowd coming from such distances and by the intensity of feeling he observed. For some reason, Lincoln was not there. Thus my grandfather never saw him. Douglas spoke, and there were questions from the audience. One question was, "When and where did the Republican party start?" The answer was: "At Ripon, Wisconsin in 1854." At this answer – or perhaps it was at an answer to another question – the man who asked it

broke out crying. (I think this is the question, but I'm not sure; in either case the crying was non sequitur, simply a part of the emotional stress that gripped the gathering.)

The California Gold Rush

My grandfather, Alfred J. Cooper, "crossed the Plains to California" – the inevitable preface to the stories he told me in my own childhood was, "When I crossed the Plains to California" – in the summer of 1859. In 1927 when he was 91 years old he told me the train he joined started "I think about the 18th of April, and got into California the last of September." But this was not his first knowledge of the Gold Rush.

John Willard, the father of Angey, had joined the Argonauts earlier, probably in the original 1849 rush, and came back penniless. And my mother heard a terrible story from her father, involving a son of "Old Mother Thomas." This good woman was greatly loved by my grandfather and his brothers, and her sons were their close associates in Will County, Illinois. I do not know the date, but I assume that it was before my grandfather's adventure, that one of these Thomas boys set out for California. One day he wantonly shot and killed an Indian woman, simply because killing Indians seemed an acceptable frontier practice. Her enraged tribesmen demanded that he be turned over to them; and the company, with their own lives in the balance, were forced to comply. The Indians then skinned him alive. When the story got back to Old Mother Thomas, she was heart-broken, but she said she did not blame the Indians, and that she could not understand why her boy would have done such an evil thing. Because of its horror the story was widely circulated, and it continues to this day. I myself heard it told in the beauty shop a few days ago, without particulars of name, date, or place; and I know that the town of Rawhide, Wyoming reenacts the incident in an annual pageant. (Or perhaps Rawhide, Nevada; my map doesn't show any Rawhide in Wyoming.) It may be that more than one youthful adventurer murdered an Indian woman and was summarily punished. In later years when the story became a legend, my grandfather felt that his veracity would be questioned if he claimed personal knowledge of the occurrence, and he ceased relating it. I myself never heard him mention it.

The outfitting place and starting point for my grandfather's own trek was Independence, Missouri. In 1924 he spent some time there with his daughter, my Aunt Ida Halstead; and he took my nine-year-old cousin, Burtin Halstead, around and showed him the location of the blacksmith shops so important in getting the wagons and other equipment in condition for the long journey. It was the custom for each train of emigrants to elect a captain; and it is my impression from my grandmother's stories that this captain's orders were obeyed implicitly.

I think the old expression, "necessary house," was no longer used at that time. Probably it was the word, "privy," not spoken in polite society, and the euphemism, "closet." In any case, such a place was needed for the women of the party. My mother told me once that she had learned from her father that one of the wagons was fitted up for the women's use. I suppose it could be used on the trail or at the camp. The men were expected to find bushes or natural depressions.

The wagons were pulled by oxen, but some cows were taken along for their milk. At some time during the summer the oxen began to die. It was believed that some cattle disease was responsible, but my grandfather had a different explanation. The trail was very dusty, and as the ox pulled the

load with the yoke on his neck his head was very close to the ground. Thus he breathed the dust of the trail and died from its effect. Whatever the cause, as the draft animals died, the cows were yoked to their places. To the surprise of the emigrants they were quicker and more active than the lumbering oxen. I suppose there were enough of these replacements to move the train through to California.

As long as he lived – he died April 8, 1928 – my grandfather remembered every step of that trail, but incredibly I failed to get it from him. I am sure he followed the Overland Trail, for he spoke often of Fort Laramie; and he may have taken the California branch west of South Pass in the present Wyoming, but more likely he continued to Fort Hall before branching off, for most of his most exciting Indian adventure occurred in the Thousand Spring Valley of northeastern Nevada.

My grandfather liked Indians and observed and remembered their customs. He had great admiration for their crafts. In my later studies I have often found striking confirmation of the things he told me in my childhood. Their method of preparing meat, for example. He himself liked his beef (and buffalo steaks) rare, and here is his evaluation of Indian cooking. “The women ruined the meat. They boiled it until all the taste was gone. But when the men were away from home on a hunting trip they cooked it just right, broiled over a fire.” I have read of the same procedures in scholarly books, an illustration of woman’s authority in her own sphere.

He distinguished among tribes, and throughout his life retained a memory of their differing characteristics. Once in later days in Oklahoma my mother described some Indians she had seen on the train. He told her they were Creeks. He was correct, but I have always wondered where he saw Creeks. But he always believed that “Shawnee” was the correct Indian pronunciation of “Shoshoni.” Probably because of their memory of Shawnees and Tecumseh in the Old Northwest, the emigrants insisted in using that designation and the Shoshonis resented it.

When an Indian came to their camp, the following dialog took place:

Emigrant: Sioux?

Indian: Unh!

Emigrant: Cheyenne?

Indian: Unh!

Emigrant: Shawnee?

Indian: UNH!

The train of which my grandfather was a member did not have enough wagons to form the traditional circle except in dangerous Indian country, but they always kept a guard at night. The Indians often came to their camp, usually in a friendly way. My grandfather gave many instances. Once the party was burying a young man who had drowned. An Indian stood by during the burial with tears rolling down his cheeks. At the close he turned away with “Poor hombre.” Sometimes

my grandfather and a lithe Indian would have a wrestling bout. The method was for both to lie on the ground on their backs with their feet in the opposite directions and their heads overlapping from the shoulders up. The right arm of one was locked with the left arm of his opponent and each tried to raise the other's body from the ground and throw it in an arc face down beside his own body. Once when quite a party of Indians came to visit the emigrants one young brave wanted to walk with my grandfather with their arms locked. Soon my grandfather saw a snake lying on the ground. (I suppose it was a dead snake. I hope it was.) My grandfather, suspecting the design of his companion, quickly threw his foot in front of the other's ankle and tripped him so that he fell on the snake. The watching women burst into a gale of laughter. (My grandfather's imitation of the women's laughter was always very light and high pitched.)

My brother considered two young men, brothers, in the party as very inept. Once they engaged the visiting Indians in a shooting match and were roundly beaten. The captain, unwilling to exhibit bad marksmanship in Indian country, came out and sent the two boys to their wagon. Then he told the Indians, "They can't shoot. They're squaws. Here, Al, come and shoot." My grandfather was a superb marksman, and easily defeated the Indians.

(This mastery of a gun was not boasting. As a youth in the Illinois woods, he used to compete in shooting matches. Once there were four shots at a mark for the four quarters of a beef. He won all four and drove the animal home. After that, he was not allowed to compete.)

Once the party saw Indians in the distance watching them through field glasses. The captain had all the men come out of the wagons in sight handling and cleaning their guns. He hoped the Indians would believe that still more men were in the wagons. Whatever they thought, they did not attack.

Once when a party of Indians was visiting, the same inept young brothers indicated an interest in two Indian girls and invited them by signs to join the caravan. This was apparently their stupid idea of a joke. The girls took them seriously and gathered up their possessions and brought them to the wagon. Again the captain had to send the youths away in disgrace. He tried to mend matters with the girls, but the band was insulted. In spite of the emigrants' utmost vigilance they managed to steal a number of articles. My grandfather knew enough about Indians to know that they never stole except as hostiles.

In the summer of 1927 when he was ninety-one years old, I wrote down at his dictation the story I had heard in my childhood of his only contact with actual Indian warfare. I had no knowledge of Indian history in 1927, but I have since marveled at the accuracy of his memory. In 1859, the year of his trek, the Bannocks and their Shoshoni relatives began their attacks on the trails in the area west of South Pass. (These attacks culminated in a full scale war in 1862; and the Indians suffered a crushing defeat by Colonel Patrick E. Conner in the Battle of Bear River, north of Great Salt Lake, on January 29, 1863.) Here with a little rearrangement of sentences is my grandfather's story:

"We camped as well as I can locate it at a place called the Thousand Spring Valley in eastern Idaho near the line. [It is south of the line, in northeastern Nevada. It is fairly certain that the train was traveling what became known as the Lander Cutoff, a wagon road being constructed by F.W. Lander under the direction of the Department of the Interior. It began at South Pass, circled north of

the old Overland Trail to Fort Hall, then struck southwest, avoiding Salt Lake City to carry the California traffic by a trail following the Humboldt River.] We got in about ten o'clock in the morning. The grass was fine, and we concluded to stay that day and recruit our stock. Colonel Lander was there for the purpose of making a treaty with the Indians. [Probably to appease them with presents for the construction of the road. It cut through the best of the Shoshoni country, and the traffic destroyed the game and the grazing.] He had a troop of cavalry, probably two hundred men. He had been waiting there about a week for the Indians, but they had failed to show up. He said some mischief was afoot, as they were always prompt to be present when a treaty was to be made.

“It was a hot day. That afternoon, about four o'clock as near as I can recollect, a lady came to our camp carrying a little baby in her arms. She was tired and faint like, bent over till she could hardly walk. She couldn't talk much, had to hang on to her words and catch her breath. We gave her some bitters so she could eat. She told her story first.

“She had come from a road about seven miles south of us where her party had camped the night before. The Indians had come down upon them just before daybreak and massacred the whole company. [He did not mention her husband, but I remember from hearing the story as a child that she saw him killed.] They took her baby and struck its head against the side of the wagon and threw it out in the brush at the side of the road, thinking it was killed. They struck her in the middle of the forehead between the eyes. It looked bad, covered with blood, and her face was all bloody.

“When she came to, the first thing she knew was to hear the baby crying. She looked the people all over. All were dead. The Indians had stolen the stock and the clothing, etc. [They took the bedding from the wagons], emptied the feathers in the road and took the ticks. Then they set fire to the wagons and burned them.

“When she related her story to Lander he sounded the bugle, and in a very few minutes there were seventy-five men, all mounted and in saddles ready to start.”

The next morning my grandfather learned the sequel from a detail Landers sent back to camp.

“When they [the cavalry] got to the scene of the tragedy they struck camp for the night. The Indians came down and fired upon their guard, killing two men and wounding three more. The soldiers killed fifteen Indians, [whose bodies] they found. They didn't know how many more were wounded and got away. They also captured all the stock the Indians had taken – about 75 head, mostly oxen. They buried the bodies of the people killed in the train.

“The next morning Landers sent the dead and wounded soldiers and the stock back to camp, and sent for reinforcements. He was following the trail of the Indians, which seemed to be going east. The Indians were supposed to be Shawnees. (They called themselves Shoshonis.) They didn't have much to do with white people. They had bony faces and pumpkin color, were built more like race horses.

“I never felt like I wanted to kill anybody, but seeing that woman and child I thought I would have killed an Indian if one had been there.

“A man by the name of Kemball [or possibly Campbell] from Illinois was also going to California. He had quite a large train. He took the woman and baby through to Placerville, California, which was called at that time Hangtown. (Some years after, the name was changed to Placerville, it being the county seat of Placer County.)

“Both of our trains started out the next morning. We were in sight every day for two days or more. There was too much stock for us to travel together on account of grass. We camped a mile or two apart. Kemball got to Placerville first. We lacked two days of being six months on the road. I think we started about the 18th of April. We got into California the last of September.

“The lady and the baby both recovered after they got medical attention. When the miners were informed of what had happened, they turned out and raised a contribution of \$1500 and presented the lady with the money. Miners were always good about helping people out. She took the money and went to San Francisco, and embarked upon the first ship to New York. Thence to her home in Ohio.

“I also remember how Colonel Lander came to be there instead of General Harney from Oregon. General Harney was sent to Oregon by our officials at Washington to keep peace between the whites and Indians there. He was instructed if serious trouble broke out with the Indians to spare the women and children. Instead he killed all – men, women, and children. They called him to Washington and asked him about those instructions. Told him he was instructed to spare women and children. Why did he disobey orders? He said, ‘Lice make nits, and nits make lice.’ So they sent Lander to replace him.”

During those same interviews in 1927 (he talked to me one day, and then I believe he came back to our house the following day and added some details), he sang me some of the songs of the mining camps. His once strong bass voice had lost its depth and power, but it was clear and rich. Some of the words had escaped his memory, but he gave me the name of a publisher in San Francisco who produced a little booklet with the text. No doubt copies can be found in California museums. My main interest was in hearing him sing them. I thought he was probably the only living person who could sing them out of his own experience of that time. Here they are:

Diaries:
March 4, 1940
(Box 5/folder 3)

I have been reading the diary of an eight-year-old. It deals with trivial things, but because those things loomed large in the experience of a child it has a certain elemental integrity. The child was named Angie Debo, but she is as far gone from the living world as the brother who lies in the cemetery. I can easily understand why she stopped her writing, for I know how lazy was that little girl of long ago. The nightly composition – even the uncensored sketchy writing that made up each day's entry – became a chore. The deterioration in penmanship is eloquent of an enthusiasm that faded. But when I read it again after all these years I do so wish she had kept it up. I wonder if it would be possible for me to keep faith with that little girl of long ago and write a sequel.

Diaries:
March 5-May 22, 1898
(Box 5/folder 1)

March 5, 1898

We went to Altavista and we saw more people in town than we ever saw except the fourth of July Edwin and I picked up all the cobs in the manger
When we was coming from town we was going to the post office to get the mail but papa had it
Hermon Martenson called this forenoon to see papa on business
Weather warm and smoky

March 6, 1898

We went to sunday school and the title of our lesson was Jesus and the Sabbath
And we went to young folks meeting in the evening Augusta Schultz came up to our house and went to sunday school and young folks meeting with us Edwin went to young folks meeting and went to sleep and thought we went home without having it
Weather warm and smoky

March 7, 1898

Mama is cleaning house and mama whitewashed the bedrooms today I went to school and wore my hood in the forenoon and my bonnet in the afternoon and came home with a headache and went to play and forgot all about it Mr Crabb called this morning to borrow a rope to move his old house
Weather warm and smoky

March 8, 1898

Crissie Doverspike sent a note to mama and told me to tell her to answer it and mama told me what to say and I learned it by heart and told crissie. Mama white washed the kitchen. Mabel

Clark brought two walnuts and she gave me one of them and she kept the other and the other girls wanted them. Papa sold the old gobbler for \$1.95.
Weather warm and windy

March 9, 1898

Blackey had a little calf this morning and it was black as coal and we called it Nig. Mrs Doverspike called this afternoon. We started to school and mama called me back and gave me the secretary book to take to the teacher as she is secretary of our Sunday School.

As we were coming home from school we saw part of the garden was harrowed and mama was planting some onion seeds and covered them up.

Weather very warm

March 10, 1898

Edwin and I was going to school and we usually came home for our dinner and we started without it and mama called us back to take our dinner she thought the weather would be to rainy to come home at noon. We started home when school was out and papa came for us and we rode the rest of the way home.

Mama got a good joke on me this evening mama had a bread pudding and set it on the table and I thought it was baked beans.

Rained all day and cloudy this evening

March 11, 1898

When we were at school today the teacher showed us the place on the map where the maine was blown up. Mama finished planting the onion patch.

Crissie and William and Roy piled up the wood at the schoolhouse. Papa went to the literary and we didnt go so we drew pictures with our eyes shut and we stayed up until nine oclock mama stayed up till papa came home and papa came and said he heard a noise and say something ran up a tree and got the gun and shot it and it was a skunk

Weather beautiful

March 12, 1898

We picked up nuts and filled a box

Susie Doverspike called this afternoon a shortling

Morning cloudy now a few drops of rain

afternoon sun shone dimly

March 13, 1898

The yellow Heifer had a calf today so we didnt get to go to Sunday school it has been a long time since we have missed we hated to stay out nor we didnt get to go to preaching because we had to

take care of the calf. We had a goodtime eating nuts and playing and went to young folks meeting in the evening
The weather was very pleasant

March 14, 1898

The wind blew so hard that mama could not dry the clothes and we couldn't hardly walk to school at noon We had a pleasant shower and a little hail and the wind went down
The Yellow Heifers calf died today

March 15, 1898

The teacher gave us a cotation to speak the last day of school. The teacher wrote a song on the board and gave the third and fifth Readers time to copy it

March 16, 1898

We prayed half an hour before breakfast The teacher wrote a song on the board for the third and fifth Readers to copy.
Alia Maguire shook hands with the scholars as her papa has bought a farm about 9 miles from here Alia was quite a favorate with the school and am sure we shall miss her very much. Mama took the carpet up and made the dust fly in the sitting room

March 17, 1898

When we came home for dinner today it sprinkled and while we were eating it rained hard but it stopped in time for us to go to school and about half past nine o'clock at night it rained real hard. Mama popped popcorn and we practiced our pieces this evening and spent a very pleasant evening

March 18, 1898

We practiced our pieces and quotations at school. It was misty this evening and so cloudy that we didnt go to the literary but at half past eight oclock we saw a light there. Augusta Schultz came up and spent the evening with us and after she was gone Edwin and I took a bath in the washtub

March 19, 1898

This morning I saw the washbasin in there and said that mama rubbed against it to bathe herself. I finished a basket for the teacher. Papa forgot his coat and left it in the hay field and I and Edwin went after it and I didnt wear mine so I wore his back. Mama churned this evening. Mr. Clarson came here today and said Mr Hornes little boy had to have his head tapped Monday and he probly will not live through the operation.
Weather cool and windy

March 20, 1898.

We went to sundayschool and the title of our lesson was John the Babtist beheaded
We saw a very large snake on the paraire
Augusta Schultz and May Springer came came up here this afternoon and Edwin and I went home
with her and she gave me a handkerchief we went to young folks meeting
Weather warm and cloudy.

March 21, 1898.

We had examinations in our school today The girls dug caves at recess because they had nothing
else to play The teacher forgot to call the roll we sang a song during examinations for rest Edwin
and I picked up all the cobs in the manger and we drew them to house in the little wagon and they
upset and while we were picking them up I found 4 eggs and Edwin found only 1 and put it into
his pocket and broke it
Weather warm and windy

March 22, 1898

We had a rain last night and with some hail and this morning it snowed and this morning it was so
cold mama had to warm our shoes for us to put on and the children played in the schoolroom and
made so much noise that the teacher had to tell them so many times not to make so much noise
and while we was going up to school the wind blew through our stockings
We practiced our pieces for the last day and when school was out it was ten minutes after four and
we waited for papa and came home backwards papa tried to shoot a goose but the gun wouldnt go
off

March 23, 1898

We practiced our pieces songs and quotations and it was nine o'clock before we were done
speaking and the teacher said that we would stop our program and while the teacher was calling
the roll Ida Benson would not say her quotation and the teacher told her what her quotation was
and she would not say it and the teacher made her stand on the floor till all the rest had said their
quotations and she wouldnt say hers and the teacher said she must say it after school was out and
then she said it. Miss Anna Gleason visited our school a few minutes and said she would like to
stay longer but she was going to visit another school
Mama set a steel trap to catch a goose and mama knew there was five geese in one flock and she
saw four rise up and circle around and she thought she caught a goose but afterwards the other
flew up and joined the others and sure enough the trap was sprung The teacher and the older
scholars made some flowers to decorate the schoolroom for the last day of school
Weather very warm to have been so cold yesterday

March 24, 1898

We practiced our pieces for the last day and Alice and Roy came up at noon and spent the afternoon to school this evening the teacher came to our house today and mama went over to Hornes a little while we got a picture of grandpa today
Weather warm and sunny

March 25, 1898

Mama was sick and I done the dishes for her when I came home from school Papa was planting potatoes and we went down and he didnt want us Alice and Roy came to school today and at the last recess we took all the woodpile that wasnt already there and the girls put a wire that was on the ground and made a fence and the boys took one wire and ran away with it and the bell rang and threw it down We practiced our pieces quotations and songs for the last day of school
Weather warm and very windy

March 26, 1898

The teacher cleaned up at the schoolhouse today. We went with papa and planted potatoes till about four o'clock in the afternoon and it sprinkled a little and went home and thought it was going to rain and it didn't rain a bit and then I studied my sundayschool lesson. Papa tried to shoot a goose but the gun wouldnt go off and they went over to Lake Superior the name of my pond and mama thought they went over to Lake Michigan the name of Edwins pond and mama scart them up and set a trap but they went over North and probably they will not come back
Weather windy this forenoon and still this afternoon and warm

March 27, 1898

It rained hard about ten o'clock last night and the wind blew hard all night from the north and this morning it sleeted and snowed there was no Sunday school today it was so cold but there was young folks meeting but we didnt go because it was cold mama said she would get a headache if she went and I didnt feel like going and while we were eating supper the lamp globe broke and about all the glass fell into my plate and it scared me nearly to death

March 28, 1898

We practiced our pieces this afternoon and the teacher made a wreath and she put some yellow flowers and some cedar in the corners of the schoolhouse the girls went in a circle and told stories and Mabel called me before we got to the schoolhouse and the girls played color and than Roxie and Emily went away and they stopped playing and told stories and at the last recess we played wood tag and then we played rotten egg and then the bell rund
Weather very warm to be so cold yesterday

March 29, 1898

Today is the last day of our school it was a holiday to us and we came at nine o'clock and we had lessons till recess and then we played till noon and then the bell rung and we came in and dinner was ready and after noon we spoke our pieces and songs and quotations and before we sang our last song the teacher gave all the scholars a souvenir with the scholars names on them Edwins was tied together with a yellow cord and mine with a pink one and after school the teacher gave us our examination cards and told them to stay and then she gave them all candy but Edwin and she forgot him and afterwards she saw him and gave him an orange and told him to trade with Harry Doverspike and Harry wouldnt trade so we divided the orange and the candy and I took the half of the candy and the orange and in the morning I gave the teacher a vanity basket and then crissie brought an album that some of the school had payed for and Martha Standage gave her a brestpin and at May Springer gave her a nice handkerchief and Mrs. springer gave her a castle. Weather rather cold but quite pleasant P.S. Edwin and I helped to pay for the teachers album

March 30, 1898

We didnt do hardly anything but talk about yesterday This evening two men came with seventy head of cattle and will stay with us tonight and they said they would come back again next Tuesday to buy some pigs of papa Swine had ten little pigs this morning Weather chilly and cloudy

March 31, 1898

We picked up eight boilers full of cobs this afternoon and we picked up five boilers full of cobs in the hog pen and papa was making a stone hog lot and he was hauling stone and left the pen open and the hogs got out and then we could'nt hardly keep them in the pen and we had to keep stones in the little wagon all the while We went with papa to get some hay and papa turned a summersault on the stack while we were picking up cobs Edwin threw me down and tried to jump over me and he lit on my back Weather warm and cloudy [unintelligible] both this evening I thought I saw an eclipse and mama told me that it was just the sun setting behind a cloud and whats worse I called it and equinox instead of a eclipse PS Papa finished planting the onions

April 1, 1898

I played a good joke on papa this morning. a little while ago we had a hair-lipped pig and I asked him why that pig was hair lipped pig and he went and looked in the box and asked me which one and I pointed to one and said April Fool. We got a good joke on papa this evening we put some strings in the mush and he got both of them. Papa called to mama this morning and said come quick as you can and ran and mama ran as fast as she could and left her overshoes and her hood and it was nothing but an April Fool It rained and snowed and some of the flakes were so large mama said they were the largest she ever seen. Edwin asked mama if she saw a bird with red white spots on its wings and mama said no it must be a United States April Fool bird. Edwin asked me if I saw a bird sitting on the fence-

post and mama said Edwin was the one that was fooled for there was one there. Papa mended the harness today. While mama was folding the tablecloth she reached around behind her and knocked and then she stepped back and we thought someone knocked on the door
Mama took all the things out of the big box and put the things back again and put some clothes in the bottom of the box

April 2, 1898

Papa was making a hog shoot today but he didnt quite finish it. It was so muddy today we couldnt play in the forenoon. We played around the fender and we played it was a bridge and the hogs were Texas Cattle and I went to Edwins house and he was gone and I went all around and wanted to buy some hogs but nobody had and to sell and at last I met Edwin and he had some of him and then I bought six bushels of apples and I only got six apples they were so large and then mama called me to get some onions
Weather was warm and cloudy sprinkled several times during the day

April 3, 1898

It rained a little this morning and there was no sunday school and we ate nuts and popcorn and walked around and talked about where we were going to set out an orchard and shrubery and this evening we thought there would be no young folks meeting but Mr. Mcdiffett came for the key and papa went up and they was all that was there and it rained hard so they couldnt come home for about an hour and they have two children sick with Lung Fever and mama a two quart can of peaches fore the children and he said he would eat them before he got home and mama said well I guess you better not and if he did I spose he got a lot of rain water with them

April 4, 1898

I wrote a letter to grandpa this afternoon Edwin fell down and got his mittens so dirty I had to wash them out in the pond Papa hauled stone for a walk and we rode the horses up on the hill when papa went after stone. We named a pond Salt Lake and it was running over and we called it the Amazon river
Weather peasant but cool and windy

April 5, 1898

We went to the Post Office and I got very tired and Edwin said girls were always delicate things. We went with papa to burn off the long grass in the pasture and we picked bunches of grass for him to set fires with. About two months ago grandpa shot a duck and couldnt find it but papa found it today I got something in my eye and could see better with the other eye than I could with both Mama washed today and it looked so much like rain mama didnt dry the colored ones she said they were so thick that she wouldnt dry them but it didnt rain and she wished she had dried them

April 6, 1898

Mama said I had these leaves jumbled when she was wrong herself. My eye didnt feel much better today but I played outdoors most of the afternoon. Mama churned today and Mr. Aye came and bought all the butter and Edwin and I were preparing some onions and Mr. Aye said they were quite early We didnt play in the forenoon I named my pig Crank today. Papa and mama put some of the cattle in the other pasture and Baley kept trying to get out. Papa put the little pigs on the south side of the house and Crank got out
Weather lovely

April 7, 1898

Mama got the toothache this afternoon We butchered and didnt have dinner till about two o'clock Papa went to the field and it sprinkled a little and he thought it was going to rain and he came back and took the hog down and went to the field again yesterday
mama found a turkey hens nest
Weather cool and windy

April 8, 1898

Mamas tooth didnt ache today but last night it ached till three oclock til he couldnt get a bit of rest. And she came out to the bales and her face was swollen so papa said she would look better if the other side of her face was that way It was so warm I wore my bonnet and not my jacket and I just sat down and didnt play and it pretty near roasted me We watched the hogs so they wouldnt get out of the lot while papa was hauling stone

April 9, 1898

Mama was sick today and we watched the hogs all the afternoon except when I came in the house to get a drink and another time I came in and helped her do the dishes and some other work Mama didnt cook anything today but some potatoes for supper We turned old Daisy over in the other pasture with her calf
Weather warm

April 10, 1898

We went to sundayschool this morning and the title of our lesson was sufferings of Jesus foretold and we went to young folks meeting this evening and the topic of our lesson was conquering the fear of death. The turkeyhens laid speckled eggs today I guess they tried to lay Easter eggs. Mama was not sick today but she felt very weak because she didnt eat nothing yesterday. I laughed so hard I could hardly writ because I pretty near wrote mama laid the eggs instead of the turkey hen
Weather pleasant

April 11, 1898

Old daisy wouldnt let her calf suck mama and Edwin and I went down there and mama tried to hold her and she couldnt and mama was afraid she would strike her with her horns she kept horning at her calf so. Our old sow had eleven pigs and it was so cool they all chilled to death but five and it looked so much like rain papa brought them all in

Our pet pullit was used to coming around us and eating nuts with us and yesterday papa and mama and us were eating nuts in the house and she came in and papa pulled her tail and today she wasn't so tame as she usually is. Papa gave Blakey and Tiny their calves and tiny stood there and let the calves eat her teats off and afterwhile mama drove them away

Augusta Schultz called this afternoon a short time

Weather very warm

April 12, 1898

Papa made a box to our little wagons because it was rainy and mama wanted to know how it would look in the rain so papa put it out doors and it fell over and papa had to put it right side up. Mama ironed some of the clothes today and I had to write on the kneading board to the flour chest and mama ironed my doll clothes and I wanted to put them one the doll but mama wouldnt let me I am going to give my little doll and cradle to the first little girl that comes.

April 13, 1898

I dressed Anna today Anna is my birthday doll that Grandma Debo gave me when I was only one year old I dreamed quite a while ago that Edwin broke her arm and mama said it dos'nt matter he did'nt mean to and scolded me for caring Mama says I must be awful careful not to dream any lies. We didn't go to town today. Papa gave the old sow her pigs and she killed all but one and Edwin had to kill that Edwin says mama woulda killed it but she is to chicken hearted

Weather war and sunshiny

April 14, 1898

Mrs. Tass and Ernie came just as we were going to town and they said they had six turkeyhes lay in the same nest. Papa went ahead with the hogs and we went behind and the horses kept going so fast mama had to hold to the lines so her hands swollen up so she could not hardly hold onto the lines. Papa took 14 dozen of eggs in a basket and broke 11 doz. and 10 I mean broke all but 11 doz. and 10 and one of the hogs smothered to death. We got weighed today and I weighed 63 pounds and a quarter and Edwin weighed 66 pounds and a half and mama weighed 108 pounds as Mama was sick and I had to wash the dishes and wipe them and keep a fire and give mama camphor and wet clothes in hot water for her and warm a flatiron and I kept such a hot fire papa asked me if I was cold and told me that we didnt have one so hot in the wintertime

Mr Oneill came here to see papa

Weather no wind atall except once in a while a cool breeze

April 15, 1898

Mama sat up about half of the time Oral Zeifer called this afternoon The turkeys moved their nest. The onions are coming up. Papa came to town with hogs. We didn't go to the literary I read this to mama and she said it was short and sweet as a roasted maggot

Weather warm and windy not so terrible though

April 16, 1898

We played it was the day before the last day of school and we was cooking up. And this evening we played night hawk and we came to some water and chased the bugs. One of the hogs that papa sold today was a fall one and all the rest was spring ones and he was as large as the rest. One of the sows had some little pigs and papa put some bales around he and put some flax over her 'cause he thought it would rain
Weather very hot but some wind

April 17, 1898

We went to sundayschool and the title of our lesson was the Transfiguration and Mrs. Melcomb came home with us. It rained and there was no young folks meeting but someone came and maybe they stayed all night
Weather warm and threatening rain

April 18, 1898

We got up a late hour this morning and found that mama and papa was'nt going to Junction City because it was rainy. It rained and papa fixed the door latch and we spent our time spinning toys and papa powed a place to set out our peach trees and in the afternoon we set out the maples and Edwin said he would graft them
After supper mama and papa told us some stories one of them was about a man that went after his cattle and only found half of them so he went back again for them and took his two little girls along and he wished he had not took the children along he had to go so far and after awhile he saw a panther running along behind him and he started to go home and it began to grow dark and the panther got ahead of him and he took the children by the wrist and jumped and took his pocketknife in the other hand jumped to the panther with the children and the panther jumped back and afterwhile he got home and the next day he was sick and another story was about a girl that went on a horse after cattle and some wolves got after her and she tried to get home and the hors must have run against the tree and threw her off and the horse came home without her and when they found her she was badly eaten. I wo'nt have room to tell the rest of the stories

April 19, 1898

We climbed the cottonwoods Sunday Monday and today. Mrs. Parkeson and her neice came her tho by butter and Oral Ziefer came to borrow a chain harness
We was mulching some trees that we sat out yesterday. We picked some flowers today but it isnt rare thing
Weather pleasant

April 20, 1898

We went to Junction City today and Edwin and I stayed at Clarks and we played that I was the doctor and Mabel had the dolls and played they was sick and Edwin had to watch some prisoners

and then Clarence came and we didnt play it much after that and Flossie played that Mabel and I stole something and Edwin and her put us in prison and then Flossie hung us and Edwin both and all of us pitched onto her but we couldnt
Mama had her tooth pulled and mama papa bought a Mother Goose Book for Edwin and an Uncle Toms' Cabin for me
Weather cool and pleasant

April 21, 1898

It rained hard all day and we had to stay in the house and amuse ourselves spinning and reading our new books and talking about yesterday if mama wasnt sick when she came home so we couldnt talk about it then

April 22, 1898

Mama felt splendid well this morning and was setting the table and all at once she got dizzy and she came near falling down and afterwhile she wasnt dizzy but she didnt feel well all the rest of the day. We played while papa fixed the fence I dont like Uncle toms cabin very well but mama says the rest of the book is better I've only read the first chapter
Weather warm

April 23, 1898

The turkeyhens wanted to sit today and mama told us to drive them up to the shed they laig 27 eggs. Mama washed today it takes four weeks for a little turkey to hatch I dont think turkeys are as pretty as chickens when there rite young but when they get a little older I think they are prettier then chickens because they are so tame they will runs after a person with their mouths wide open a whisteling last year I had a pet turkey he got crippled some way and we had to feed it bugs and when it got well would roll logs and thing over for bugs and afterwhile it would watch me and when Id roll the logs over he would get after the bugs and some of the crickets would get away and run under another log and the turkey would run after him and try to raise up the log but he wasnt as good as the others because he was crippled
Weather warm

April 24, 1898

We went to Sunday School and the title of our lesson was a lesson on forgiveness and we went to preaching and young folks meeting and the topic was halfits We went to church all day
Weather pleasant excepting quite a nice sower in the afternoon

April 25, 1898

Mama had a kind of straightening up day in the house today. We are going to plant garden tomorrow papa started listing this afternoon and Edwin followed him
Weather pleasant

April 26, 1898

We garden today we planted peas and cabbage and beans and tomatoes and set out some turnips to raise seed and we planted some radishes. It was so warm mama had a [unintelligible] barefoot Edwin had the biggest water blister mama ever saw and he said it didnt hurt him atall and mama told him it would bust and he asked her if she'd have to give him chloroform

April 27, 1898

We finished planting garden too today and we planted some in the forenoon and the wind blew so hard we could'nt plant the small seeds but this afternoon the wind went down and it looked rainy and we hurried to get it in before the rain but it did'nt rain

April 28, 1898

[We was going without shoes (crossed out)]

We went in our stockenfeet today and this morning grandpa and his brother George and Uncle Georges wife and girl came here and mama pretended she was foolish and did'nt know who they was she said when we thought it was them it it can't be them can it and then she grunted like a pig and grandpa came up and said that they got stuck and papa went down and helped pull them out and they had some birds Weather warm

April 29, 1898

Uncle George was in the war in 1862 and he has not got enough of it yet he wants to go to war with spain. Uncle George asked me if he wasnt prettier than grandpa and I told him he would be if his hair didnt stick up like an Indians. they are going to Calafornia. They think it will take them 3 months but I think it will take four of them
Weather commenced to rain about five o'clock this afternoon

April 30, 1898

It rained all night last night last night April Fool had a calf. The reason we called her April Fool was because she was two years old last April Fool And she fooled us too she was so small It drizzled all day and Uncle George and Edwin and papa went over to Hornes and got some grafts of three kinds of peaches and some Apricots and we grafted trees today. Grandpa gave Edwin and I each a picture of him and Nellie gave mama a picture of her riding a mule. Edwin rode a mule to water yesterday and now he climbs up in the hay rack and pets it.

May 1, 1898

it rained all day today Nellie's birthday is the 9 of may and they are going to start to California tomorrow I don't think they will get any cake for their birthday. We didnt have any Sunday school today. Mama asked Uncle to write in her album and he wrote Dear Neice Although we got stuck We have got the pluck To go to the mountains blue And when you read this send me a kiss

For I shall always love you true And cousin Nellie wrote In the golden chain of friendships reard
me as a true link

May 2, 1898

our emigrants started out today I don't think they can travel very far it is such rainy weather. It
kept raining every once and a while today and papa went off to get some forest trees. About five
o'clock Allie Morhead got stuck and I don't now whether the mules feeled good at first or not but
he hitched them to the back of the wagon and they just jumped and wouldnt pull and papas horses
would have pulled it out but one of the mules laid down and papa said it pretty run over him. they
left the load till tomorrow

May 3, 1898

they unloaded part of the corn and got stuck with part of a load till papas horse couldnt hardly pull
it out and papa pulled it out of the draw intirely and Allie said he would kill them if they didnt
pull it out but they had to pry it out
papa went over and got some trees and set them out all day
Weather rainy

May 4, 1898

it rained all day and papa set out trees today. I like Uncle Toms Cabin very much the chapters I
like best are The Husband and Father. Showing the Feelings of Living property on Changing
Owners. Escape of Eliza. In which it appears that a senator is but a man. The property is carried
off. Select incident of lawful trade. The quaker settlement. Evengeline. The freemans defence

May 5, 1898

Its still rainy weather and papa sets out lots of trees and we put dirt around them and one time we
played we was tree dwellers and didnt have a ladder so we couldnt climb the trees so we put the
loose dirt around them but we couldnt get the dirt that wasnt loose because we couldnd dig it up
so we would take another tree and when we stamped the dirt down we tried to get up the tree

May 6, 1898

It stopped raining today and mama washed
theres lots of flowers now and the meadowlarks sings im glad its may the kinds of flowers we
gather are ferns daisies buffalo peas and violets and dandelions

May 7, 1898

We went after the mail today and got a picture and when we came home papa had got the hay and
we fed spot some and then we played toys night
It was a pleasant day

May 8, 1898

We went to Sunday school today and the title of our lesson was The marriage feast there wasn't any Sunday school last Sunday so mama had a review of last Sunday's lesson and the title of it was the triumphal entry We tried to get around in time to go to preaching but we just got there in time to hear the last song and be dismissed and then we stayed and talked about building a church and we would have been late for young folks meeting and they commenced to gather before it was dark papa was just milking the cows but mama was leader so they waited for her it was like the fellow that was going to be hung there wasn't going to be anything done till he got there. I wore my summer hat today one time while we was setting out trees mama turned milliner and trimmed my hat

Weather very pleasant threatening showers

May 9, 1898

It rained last night and papa and mama put Duchman in the derrick and we went out to play and mama thought it was terrible

Lumb's girls came here and gave mama some treebark and she gave them some pickles

Weather sprinkled occasionally

May 10, 1898

this morning when papa and mama was putting Duchman in the derrick Harry Lumb and his hired hand came and helped lift her up. the reason we called her Duchman was she had a big nose

Weather warm and cloudy

May 11, 1898

Mama and papa put Duchman up in the derrick and they didn't have much trouble putting her up and mama and I went to town today and the flags were flying in all directions I guess their getting woke up about the war Mama and I saw the Cuban flag under the United States flag and mama thought it was the flag of truce from the Spaniards and the United States flag was faded some Papa and Edwin went after the scraper to make a ditch and we couldn't hardly get the cows down

May 12, 1898

We didn't get the cow up in the derrick today [unintelligible] are in bloom a little. last year I had several kinds of flowers but they didn't but two kinds come up and they was cucumber and cypress and they was three colors Red white and pink but we didn't get any cypress seed. My flowers was planted this year before a week of rain and there ain't but two up

Weather windy from the South East

May 13, 1898

this afternoon we was to the house while mama was to garden and it commenced raining a few large drops fell and mama ran home and we went in the bedroom and it hailed a little and kept

raining harder all the time and in about twenty minutes it stoped raining just fell and the water must have been a foot high all over the yard

May 14, 1898

We went to the postoffice and I told Mable about the cakes of dirt in the draw and Edwin said I ment cakes of dirt and mable said no she means cakes of ice We went out and running and had a circus and when the mailcarrier came his horse was all swed and when we came I founq a penny
Weather warm

May 15, 1898

We did'nt have any sunday School today because it was raining this morning and and we had Young Folks Meeting this Evening and the topic was our bodes Gods temple and Andy Mcarther lost eight head of yearling steers last Friday and Lumbs hogs and hog lots swept away together but they all swum out but three and the lightning struck their best three year old steer and a calf drown

Its cloudy and threatening rain this evening till mama had me wear my cap

May 16, 1898

We did nothing but play this morning the air was so fresh and mama went over to Clarks to trade some eggs to set and I cut my thumb an im so afraid of blood I was scared worse than it hurt and it hurt very bad to and so you see I was pretty much frightened

May 17, 1898

mama went over to Doverspikes to get some seeds that she had sent to town by them for and when we got up mama had just got back with some lilacs she had begged
Doverspikes lilacs are awful late. We went to Allie Morheads. We went to tell him his hog and two pigs come to our house all the time and mama said she could ask for some lilacs but he was gone and the lilacs were all gone but some
Weather very warm

May 18, 1898

It was so windy today we played in the sitting room all the forenoon and we cut people out of papers and we have horses mules elephants girraffes colts lambs and sheep and I guess afterwhile Edwin will get a rattlesnake to ride. We went to the garden with mama this afternoon

May 19, 1898

this forenoon I helped mama work in the garden and today nick schorten Mr Hornes hired hand came and told us that clarence horne was dead His head was operated on Tuesday they thought they would burry him on Saturday they said they would come around again and let us know

We feel very sorry for Mr. Horne
Weather warm and Windy

May 20, 1898

the wind blew terrible hard today and threatened rain so hornes had the furnerl today but they thought it was going to rain so they hurried the funerl services they We looked at the corpse and he looked better than he did in life He was buried in a beautiful white coffin the first white one I ever saw. he was buried beside his sister there was the prettiest evergreen I ever saw on her grave. and there was so many wreathes and flowers we never saw such pretty ones the grave was almost covered

May 21, 1898

It rained hard last night and today we went over to the other pasture with papa and came back and drove the hogs and we run till we could not run any longer after one of them and we came back and rested and went over to the postoffice and back and did'nt get a bit tired I guess the reason I got so terrible tired that time was because I wasnt well. and when I was going up there I found a snake four or five inches around and when we came back he was there and May Springer came and she walked very fast and we told her she would find him
Weather cool and cloudy

May 22, 1898

We went to sunday school today and the title of our lesson was the day of Judgment and we went over to springers and and Ethel had about a [unintelligible] full of pieces for a quilt and she has a part of a quilt already it was already [unintelligible] I couldnt find enough to [unintelligible] about so they had to repeat We stayed to springers till evening and went to young folks meeting with them
Weather very warm

November 1899:

Moved to Marshall, Oklahoma Territory

In the fall of 1899 we came in a covered wagon to a farm my father purchased from the original homesteader near Marshall, Oklahoma Territory, arriving on November 8. How well I remember the warm, golden day, the lively little town, and the green wheat stretching to the low horizon, the setting of my life for over seventy years. . . .

Diaries:

March 4-June 25, 1901

(Box 5/folder 2)

This was copied – and badly copied – from the original diary. I hated the copying chore and neglected it. I enjoyed making the original entries, but my mother thought I should copy them – after I had three months' entries accumulated – in a permanent book. I simply hadn't the patience to do this, and the careless work is the result. In fact that is the real reason I discontinued the diary. I was a lazy child, and the file to be copied looked too large.

I commenced a diary March 5, 1898 and kept it up till May 22, 1898 I thought there wasn't any use in keeping one The other day I looked them over and had so much fun I thought I would start again Since then we have left our home in Kansas and have moved to Oklahoma we came where we are now Nov. 9, 1899 We have fixed the house and built a barn set out some trees fenced the pasture dug a well and made a hog-lot and there is room for improvements yet Papa has brought us a pony we call her Queen We have four cows and four calves the name of my cow is Lily and the name of my calf is Beauty the name of mamas cow is Spottie the name of her calf is Pretty Edwins cow is Rosie and the calf is Daisy Papas cow is Nig and the calf is Jim We have four horses Nellie Fred Frank and Bill we brought Nellie Fred and Bill down here with us We have four little pigs and twenty young chickens I have two birds and a cat the cats name is Bluebell School was out March 1 I found the first flower March 2

Angie Debo

March 4, 1901

We helped papa load up some oats today He wanted to plant them I was going to make a play-house but it was too cold Mama was going to plant garden but it was too windy so we got out of that job Edwin blew on his mouth organ to-night and told me to write so I will to please him Orlando Ray was here to-day for a load of oats papa wasnt here and mama told him that he was out in the field and then she saw him over to Mr. Elmars and then I had to run over and tell Orlando mama has got a knife that if it were a gun would shoot a man hiding behind a tree like the Irishmans Angie Debo Weather cold & windy

March 5, 1901

Edwin said when he read what I wrote last night he didn't think I would write about that mouth-organ We lost a little chicken to-day the old hen stepped on it Papa sowed oats to-day Edwin and I went around the creek and named Mt. Comfort and warm plateau and Grease Slide. Papa killed a skunk this morning I expect the cat will have fun mama planted cabbage and tomatoes in boxes She isn't going to plant any out of doors yet We got a good joke on mama tonight she told me to get some water for her and I just put a little in the cup so she kept calling and I counting and she drank twenty cups part full and we said it was twenty cups full
Weather – Cold but not as cold as yesterday

March 6, 1901

Mama was sick this morning and I did up the work and got dinner and she got well I told her she got sick on purpose Papa finished the oats today We have got some new neighbors to-day We told mama she was sick because she drank so much water yester-day Edwin and I started a play-house
Weather – Cold but wind in the South

March 7, 1901

Papa planted potatoes to-day Mr. Murphey was here to-day and his dogs Edwin and I didn't play out of doors to-day I finished in my Arithmetic to the eighteenth example on page 22 I croquetted some to-day and Edwin cut my finger with the thread and it scared me nearly to death
Weather – Very windy and getting worse all the time very warm

March 8, 1901

We went to town this morning Edwin got a knife I think it is very pretty Edwin got a pair of suspenders and a hat I guess it will be my turn next We had got about half way between the mill and the corner and we didn't think of the hat and suspenders so Edwin had to go back after them we went about 1/2 mile from the corner and we forgot the potatoes so we had to drive back after them Papa finished the potatoes
Weather – Warm and very windy sprinkled this evening

May 9, 1901 [March 9, 1901]

Mama and I planted the onion seeds this morning Edwin finished his wagon this morning Papa fixed fence Our new neighbors have got some guinea fowls I'm glad of it Edwin and I made a ball to-day
Weather – Warm and cloudy it is raining very hard
P.S. Edwin and I made a fox-and-geese book

May 10, 1901 [March 10, 1901]

We didn't go to Sunday School today The title of our lesson was Jesus and Caiaphas and the Golden Text was Thou art the Christ the son of the Living God I am nearly sick We called on our

new neighbors to-day their name is Nelson The childrens names is Sol and Hollie Wells This morning I got a pit shell in my throat and it was sore all day
Weather – Cold this morning warm this evening

March 11, 1901

Mama washed to-day and got the wash out before noon Mr. Baldwin was here for his harrow Edwin and I made a dining room on our play-house We played we went to a fair and I got premiums on a quilt it was some dishes We clipped the rags off of the trees mama put the prettiest chicken we had in the doom box tonight

Weather – Warm and terrible windy

Edwin was going to talk about Bob Ingersol and he said Salt Petre

March 12, 1901

We went to Hennessey with a load of oats It was the second time I've ever been there Mama got two teeth drawn I got a hat too We were too early there was only one store with trimmed hats in it Edwin got a pair of shoes When we went over to town we had to face an awful hard wind

Weather – Warm and terrible windy

March 13, 1901

Papa was making fence to-day Edwin and I moved our play-house and the wind began to blow and we threwed it up

Weather – Warm and very windy

March 14, 1901

Edwin herded our cows to-day I wanted to turn with the wagon and papa said the wheel raised The chickens went in the barn better to-night than yesterday Papa says Queen bites the cattle when they don't go fast enough to suit her

Weather – Very windy but not very warm

March 15, 1901

Mrs. Cramer and Mrs Sala were here to-day They said they went to Nicolsons and thought it was where we lived and found out it was not Nelsons guinea was here and went to roost on the manger Edwin herded the cattle to-day Papa cut down a tree made post Charlie Risley was here to-day and he where papa was and left his dog here and when he was going to go home he left his dog and he had to back after it

Weather – Cold and very windy

March 16, 1901

Edwin herded cattle to-day Edwin and I had time to play Shinnny and saw papa went to Marshall this morning Mama was sick

Weather – Warm but not windy

March 17, 1901

All of us went to Sunday School but mama The title of our lesson was Jesus and Pilate and the Golden text I find no fault in this man Our teacher says she will give us a button Isabell and Floid

Combs were here to-day We had a big time We herded cattle in the after-noon

Weather – Warm and very windy

March 18, 1901

Edwin found an opossum and mashed his head but he got away This morning we found that some-thing had dug all around all under the box and pulled the screen off but he didn't have sense enough to get in Two chickens put their toes through the cracks and he pulled their legs off and they did and he bit ones toe off We played wood-tag to-night Edwin herded the cattle
Weather – Warm and very windy rained very hard to-night

March 19, 1901

Papa killed a skunk this morning I suppose he was the one that killed the Papa set up his new lister to-day he bought it when we went to Hennessey I drempt last night that I wanted to say stove-pipe and I said mama The weather was like the little boy said it snew and blew awful bad Edwin herded the cattle to-day At noon we blind pigs horses cattle turtles flowers etc
Weather – Cold and windy sprinkled this forenoon showed some

March 20, 1901

Edwin herded the cattle papa used his new lister Tonight Edwin said Queen was a gunny-sack with a cats leg glued on and dyed with diamond dyes and she shook her little head Edwin went to go past the tub to-night and he began to snort like he always does and I told him there was a cat in it

Weather – So cold that it froze the creek last night windy

March 21, 1901

Edwin found his opossum to-day it was dead Mama set a trap to-day Papa listed Mama made us a checker-board Edwin threw his shoe against the door and mama thought he fell Quite a compliment on his foot

Weather – Warm and pleasant

March 22, 1901

I scraped up a large pile of truck and set a fire to it and I had to watch it and it was fun for me to put it out Edwin herded the cattle to-day and yesterday Mama didn't feel very well to-day Papa listed again

Weather – Warm and windy pleasant until night then we had a light shower

March 23, 1901

The turkeys went over to Combses and Isabell came over and told us and Edwin and I got all but one Then at noon we turned the cattle in the corral and they got out and went clear down to the South line then we went after them and when we got back the turkey hen was here and tonight mama cut off her tail Edwin herded the cattle and papa listed Mr. Murphy was here a little while today I sent off for some seeds Papa went to Marshall

Weather – Warm this fore-noon threatening rain this morning warm this after-noon threatening rain this evening

March 24, 1901

We all went to Sunday School The title of our lesson was Jesus and Caiaphas and the Golden Text Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures I mean the title was Jesus crucified and buried I was a little crazy when I said it was Jesus and Caiaphas When we got home Grandma Aunt Bird Aunt Ida Uncle Elmer Aunt Nettie and Cousin Mattie were here I had a lot with Mattie They brought me two house-plants Edwin herded the cattle

Weather – Cold and very windy

March 25, 1901

Papa went to town today and got Edwin a ball and brought home seven Faultless books no two alike Edwin herded the cattle papa listed A gentleman came here this morning and said that his horse got scared and broke the top wire of our fence and his brother was on it His brother was not hurt but the horse was badly cut

Weather – Warm and pleasant

March 26, 1901

Hollie was here to-day and at noon we got the steel-trap and Edwin got it and ran away to the yard and then we played we were opossums and we got the trap and set traps for each and dug holes and then we were in 1565 and founded St. Augustine mama washed and papa listed Hollie and I hunted for stones we found several Edwin herded the cattle We set a hen to-day

Weather – Warm and pleasant

March 27, 1901

Mama and I planted onion seeds and set a hen The little chickens are six weeks old next Sunday Papa listed Edwin herded the cattle To-night we sat on the hog-pen and when the hogs came up

we ran off and sat down some-where else on the pen and trembled and said “I wasn’t afraid I wasn’t afraid and then we went up to the barn and climb up on the hay-rack and trembled again and said “I ain’t afraid” and forgot what we got up there for and made things of the clouds and we saw a man standing on his head and a great many things

Weather – Chilly

March 28, 1901

I wrote to Flossie and Mabel to-day and March 5 I wrote to Armel and mama wanted to write too and she didn’t write until to-day Sol finished his work sooner than his folks expected and they went away this morning and to-night he was alone and we made him come down here Two turkeys made a nest so we have two eggs any-how Edwin herded the cattle and papa listed
Weather – Cold and windy rained a little in the after-noon and still cloudy

March 29, 1901

Sol was here to-day It rained hard last night and as it was too wet to work St. Augustine lay at the mercy of the Indians Papa went over to Marshall and several places after black-berries and pie-plant to set out in the after-noon and set out peach-trees in the fore-noon The door locked its-seft and mama had to go around to the bed-room window and wake Edwin up to unlock the door
Weather – Rainy until nine o’clock then cleared off and was cool and cloudy the rest of the day

March 30, 1901

We worked at St. Augustine We have made a bank hotel and store and to-day Edwin made a livery stable and I made a dwelling house and painted signs We made some taffy Papa set out the black-berries and pie-plant Four turkey hens are laying The Indians did not disturb St. Augustine
Weather – Warm and pleasant
Papa and mama said it was cold and pleasant

March 31, 1901

We all went to Sunday School and we had review and the Golden Text was He is despised and rejected of men

Title	G.F.
1 Jesus anointed at Bethany	She has done what she could
2 The triumphant entry	Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord
3 Greeks seeking Jesus	We would see Jesus buried
4 Christ silences the Pharisees	What think ye of Christ
5 Parable of the ten virgins	Watch there-for for ye know neither the day nor the hour where-in the Son of man cometh

6 Parable of the talents	So then every one of us shall give account of him-self to God
7 The Lords Supper	This in remembrance of me
8 Jesus in Gethsemane	Not my will but Thine be done
9 Jesus Betrayed	The Son of man is betrayed in-to the hands of Sinners
10 Jesus and Caiaphas	Thou art the Christ the Son of the Living God
11 Jesus and Pilate	I find no fault in this man
12 Jesus crucified and buried	Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures

There is three of us in my class and our teacher Mrs. Sala was going to give us a button if we had all the lessons and Golden Texts like I have put them down and we all got one and they weren't alike and mine was ye are the light of the world Edwin herded the cattle
Weather – Cloudy cold in the fore-noon warm in the after-noon

April 1, 1901

I came out to dress in the sitting-room to dress this morning and mama said she wondered what Sol wanted and I ran in the bed-room Papa got a good joke on Nellie he changed the fence and she thought she was loose Edwin and I hunted for shells and I made him think I saw a rabbit To-night mama told us to get wood and the first time I brought a stone and Edwin and old wash-basin and the last time we took the wood to the door and then told mama to open it and than ran off with the wood I told Edwin to put the cat on the clothes-line post and I went in and told mama and she thought the cat wasn't up there so she said April Fool Mama put some strings in the eggs and she got one and the rest swallowed theirs mama put a handkerchief on Edwin and Edwin tied papas legs together and fastened a news-paper to his leg Mama pinned Edwins sock to the carpet and then called him and he had his shoes off and his socks on and he jumped up and off came his sock Mama pinned my hood together I gave Edwin a piece of bark for sassafras While I was writing Edwin has been trying to lariat me I have two traps set now Mama made Edwin a cute little dog

Weather – Cold and rainy

April 2, 1901

The two traps I had set was I pinned up mamas night-dress sleeve for-got to put that Edwin herded the cattle yesterday in the fore-noon He didn't herd to-day and Jim Daisy and Nonsense got out but then we had to shut up all the cattle Lily is the name of my cow and I named her calf Ringtail and mama called her Nonsense just for fun and I traded her to mama and mama called her Pretty but I call her Nonsense Papa cleaned some brush out of the timber Edwin and I played at St. Augustine we made a church and I made a Drs office and Edwin a dwelling house
Weather – Cold and pleasant
P.S. It froze last night

April 3, 1901

We played at St Augustine I made a milliner-store hard-ware store and parsonage and Edwin made a drug store We made a fort of it I mean St. Augustine So our scalps are safe at least I put a letter in my handkerchief papa listed and Edwin followed him in the fore-noon He shot a crow I read four books in the bible to-day Mama tried to get the pigs to drink milk and they drank a few swallows Edwin and I went to feed them and they drank it all
Weather – Warm and pleasant froze last night

April 4, 1901

Papa listed and Edwin followed him around with a gun all day papa wanted to shoot a crow Edwin killed three mice and one centipede I finished reading the New Testament I read all of Revelation to-day When Edwin went out to the field he put four cartridges in his pocket and after he was gone I found one on the door-step and when he was coming home he found two by the hog-pen and he didn't lose the other Edwin got a good joke on me he said he if made money he would steal one cent and five mills a month and he said he would get twelve pennies and six cents a year and I thought he said twelve pennies and six mills so I said no eighteen cents
Mr. Risley was here for a harrow
Weather – Warm and windy

April 5, 1901

It rained last night and blew a perfect gale I got up and went up to the window and tried to knock the pane out and tried to raise the window and said mama and mama thought I was afraid of the storm and told me to go back it was only a straight wind and then I woke up and I dreamt I wanted to poke Edwin out through the window We went to Nelsons a little while Some-body is here tonight he is going to stay all night Edwin and I filled the tick Papas listed We have little chickens hatch
Weather – Cold and terrible windy

April 6, 1901

We have another hen hatching Edwin and I studied our pieces this morning and Uncle Elmer couldn't stay to dinner and right after dinner we went to Marshall and practiced our pieces and came home and had a bad head-ache I had fun emptying the tick Mama told Uncle Elmer that the Easter services were at 10 in the morning and when we went to practice we found it was at night Mama got us some sashes
Weather – Very warm in the after noon

April 7, 1901

As we told Uncle Elmer the wrong time papa and mama took Edwin and I to Sunday School and started out to head them off and after Sunday School we went to Cramers and went to practice in the after-noon and when we were coming home we met some boys with a basket of pop-corn and there were five of us Ethel Eva Blanche Edna and I and we filled our hands and papa and mama

came to Marshall and papa went home and mama stayed and the church was decorated in flowers and there were letters that said Christ is risen and the piece I spoke was He is just the same to-day and Edwins was Through the night mama and papa brought some rose-bushes to set out We wore our sashes every child that took part had on
Weather – Warm and pleasant

April 8, 1901

Edwin and I watched turkey-hens all day and they didn't lay Mama watched another and found a nest with seven eggs Papa listed Papa turned the cattle not because there was much grass but there was some weeds
Weather – Warm and windy

April 9, 1901

Papa hit five crows with one shot Edwin and I watched the same turkeys we watched yesterday they both went on the same nest mama found yesterday So three lays in the same nest Mama was sick she said she felt worse than she felt for a long time Papa fixed harness and cut down brush in the timber While we were watching the turkeys we played show we performed tricks and described some wonderful animal We sold Shetland ponies and when you fell off they would kick you and they were warranted to kill
Weather – Cold and rainy

April 10, 1901

Papa made a hog-pen Mama didn't feel very well Papa killed a snake day before yesterday mama set two hens I fell down yesterday and stuck my knee just full of poison briars and they made blisters and they were awful sore to-day Mama set out my Chrysanthem
Weather – Cold and rainy

April 11, 1901

Papa is weaning the pigs and mama set a hen mama and papa planted some onion seeds the ones we planted didn't come I didn't tell the Title of last Sundays lesson was The resurrection of Jesus and the Golden Text Now is Christ risen from the dead Papa went over to Risleys and got a sledge and dug out stone mama gave them two litters of chickens to one hen
Weather – Rainy in the fore-noon several showers last night

April 12, 1901

Mama washed to-day and papa got some black-berries and went to town He got some trough and made a pig board and set out some black-berries Mama and Edwin and I went out to shell some corn and mama would feed and Edwin and I took turns in shelling and papa came up and mama went away and papa shelled and I got corn out of the crib and Edwin picked the dirt out we are going to make chop

Weather – Warm and pleasant in fore-noon but several clouds flying over very cold this after-noon wind in North

April 13, 1901

Some cattle got in our wheat and we thought they were Mr. Murpheys and they were Mr. Actins and Edwin got Queen and when he got there they were gone home and Sol came here this fore-noon for some-thing and after dinner we went up and stayed a little while and their folks went away and Sol and Hollie and their cousin Lily came here papa went to Connards for a plow we broke the little wagon tongue

Weather – Cold and cloudy

April 14, 1901

mama didn't go to Sunday School but the rest of us did the title of our lesson was Jesus appears to Mary and the Golden Text was Behold I am alive for evermore and when we got home Uncle Elmer and Mary and Anna Rogers were here Papa and mama knew them in Marshall Co and we moved to Geary Co and they to Okla and we came here not for them They went away right after dinner because they thought it was going to rain and it didn't rain after all

Weather – Cool and cloudy threatening rain

April 15, 1901

Grandpa came here this morning Papa plowed and Edwin harrowed and papa sewed some sorgam seed and harrowed again Edwin and I went with papa after a load of straw To-night Edwin hid behind a stump to scare me and I saw him and reached over and touched him and scared

Weather – Warm and threatened rain

April 16, 1901

Grandpa was here to-day Papa plowed a place to put in millet and Frank broke the tongue to the riding plow We have little chickens hatching Grandpa jumped at Edwin and Edwin didn't jump quite two feet high

Weather – Cold and windy

April 17, 1901

Grandpa was here to-day and papa sowed millet and Sol and Mrs. Nelson came here and stayed just a little while and Edwin and I took a note to Mr. Actin and they live a mile from here and Edwin made me run all the way there and 1/2 the way back While we were coming home a buzzard came near eating Edwin Isabell came here this after-noon she had some pretty things to sell her parents went to town and left her here She will get a doll when she sells her things

Weather – Cold in the fore-noon sprinkled

April 18, 1901

Mama and I planted garden all day and Edwin covered corn and peanuts at dinner we set out some weeds at St. Augustine and played they were trees and mama said she told us dinner was ready and we didn't hear her and we went out to St. Augustine Grandpa went home Edwin and I went bare-footed this is not the first day we went bare-footed two days before I commenced my diary Papa got straw and mulched the potatoes
Weather – Warm Froze ice last night

April 19, 1901

Papa went to Mr. Risleys to ask him if he could have some rotten straw and after breakfast he got a load and Edwin and I went with him and we met Mr. and Mrs. Nelson and they were going to Hennessy and papa told to get part of our lister The man papa bought the lister forgot to give it to papa We found quite a bit of binding twine and came home and planted some more weeds in St. Augustine Doll and Sol and their cousin Wade came down here this after-noon Mama finished the garden Papa only got one load of straw Edwin and I went bare-foot
Weather – Warm

April 20, 1901

Papa had to plow the yard so we had to tear up St. Augustine we changed the name to Ft. Carolina because it was torn down Edwin went up to Mr. Nelsons to get that lister piece this after-noon we put grass seed in our yard it took quite a while and after we had put it in papa took hold of the drill and Edwin drove him and he balked and wouldn't pull and Edwin had to get another horse Edwin and I went bare-footed Mama saw two snakes Three turkey hens laid in the nest mama found and mama said one of them is laying out and I told her which one it was and mama walked straight to it
Weather – Warm and pleasant

April 21, 1901

We all went to Sunday School and the title of our lesson was the walk to Emmaus and the Garden Text Did not our hearts burn with-in us while he talked with us by the way Two of our hogs had pigs one had four and the other had three we had one litter before I commenced my diary they were four of them Edwin and I went bare-footed mama set a turkey-hen yesterday We made a swing
Weather – Warm and pleasant

April 22, 1901

Papa Edwin and I went to Sheridan this morning and took two bushels of corn to make chop and the sack came untied and we lost a bushel Edwin begged a cigar-box and they gave us both one We butchered to-night and we had good old liver for supper Edwin and I went bare-footed We have chickens hatching
Weather – Warm and pleasant

April 23, 1901

Mama took care of the meat and Mrs Peacock and her baby came here they used to live where Mr. Mr. Nelsons live now and moved away we never saw the baby he was born after they left they call him Charlie he is smartest baby I ever saw he just laughs all the time he is five months old Papa worked on the road Edwin and I went bare-footed
Weather – Warm P.S. Papa painted the trough

April 24, 1901

Mama set a turkey hen and papa worked on the road Papa made a shed for the hogs at noon Edwin and I went bare-footed
Weather – Warm threatening rain in the after-noon

April 25, 1901

Mama was sick this fore-noon and in the after-noon mama Edwin and I came to grandmas we are here now I gave her some lace for pillow-slips for to-morrow is her birth-day and Edwin gave her a bouquet of lilacs To-night Uncle Elmer and Edwin and I went to scare mama and grandma and Aunt Nettie ran in front of us and scared Edwin and we went and dressed him up like a dog and scared grandma and mama Edwin and I went bare-footed
Weather – Warm and windy

April 26, 1901

Mama went home this morning and left Edwin and I here then Aunt Ida and Mattie came up and Edwin and I went down there and was there all day then we came to grandmas this is her birth-day Edwin and I went bare-footed
Weather – Warm

April 27, 1901

Edwin and I were to grandmas Aunt Nettie gave me a little bell and a lot of things and I lost the bell Edwin and I went bare-footed Mattie came up here this fore-noon they have turkeys hatching
Weather – Warm and cloudy

April 28, 1901

We did not go to Sunday School to-day and Mattie and Aunt Ida came up here in the after-noon and Uncle Elmer Aunt Nettie and I got in the buggy and rode twelve miles Edwin and I had a radish apiece I broke a flower-pot so they call me Carrie
Weather – Warm

April 29, 1901

Edwin and I went to Aunt Idas this morning and was there all day I tried to pull out some onions and broke three and didn't pull up any grandma brought a yellow rose to Mattie it is the first one
Weather – Warm

April 30, 1901

Edwin and I were to Aunt Idas all day Tonight Aunt Bird and Aunt Nettie were up stairs and I was on the steps and I told Aunt Bird not to fall on me just for fun and just as I said it a shelf broke and every-thing fell on the floor and made a fearful noise and two packages of coffee fell down stairs and I thought Aunt Bird was going to fall down on top of my head and I didn't know Aunt Nettie was up there or I would have thought they were both coming down
Weather – Warm

May 1, 1901

Edwin and I were to grandmas today Mrs Elgin came up and Edwin went to Marshall with Uncle Elmer Mattie came up this morning and was here all day in the after-noon Aunt Ida came up and Aunt Nettie held Mattie and had her pretend to cry and Aunt Ida began to look wild and walk fast and I opened the door and she said what is dear and I had to laugh but Aunt Ida said what is it and then she set down and Aunt Nettie rolled her into her lap laughing

Weather – Warm and windy

P.S. This morning Aunt Nettie was leaning back in her chair and fell down and fell down and broke it

May 2, 1901

Edwin and I were to Aunt Idas Mattie went to sleep and grand-pa Edwin and I went after poke-root for greens we brought two pails full and Edwin and I went home as soon as we came back for we took one pail full home and we didn't want them to wilt Grandma went to Ellises and Mrs. Ellis let her borrow a book

Weather – Warm and windy

May 3, 1901

Edwin and I were to grand-mas Uncle Elmer and grand-ma were going to Orlando and went a little way and hollered that the calf was out so Aunt Nettie Edwin and I went down there and they were all out so she sent Edwin down to get Uncle Zeb but she yelled to Uncle Elmer and he turned to come back then we tried to get Edwin to come back but he didn't hear so I started down after him but he got there first we both ran back but Uncle Zeb came anyhow This after-noon Aunt Nettie Edwin and I hunted stones they are the funniest stones they are just the same as the Mammoth Cave only smaller

Weather – Hot and windy

May 4, 1901

Edwin and I were grand-mas Uncle Elmer and Edwin went to Marshall and Uncle Elmer made nests in the hen-house in the after-noon
Weather – Warm and windy

May 5, 1901

Uncle Elmer Aunt Bird and grandma went to Rogers and Edwin went to Aunt Idas and Aunt Nettie and I stayed untill Aunt Nettie had done the work and then we went to the canon and picked some flowers and while we came back we saw five little turkeys strayed off then we had to find their mother then we went down to Aunt Idas Weather – Hot

May 6, 1901

Last night at 11 o'clock at night papa and mama came here and of course took us home they have thirty-five chickens hatched sinse we left papa mad a monitor I took home a large pile of Youths Companions
Weather – Cool and windy

May 7, 1901

Papa took a hog to Hennessey it is fifteen miles so papa and mama wanted to get up at 3 but didn't get up untill 5 Uncle Zeb came over he looked at his wheat the louse was so bad it nearly killed the wheat but it is beginning to leave but the wheat looks better While us kids were gone one of the pigs that was born 21 died
Weather – Cool with good breeze

May 8, 1901

Combses turkey was here a week or so and Mrs. Combs was here after her but she was on her nest and went know where her nest was so she had to go home with-out her she told us one of our turkeys laid on our place theirs I don't know which Edwin cultivated corn with the monitor Papa planted corn with a hoe where it didn't come up
Weather – Hot

May 9, 1901

Two of Combses boys came here to watch their turkey but she was on her nest mama got me up early to watch our turkey-hen and I went out and she was gone There was some-body here this morning to sell some medicine Edwin cultivated with the monitor papa planted corn in with a hoe where it didn't come up
Weather – Fearful hot and not any breeze nearly enough to roast you threatening rain in the after-noon

May 10, 1901

Mama and I watched turkeys all the fore-noon and at last found the nest Isabel Combs came here this after-noon and her and I had a big time Edwin cultivated corn with the monitor Papa planted more corn in

Weather – Awful hot just as hot as it was yesterday in the after-noon wind changed to the North and got cool and blew a gale P.S. We shut up Combses turkey hen so they can find her tomorrow she goes to her nest so early

P.P.S. Papa sold two hogs

May 11, 1901

Combses boys were here to watch their turkey but she got away from them Nig had a calf we call her Speckie I mean the calf she is nearly white and her mother black Levi Combs killed two opossums and eighteen young ones the turkey didn't come up Tonight I'm she is going to set Mama and I watched a turkey for about an hour then shut her up about two then I watched her and found the nest Edwin finished cultivating

Weather – Warm

May 12, 1901

We all went to Sunday School and Aunt Ida Mattie Uncle Zeb and Aunt Nettie were there and they meant to come home with us but the colt ran home and so they had to go The Golden was Lo I am with you always even un-to the end of the end of the world and the lesson The great Commission This after-noon girls came over and harry then Sol came over Edna and blanche Bishop are going home they have been to their grand-parents for over a year

Weather – Roasting hot threatening rain

May 13, 1901

Mama and Edwin set out cabbage in the fore-noon in the after-noon we saw Combses turkey so we couldn't get her in the drive-way so I got after her and she jumped over the fence into the garden then Edwin watched her and I ran all the way over and Wade came over and watched her and then Isabel and Floyd came over and in a little while Mrs Combs came over and they found the nest One of our lilies is in bloom Papa planted in corn

Weather – Hot

May 14, 1901

Papa cultivated potatoes in the morning Two pigeons came here they are so tame you can catch them easy then about 10 it commenced to rain and rained all day the pigeons were here all day

Weather – Rainy

Mama set out cabbage before the rain

May 15, 1901

The pigeons were here to-day Papa put shingles on the cracks on the barn roof and Edwin had a big promenade The roof is so steep papa had to wind a rope on his leg
Weather – It sprinkled around this fore-noon and toward night about 4 it commenced to rain and is still raining

May 16, 1901

It rained all night last night and was showry this forenoon grand-pa came here about 4 o'clock Papa put shingles on the roof of the barn The pigeons were here today I am making cat-tracks on my dress
Weather – Rainy

May 17, 1901

Grand-pa was here to-day the pigeons were too Edwin and I went after turkey-eggs and we saw Nelsons and I told them their pigeons were here and Sol came after them but they were gone Papa had a hog-pen
Weather – Rainy rained this after-noon

May 18, 1901

Mama and papa went to Marshall grandpa went home Edwin and I went to Combses we caught four fish I caught the biggest one with my hands and was going to take it home but we put it where it couldn't get away and it got away any-how Sol and Doll came after their pigeons we have young turkeys
Weather – Cloudy sprinkled

May 19, 1901

We didn't go to Sunday School I guess things are having a good time but it don't seem as though it was near ready to stop yet
Weather – Rainy

May 20, 1901

Papa Edwin and I went fishing and fished and fished and fished all the fore-noon and didn't catch any thing The chickens were running around with a frog and we caught him and kept him for bait Mama washed to-day and in the after-noon papa made a kite but it wouldn't go
Weather – Cloudy

May 21, 1901

We worked in the garden all day and Isabell came here in the morning and brought her doll and went home at night and forgot her doll and at night I felt like jumping on the stepping block and yelling "Isabell has forgot her doll" and I believe they would heard me
Weather – Pleasant

May 22, 1901

We worked in the garden all day and we was to have a picture of our house taken and I danced a jig all day but the fellow didn't come Cramers brought some cattle to put in our pasture but the grass was so poor they took them out

May 23, 1901

We worked in the garden all day I forgot to say that the Title of last Sundays lesson was the Jesus ascends into Heaven and the Golden Text While he blessed them he was parted from them and was carried up in-to Heaven Papa cultivated
Weather – Hot

May 24, 1901

Papa cultivated and we worked in the gardenen We have little turkeys I guess their mother is mean
Weather – Hot

May 25, 1901

Papa cultivated and we planted sweet potatoes we took a stick and measured how far apart to put them They are nice plants We planted two rows
Weather – Cold threatened rain

May 26, 1901

This is Memorial Sunday and we went this morning and it was Childrens Day at night a queer time to have it but we didn't go The Title of our lesson was The Holy Spirit given and the Golden Text When he the Spirit of Truth in come he will guide you in to all truth
Weather – Cold

May 27, 1901

Papa cultivated
Weather – getting warmer
Maybe if it keeps on by to-morrow I thaw out so I can write more

May 28, 1901

Papa cultivated

Weather – Hot

The weather got hot enough but it seems it didn't have time to thaw me out a bit though I thought it would

May 29, 1901

We have little turkeys they are the cutest little things but their mother she is a terror to cats. Papa cultivated

Weather – Hot

May 30, 1901

We didn't go any-where but staid to home and planted sweet potatoes it was so cold mama made us wear our shoes but of course it was awful silly Papa finished the potatoes and corn

Weather – Cold

May 31, 1901

Papa mama Edwin and I all went to Marshall and took in the oldest chickens there was only eleven left they weighed 1 ½ lbs apiece and 12 [cents] a pound when we were coming back we asked Mr. Rice and we picked a lot of mulberries

Weather – Cold

June 1, 1901

Grandpa came home here today Papa listed It seems rather odd to think of listing after the corn is all cultivated but he listed up the oats

Weather – Warm

June 2, 1901

We didn't go to Sunday School but the title of our lesson was Jesus our High Priest in Heaven and the Golden Text He ever liveth to make intercession Grandpa was here too and this afternoon we hunted wild mulberries and found a lot but we would not pick them unless they were awful thick so we didn't get a cup full

Weather – Warm

June 3, 1901

Isabell came here and grandpa went home Isabell stayed here and Mrs. Murphey came here and she has a dress just like mama and is going to make it the same

Weather – Hot windy threatened rain at night

Papa listed

June 4, 1901

Papa went to Marshall and listed and went to Elmors to see about cutting our wheat
Mama washed
Weather Hot and windy

June 5, 1901

Papa listed in the fore-noon and Mr Elmor cut the wheat in the after-noon and papa shocked I
guess it will not go ten bushel
Weather – Hot and windy

June 6, 1901

They finished the wheat and Edwin and I went after mulberries Mr Elmor said we could they are
his they are up by the road
Weather – Hot and windy

June 7, 1901

We planted sweet potatoes Edwin made a wind-wheel Papa cultivated tonight The wind got
almost a hurricane and papas knife was down to the garden and Edwin and I went down to get and
it was impossible to run against the wind
Weather – Hot and windy

June 8, 1901

We had shower last night Papa cultivated Mrs Combs and Isabell came to see about their turkey
and she was hatched and gone We had some new potatoes we shall use them all along

June 9, 1901

We went to church and the title of our lesson was Jesus appears to Paul and the Golden Text I was
not disobedient unto the heavenly vision It was quarterly vision tonight but we didn't go

June 11, 1901

Papa cultivated Edwin and I got mulberries Mama was sick Dollies folks were gone and she came
here to stay all night We played hide-and-go-seek before supper and after supper we played fox
and geese and Dollie and I played the first game and I beat next Edwin and Dollie and Edwin beat
and next Dollie and I and Dollie beat

June 10, 1901

Mama washed Mrs Simson came here she wanted to sell some baking powder and dishes we had some strings beans Papa cultivated I have got the cart before the horse but you may rest assured that I did not live tomorrow before today or the 11 before the 10

June 12, 1901

Papa cultivated tonight Edwin and I were playing hide-and-go-seek and I was hid and mama said something to Doll and I thought it was one of Edwins tricks and Edwin found me and I told him it was a pretty smart trick and he told me it was Dolly and sure enough it was

Weather – Windy

June 13, 1901

We got some mulberries we had a shower tonight two turkeys were fighting and papa put one on the roost and she flopped over and broke her leg we killed her Weather – awful windy

June 14, 1901

Papa cultivated and finished the field he was working at Edwin put his wind wheel on the peak of the barn he climb up and naid it on

Weather – Hot

June 15, 1901

Papa cultivated and finished the field yesterday and worked in the field South of the house and finished the corn Edwin and I got some mulberries

Weather – Hot and dry

June 16, 1901

We all started to church and met grandma and Aunt Nettie so we came back The Title of our lesson was Jesus appears to John and The Golden Text Jesus Christ the same yesterday to-day and forever Isabel came here this after-noon Mama and I had a headache

Weather – Hot

June 17, 1901

Papa worked in the Harvest field Uncle Zeb came here he has his wheat near us and is now cutting it mama Edwin and I felt bad

Weather – Terrible hot

June 18, 1901

Papa harvested Uncle Zeb was here for dinner and we had some peas We have little turkeys
Mama went to town and Edwin and I went to town too we got weighed Edwin is 71 lbs me 69 ½
and mama 109 while we were coming home it was thundering a little harder than usual and
Edwin thought it struck Tonight the lightning struck north and it rained a little but not much

June 19, 1901

Mr Elmor told papa that the lightning killed a man it was the same time Edwin heard yesterday
Papa harvested
Weather – Hot

June 20, 1901

Papa harvested Edwin and I went along the road after mulberries I got a gallon and Edwin got
about a cup full
Weather – Hot

June 21, 1901

Papa harvested Tonight Edwin went to get some water for supper and the pump gave out
Weather – Hot

June 22, 1901

Papa went to P Peddicords and Balawin to get the pump tools Then he went to town to get a new
rigger he called it cylinder sucker plunger and valve so I don't know which it is It don't pump
near so easy Papa worked in the harvest field this fore-noon We couldn't find the little turkeys
Weather – Hot

June 23, 1901

We all to Sunday School It was the preachers last Sunday he has something the matter with his
lungs and wants to go some where the Title of our lesson was a new heaven and a new earth and
the Golden Text He that over-cometh shall inherit all things and I will be his God and he shall be
my son Edwin and I were up in a big burr oak to play and we threw leaves down and I got some
leaves and broke them up and got a big leaf and put the little ones on top and said Here goes an
old tree goose and some young ones on its back and I meant wood duck Then papa and mama
came along with an ax and a box of matches some sulphur and a box of straw we followed and
they tried to smoke an opossum out of a stump and there was none in then Edwin and I went and
found some fish We couldn't find the little turkeys so they are out again tonight
Weather – Hot

June 24, 1901

Papa worked in the harvest field Mama washed in the fore-noon and went down to see the fish and found the turkeys they are nearly starved to death then right after dinner we drained off all the water we could then carried of nearly all the rest and caught 7 one perch and six little bull heads We ate the big perch and kept the little ones
Weather – Hot

June 25, 1901

Edwin and I went down to fish again and I sent Edwin up after the swill-pail to and little wagon drain it off but he brought down the swill-pail and a gunny sack so we filled the sack up with stones and started out and didn't get but one then we went to another place and got 32 The six we caught yesterday we took to the spring four of them died then we took 32 to the spring the turkeys died

1902:
Received common school diploma

1906:
Attended one year of high school

1907-1910:
Obtained teacher's certificate and taught in rural schools near Marshall, Oklahoma

1913:
Graduated from Marshall High School

1913-1915:
Taught in rural schools near Marshall, Oklahoma

1915-1918:
Student at the University of Oklahoma, Norman

1918:
Received Bachelor's degree in history from the University of Oklahoma, Norman

1918-1919:
Principal, Village School, North Enid, Oklahoma

1919-1923:
Taught history at Senior High School, Enid, Oklahoma

1920:
Inducted into Phi Beta Kappa honor society

1923:
Received Community Service Certificate, Enid, Oklahoma

1923-1924:
Graduate student at the University of Chicago

1924:
Received the Master's degree in history from the University of Chicago

1924-1933:
Member of the history department, West Texas State Teachers College, Canyon, Texas.
Taught in a high school associated with the college.
Studied toward her doctorate at the University of Oklahoma.
Worked on her dissertation.

1924:
Publication of Debo's master's thesis, co-authored with J. Fred Rippy,
The Historical Background of the American Policy of Isolationism.

1927:
Inducted into Pi Gamma Mu, national social science honor society.

1931:
Death of her brother, Edwin Debo.

Interviews with Angie Debo, #2

November 20, 1981.

**(Gloria Valencia-Weber and Glenna Matthews Interviews with Dr. Angie Debo,
Collection 1985-013, Box 2/folder 3)**

Now I could maybe talk about what got me started writing. I went to O.U. with every intention of majoring in English, because I had been encouraged by a high school teacher here. I'm afraid I'm not doing well today. I never am when you come, somehow. The times when I feel the best you don't happen to be here on those days.

Why don't you turn it on and we'll – Well, you say
a high school teacher got you interested in English?

Well, not exactly. I suppose everybody that likes to read would like to write. When I was five years old – which was the age people started going to school in Kansas – learning to read was a great joy to me. It was just about the nicest thing that had ever happened to me, and so, very soon I thought I'd like to be writing some books, too. My brother and I spent so much time running over the prairies and I always noticed flowers and plants. My grandfather was rather proud of me for that because I always knew everything about a plant. I knew just how it bloomed, and what its habits were, and so forth. And so, I was going to write a book that was called "Wild Flowers," and I was going to describe the plants that grew on the prairies. I was about seven years old, I guess, by that time, but I never did think very much about it. And then, of course, I came to Oklahoma and I attended a rural school – first in Kansas – that's where I was introduced to literature and things of that sort, and enjoyed reading still more. Of course, I taught in rural schools and was not able to go to high school because there weren't any high schools around here. And so I taught a few years, and went back to high school. When I went back to high school, I had managed to pick up one year of high school here at Marshall. They did have one year of high school here, but they kept on having a year every year, and never went any farther. So, while I was in high school, Mr. Castleberry – who was later on the faculty at what is now Oklahoma City University – told me one time, "When you go to college, major in English because when you get older you're going to write books and things that the rest of us will be reading."

Well, of course I walked home on clouds that evening. When I did go to college I did start out with an English major. They didn't have any course in professional writing at that time. The Freshman English course just was to teach one to write accurately and grammatically, shall I say, and it was mostly on exposition because they said that was what people would use most of their lifetime. There wasn't anything about that Freshman English course that would help anybody in becoming a writer. I did take a course in English literature which I enjoyed. They were well-taught courses, but all they did was teach someone to become an English teacher, to use good English – at least correct English – and to develop an appreciation of literature, and be an English teacher, and grade papers the rest of one's life. So I enjoyed all my courses so much – I always did – one was about the same as another, I changed into a geology major – I didn't want to be an English teacher – I didn't want to grade that many papers. And then I came under the influence of Dr. Dale – he wasn't Dr. Dale at that time. He was a new member of the History [Department] faculty that had one year of graduate study at Harvard. And, of course, you know that he had come up as – he had been a cowboy and he hadn't even looked at a high school until he was 27

years old. And then he took an examination the same as I had done when I was 16, and did the same thing – started teaching at a rural school, got a taste of it, and then went on to college at the Central State Normal School – it was then at Edmond.

I remember one time he said he paid so much for bed and board, and he couldn't tell which was which. [Laughter] Well, he was quite an inspiration. He had graduated by that time from the University of Oklahoma, and had one year at Harvard and had really got a taste of the way to conduct historical research. So he taught his classes, and that's the only training I ever had in writing, and it's the only kind of writing I ever knew how to do. So it seemed rather natural that since I did enjoy history – I enjoyed geology for that matter, and I enjoyed English for that matter – but I did enjoy history. So I majored in history.

When Dale was at Harvard did he study with Frederick Jackson Turner?

Yes. That was a very wonderful experience for Dale. It meant as much for Dale to be under the direction of Frederick Jackson Turner – it meant as much to Dale as it had meant to me to get a glimpse of what lay beyond in the field of – in the intellectual and scholarly field and so forth, and he came back all thrilled with it. He was a lowly instructor in the [O.U.] History Department with a Master's degree from Harvard – but extremely enthusiastic. So he taught that class in American history is what it was, I believe – I believe it was a sophomore course. He taught that class how to conduct research. He had us hand in our notes; and he showed us how to take notes; and then he had us hand in an outline; and he showed us how to organize our material.

Then, at the end of the semester we, of course, wrote our term theme, but instead of just writing a term theme and handing it in, he spent the whole semester in helping us in the techniques of historical investigation and writing, just the same as he had been taught at Harvard. That had been such an exciting experience for him. That was the main reason why I changed to a history major – I came out of the university with a history major.

So because Dale had gotten a high school degree at 27 and then been able to go on to Harvard I expect you felt no diffidence about going to the University of Chicago yourself. Dale must have provided quite a role model and inspiration in his having been a cowboy and so on and then his winding up getting a Master's degree at Harvard. So that made it more psychologically possible for you to go to the University of Chicago, I would imagine.

What he did was to take an examination you see, and teach in a rural school. Well, he gave his experience in that memorial book that you've read. He became – well, very successful and he got a job as principal of a small town high school. The Kiowa-Comanche-Apache Reservation had just been opened to settlement, and he got a job as superintendent, maybe – or principal – I don't remember which, it's in that book [*Frontier Historian*]. And he needed more education, so he went to Edmond, and he had not ever been to high school. The name of the college was the Central State Normal School – no, it wasn't State, we weren't a state yet. Anyhow, it was the

Normal School, and he said it was very appropriate to call it the sub-normal department [Laughter]. I mean in later years I heard him call it that. Well, that's the way he worked out his – he'd got to summer school and so forth, it's in that book [*Frontier Historian*] – that's the way he worked out his eligibility to take college work. He got his bachelor's degree from the University of Oklahoma. Of course, he had the cow-country background, and I had the homesteader background – but he came up in much the same way that I did.

You describe somebody starting college after 20.
Were you and Dale typical of people of that time
going to college later in their 20s?

I don't believe we were typical. I really don't believe we were. I don't think very many people went back to high school if they didn't get high school at the right time, which most of us didn't. No, I don't think they did. After we had high schools – when people would graduate from high school, then they might teach or something. High school graduates would be probably of a normal age – 18 or so. They would teach, and then they would perhaps add to their background some college courses in the summertime, or maybe they'd go to college the whole year – the same as Dr. Dale and I did, but I don't know of anybody that went back to high school. I don't know. It wasn't a very common thing.

Those ordinary statistics about land ownership, they don't apply – they don't have any meaning. It takes until about 1920 until any statistics about land ownership are worth anything. And people don't know that. Good scholars don't know that.

What made you feel that you could tackle
something like going to the University of Chicago?

I suppose it was true that I had somewhat the same kind of background that Dr. Dale had had – of course, his was of the cow country, and mine was of the homesteaders, but both of us had been unable to pursue our education. Both of us had read every book we could get hold of, which were not very numerous. And both of us had gone to a country school, and learned whatever we could learn. We learned the books by heart in the country school, and we had not had a chance to go farther; because he had picked up his education after he started teaching, and I had done the same with my high school work. It just seemed like a perfectly natural thing for me. I don't think anything about it. I remember thinking that for a graduate study I ought to choose an urban environment. I felt as though my Oklahoma environment was entirely rural, and it was a specialized kind of rural environment too – because it was a frontier environment and it was really the last frontier. So I felt as though that the urban environment was something that I didn't know anything about, and that I ought to go either to Chicago or Columbia, so I could live in either Chicago or New York. I really chose a place where I would be living in a city. No, I didn't have any feeling of hesitancy about it at all.

What made you choose Chicago over Columbia?

Well, it did have a better history department. Now, of course, there were some great historians at Columbia, but Chicago was at the very height of its influence at that time. It had outstanding

historians, and I did feel that the scholarship was stronger there. Now, Hays was at Columbia. He's the only person I can think of right now that was really outstanding.

Whereas at Chicago you had Avery Craven and William E. Dodd there?

Yes, William E. Dodd was there. I had a course with William E. Dodd.

Chicago in the 1920s had the reputation of being a real innovator in education.

It hadn't started yet – it started after I left. It just had an outstanding group of historians. I don't think its scholarship was ever so high after that. In fact, I'm sure it wasn't. And of course, it had J. Fred Rippy, who was just starting his career. Oh, I should just be able to name all of them . . .

How did they train or expose you to this scholarship?
Were there set courses that everybody took?

I just took courses. And I was fortunate enough to get in J. Fred Rippy's class. It was a course on, The Americas in World Affairs. That was his specialty. But I think I could have been almost as successful in the classes of several other historians because they were very strict and hard-hearted at the university. But if they saw just a little glimmer of earnestness or ability, they fanned the flame! They really helped us. And I came across a statement in the reminiscences of John Adams that surprised me about the American foreign policy. It was the first quarter, and I was in Dr. Rippy's class, and I took that to him and asked him if he believed that that was just a lone statement, or if that was something general that there was a definite policy of isolation quite a while before independence – as soon as the Revolution started, there was a very strong policy of isolation, and they were even opposed to the Declaration of Independence at that time. Well, he was surprised when he saw it. I don't know why none of the historians had never found that and why I, just a beginning graduate student, found it. It was just a piece of good luck is really what it was. And he was quite excited and he said, "Well, now you can follow that through and see if there are any other indications or if that's just one lone statement, of one person, that maybe has forgotten before he wrote it down." Anyhow, he said, "You're supposed to write a term theme in my course and that will be for your term theme." Well, Americas in World Affairs – that wasn't really on the subject at all because when he said Americas – he meant North or South America. But I said, "Suppose I spend a whole quarter hunting it and don't find anything but that?" He said, "Suppose you do find that that was a settled policy? You've made a discovery and I think we can get it published." Well, I got awfully excited you know and I said, "Suppose that I find out that this is just a lone statement and has no significance whatever?" He said, "You can use this for your thesis and I think we can get it published." I said, "If I find out it has no significance I can't use it for my thesis. I still won't have a term theme for your course." He said, "I'll take that as a term theme. You just write a statement that you have examined this and this and this, and that you find no evidence and that'll be a term theme for me. But of course, you will have to find another subject for your thesis."

Well, by the time the quarter was over, which ended at Christmas time, I had found overwhelming evidence that had been overlooked by all of the historians. Why they overlooked it I don't know, but they did. I was just lucky. Well then of course, I was very excited. I did use that for my thesis. I think I told you, William E. Dodd – I had a course with him on the Old South, and American foreign policy had nothing whatever to do with the Old South. I had to write a term theme for him. He said he would read my thesis and that would do for the term theme – not to waste time on anything but that thesis. Several people helped me like that. That is, they made things easy for me. I worked harder on that thesis than you usually work on a thesis – naturally. Well, all of the writers – the historians before that time had started the American Policy of Isolation. It was strongly influenced by historical writing in the early 1920s. You see, that was the fall of 1923, and Wilson had just failed and all those things had happened. It was really the major issue in American foreign policy at that time. It isn't now; and everybody assumed that it started with Washington's policy when he was president and with his farewell message. They started there and I found out that it had been a recognized factor of American foreign policy even before the Declaration of Independence was signed, and that it had been used as an argument on both sides when they were deciding about whether to declare independence or not. The people who didn't want independence, who thought we should not declare independence, had used it as an argument. And the people who had approved independence had used it as an argument. And it had been recognized by the European countries, the League of Armed Neutrality, and so on even before the Revolution closed. Of course, we did enter an alliance with France, but we would have made an alliance with the devil at that time because we just had to have help.

Dodd must have thought that you were really on to something very significant and therefore that had more social importance to the American society to push that back a little bit and see that threat as being really part of America. In other words, almost as soon as Americans start talking about political issues they start talking in terms of isolationism is what you're saying. That when there's any kind of political discussion being carried on there are assumptions about how America won't get entangled with others.

Are you familiar with that book? There are not very many copies of it. It's called the same title that was on the thesis, and it's in Dr. Rippey's name and mine. There is a copy at the OSU library, but if you don't find it, I'll lend you my copy.

What is the full title?

The Historical Background of the American Policy of Isolation. It was recognized by European governments that this rebellious group of colonies that hadn't yet established themselves, they were claiming to be independent, but they hadn't yet got it recognized by England. The Revolution was still on; but while it was still on they recognized that the Americans wanted to stay out of entangling alliances.

It seemed like there was almost going to be a war up there in the Pacific Northwest during Washington's administration, the Nootka Sound Controversy. Washington had to make a decision about that during his presidency, and that had been understood by historians. But they started with that. They started with Washington's presidency, and I started with before the Declaration of Independence was signed.

You'd mentioned that you'd found that both sides of the involvement or non-involvement had used the stamen of isolation. This is in 1923. It would be the time after the failure of the United States to enter the League of Nations, and it was a current issue. What did you do when you finally got all this written up, and where did you submit the idea and discuss the idea with?

Dr. Rippey did that. All I did was just write down what happened. I didn't give any of my own opinion about it at all, or about isolation. But when he submitted it to Smith College he just submitted the thesis as it stood.

I had been surprised at how many historians in writing about that French alliance have not read the Treaty of Alliance. There were two treaties. There was a commercial treaty and there was a Treaty of Alliance, and they don't even read the Treaty of Alliance. They think that it bound us to support France if France got in a war, and that's not true. There was even a provision in that Treaty of Alliance for neutral ally – for the action that a neutral ally should take if the other ally got in a war. The neutral ally didn't have to join in the war. There was some entanglement in the commercial treaty. Later on when we did get into trouble, when France and England fought, we did not violate the Treaty of Alliance. And it's surprising how many historians say we did because they didn't even read it, and it's a brief treaty. They could have read it. There was one provision in the commercial treaty that I think we did violate, but we did not violate the Treaty of Alliance.

So, the popular misconception is that the United States did not keep the treaty because it did not enter on the side of France. But you're saying we did keep the treaty by staying neutral.

We were not required to enter. There was nothing in that Treaty of Alliance that would have required us to join France in the war against England. All you need to do is read that treaty. But there was one provision in the commercial treaty that I think perhaps we violated. I don't happen to remember just what that provision was. It's been too many years since I'd been thinking about this.

That's very exciting, though, to be making this discovery at that time. This is year 1923 when you started, and you worked on this thesis for how long?

I got it finished sometime before graduation. I got my degree at the end of the term 1923-24 and my thesis written sometime before that. Dr. Rippey submitted it to Smith College, and I didn't have anything to do with that at all. He did it all. He did the proofreading and all.

It sounds as if you are saying that your professors at Chicago treated you the same as they did a man student who had a similar glimmer that they wanted to fan.

There wasn't any discrimination at all at my being a woman. No, there was no discrimination. They didn't care if it was a woman or a man. I never had any discrimination against anything I wrote. Whatever discrimination I have had was in getting a position at a college or university.

How was that class? Were there other women there?
Was it a large class in general? How many people were there and what happened to them?

I don't know what happened to them. Several of them I became quite intimate with. And there were several of them that were very – just about all of them were very capable, and I don't know what their future was. I never kept track of them after that, so I don't know.

You once told me that when you finished that there were letters that the University of Chicago History Department would get from institutions interested in hiring graduates from the program. How many of those programs were so interested in hiring a Chicago graduate that they would hire a woman?

It was during the Spring when all of us – of course, I didn't know all of the graduate students, either women or men – I just knew some of them I happened to meet in class and I became quite intimate with some of them. The university stood so high that even a Master's degree – which is not considered very important now – from the University of Chicago was important enough that colleges and universities over the country were contacting the History Department for some of their people who were receiving Master's degrees. Dr. Rippey happened to be the member of the History Department that had charge of that, and there were 30 colleges and universities that asked the University of Chicago History Department to make contact with some of their students. Twenty-nine of them said that they wouldn't take a woman under any circumstances. One of them said they preferred a man; they would take a woman if they couldn't get a man. One of the 30. It hit all of us pretty hard.

About how many women were in your class?

I don't know. You see, we weren't a class exactly, we were just enrolled in classes. I'd be in a course with Dr. Rippey, and I'd be in a course with Dr. Dodd.

There were other women in the program that you knew?

Oh, I knew several of the women in the program that I happened to have met in class. It was just like being an undergraduate; it wasn't any different. Our relationship with each other wasn't any different from the relationship that undergraduates had with each other. Freshmen are acquainted with other freshmen perhaps in Freshman English, and they meet other freshmen in Freshman Algebra – something like that. That's the only relationship we had. Oh, I think we did have a few meetings of the graduate history students, but I didn't pay too much attention to them. We were supposed to take an examination on all of the courses that we had taken during the three quarters before we were admitted as candidates for the degree. Dr. Rippey told me not to study. And all of them studied pretty hard on those examinations, but me. And I worked on my thesis, and he told me not to study for his course. He said, "We won't pay any attention to that at all." He said, "You'll be all right in my class." I don't know what the others did, but I didn't do one bit of studying. And people that I knew would come by me with their arms full of books, and here I'd be working on my thesis. They thought I probably failed, but I didn't. I had to take an examination in every course I had all winter. I don't know what I made on those examinations. They gave me a degree anyhow.

Of the people you did know as friends there, what were their backgrounds like? Here you come from this frontier country. Were there other people like you?

No, there wasn't anybody else like me. But they didn't know about my background either for that matter. And I tried to see as much of Chicago as I could in that winter. In those days there weren't tours planned or anything like that, but you could buy a guide book. In all the spare time I had, I went to Hull House, and I went to all the places that I'd ever heard about. The only things I failed to go to – I didn't go to the stockyards and I didn't go to Northwestern University. I had those laid out – I was supposed to go to them – but I missed them. But I went to everything else. And, of course, the people I knew sort of teased me because I studied this guide book. But it wasn't more than a week that they were coming to me for information and I was guiding their tours.

Well, that was the great age of Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright had just been designing great buildings in Chicago. So I expect it was very exciting to see some of the Louis Sullivan buildings in downtown Chicago?

Well, yes, that area – Michigan Avenue – there's a space you know between Michigan Avenue and the lake, and it was just a sea of mud, and it had not been filled in as it has been now. I was there at noon, and a group of young men and women that worked in the offices on the West Side where all the skyscrapers were had crossed the street and gone into that sea of mud and were playing and throwing baseballs at each other, and I thought it was such a pretty sight. I thought it was the most American sight that I saw all the time that I was in Chicago. Chicago seemed in many ways like a foreign city. There was so much of Chicago that was not – that didn't have the kind of American spirit that I was accustomed to. But it seemed to me that this was really an American sight to see all of these hundreds – there were hundreds of them – of young people out

there in that mud throwing muddy balls at each other and batting them. Oh, I went to all the places that one ever went to.

Were you ever concerned, as people are nowadays,
about your safety in the city?

Well, people were always getting killed, but I didn't pay much attention to it somehow. I never thought much about it. I don't know why I didn't, but I didn't. I guess because I wasn't in the habit of being afraid. The place where I had a room was not very far from the Elevated – oh, about four or five blocks – and anytime of the night that I wanted to go downtown why I'd just walk down there to the Elevated; I wasn't afraid. The most famous crime – it was called the Crime of the Century – was this Leopold [and] Loeb killing. That occurred while I was in Chicago. This charming young Loeb sat by me at a graduate history dinner not so very long before this crime occurred. And I remember so well coming home and thinking – as I got home I remember – I was looking in the mirror and fixing my hair while I was thinking of it. And I had talked with him, and he was so charming, and I liked him so well. I said to myself, my experience is very limited. Here I'm just used to Oklahoma people and their pioneer experience and so forth, and here is this young history major that has grown up in Chicago, and what a fine young fellow he is. Now I'm just narrow-minded. I don't give credit to people who have a different background from mine.

My roommate, who was a Latin major – majored in Latin and minored in Greek – very brilliant young woman. I have kept track of her. My roommate was quite well acquainted with Leopold, but she didn't like him. But, I was so impressed with young Loeb.

Let me ask you what I think is one of the questions
a lot of people want to know. Of your time in
Chicago, what has been the most important
experience or thing that you learned, that has been a
life-long influence or guide for you, whether it be
part of your studies, or part of these other
experiences? What was the most important thing
you got from the Chicago experience?

Well, the most important thing that I got was the success of my thesis. I had many disappointments later, and always that was there – something that I could – I knew, and it gave me confidence. I shall always be grateful to the faculty that I came in contact with. I didn't come in contact with all the history faculty, but I shall always be grateful for people like Dr. Rippy, and William E. Dodd, and people like that. I shall always be grateful to them for giving me opportunity and encouragement to do this. I wouldn't have done it without their help. I have just told you how that Dr. Rippy made it possible for me to use it as a term theme in his course, and if it hadn't turned out well, I hadn't wasted my time. That was the outstanding thing.

Now I came back, and I took a position at the West Texas State Teachers College. It was at that time I managed to find some work. Well, as a matter of fact, I always enjoyed teaching very much and they had a training school there, and I demonstrated to history majors who were going out to

teach history. I demonstrated how to teach history to high school students – that was what I did; I worked in the demonstration school. Well, anyhow, I still had this background and still didn't know how to do any writing except historical writing that Dr. Dale had shown me how to do. He had shown us all how to do it when we were undergraduates. I still know how to do that. So, I thought I might try some other writing, and by that time I knew I could write because I had written and it was published. So one morning I wrote two so-called short stories. They were short and they weren't so – so I guess they were stories. And I had taught myself to type because I knew that that's one thing I needed to know how to do. I needed to be able to copy. And so I wrote these two, and sent them off. And I don't know how I ever happened to be so lucky, but the first one I sent I got \$160.00 for – which just came back almost immediately -- \$160.00!

Well, now that helped me, too. Well, I spent most of the \$160.00 in trying to sell the other one, and never did sell it. I just wrote a lot of things after that, and I never did sell any of them. And so, I thought maybe if I'd go back to the University of Oklahoma that I might somehow be able to get in contact with how you change from writing a theme in an English class – that was marked with an "A" and got in the wastebasket – and writing something that you sold to a magazine. I thought maybe I could find that out at the university.

So I went to the university, and because I didn't especially care for a Ph.D. But then I already had my Bachelor's, and they had to put me down for something. So they put down Ph.D. – that I was working on a Ph.D. I took in a lot of seminar courses. And all of the things I wrote I sent to scholarly historical magazines, and all of them got published – all the seminar papers. But I never succeeded in getting in touch with the professional writers. They didn't have any course in professional writing. When I was a freshman back in 1915 and took my Freshman English, I didn't get that. And here this was about 1928, and I still didn't get that. And so there wasn't anything I could do except to do the only kind of writing I knew how to do. So I thought, well, I'll do the best I can with my doctoral dissertation. And I did. And it was, The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic. Just a very short time before that, Joseph Brandt had come to the university; I told the story in Footloose and Fancy Free. He had set up this University of Oklahoma Press, and had established this history of the American Indian series. By the way, I had to have a subject for the dissertation and people would ask me how I happened to choose the history of the Choctaws. Well, the only reason I chose it was because Dr. Dale said, "Nobody has ever used those Acts of the Choctaw Nation." The original manuscript, Acts of the Choctaw Nation, had been brought from the Choctaw capital and was in the University of Oklahoma collection. "Nobody has ever used them, so suppose you write a history of the Choctaws from the Civil War on down."

Well, I did that for my thesis. Nobody in the world would have published that except the University [of Oklahoma] Press. Nobody was interested in Indians, but the University [of Oklahoma] Press had set up this Civilization of the American Indian series and had published two or three books, and it just fit. I did add two or three chapters at the beginning so that it would start at with the Civil War – so that it would be a complete history.

And when it was published – I have never understood why it was so widely reviewed. I still don't know why, because nobody was interested in Indian history. I knew that I had done a conscientious piece of work, and I thought that scholars in historical magazines would probably

give it some favorable comment – I expected that. I didn't suppose that in newspapers all over the United States it would be reviewed – and still don't know why it was. But it was.

And it was right in the depth of the [Great] Depression. It was in 1934 that it was published. The reviewing came immediately afterward. I quit my job there at the West Texas State Teachers College and started in writing, and I didn't have any money or anything. But I managed to get some help from the Social Science Research Foundation, and they sent \$800.00. And I didn't use all of it; I sent some of it back. I wrote from that time on. And I have written history because that is the only type of writing that I have ever learned how to do. And very soon after that, Walter Camel established this course in professional writing at the university, but it wasn't there yet when I was there. There wasn't any way of teaching anybody how to write at the university when I was there. So all the techniques I learned was what Dr. Dale gave us when he came back so enthusiastically from Harvard when I was an undergraduate – a sophomore, I guess.

And so, from that time on I've written. And when I needed money, sometimes I would get a job – temporarily. This ban against women in history departments would be lifted in my case by that time because they want people who have productive scholarships. Oh yes, it got the John H. Dunning Prize [from] the American Historical Association. And it had got quite a bit of good publicity, so I could have got a job in history departments. I could have got one at Tahlequah at the college there. But I felt by that time that writing was my job, so I kept at it. I spent one summer at the Stephen F. Austin State Teachers College at Nacogdoches, Texas. So, I teach some, and I served as the – you see, it was right during the [Great] Depression. I served as the state director of the Federal Writers Project, and I got money for various things that sort of kept me going.

While writing did you live in Marshall?

I would go where I needed to go, and when it came to the writing I did my writing in Marshall. My parents lived right here in this house, and I didn't have all those things in my study at that time so it could be used as a bedroom. And that's where I stayed while I was doing the writing. And my mother – I got her pretty well-trained not to talk to me. She used to say, "Angie and I aren't speaking." I never did get my father trained. He wasn't home very – he'd just be home at noon and the evening – so, when he'd come in and say something to me, I'd be nice to him and answer back, and quit writing. But I never did get him trained. But I did my writing here. I had to take notes. We didn't have those duplicating machines in those days, and I had to take notes with a pen in most cases; and I've got a lump right here on my finger – you can feel it – where my pen rested. I would go to the basement of the old Interior Building and there were bundles tied in red tape. And they had been there since the Civil War, I guess. Not in that building, but they'd been tied in red tape since the Civil War. And I'd untie those bundles, you know, and I'd take notes. And I'd spend weeks – months. I'd spend months in Washington. And I'd spend months if I was writing about the Indians. I'd spend months at the – it was called the Five Tribes Agency at that time. It's called the Area Office now, over at Muskogee. And I'd spend months at the Special Collections down at the University of Oklahoma, and months at the [Oklahoma] Historical Society using their newspapers on whatever subject I was working on – and I had to do it all with a pen! I brought these notes home, and I wrote with the notes. And I never did make outlines after that one that Dr. Dale had all of us make before we wrote our term theme. I never made any

outlines; I just used paper clips. When I got all my notes collected, then I sorted them out. I'd fasten them together with paper clips, and they very easily fell into chapters.

I put those in folders. I didn't even have anything to put those folders in but a pasteboard box; and each folder was a chapter, and I wrote from those notes. I didn't have to go back. I took my notes very carefully. So, I never had to go back – I was able to use the notes.

The saddest story I know is about Grant Foreman. I thought a lot about Grant Foreman and his wife, Carolyn Thomas Foreman. The first book he wrote he took notes, but he didn't give the source. And he wrote his book, and he didn't have the source, and he had to go back to all of those places and find the source.

Angie, from your accounts today I would say you've been quite pleased to be a writer. It sounds to me like you've been very happy you made the choice to spend your life writing.

I have never felt that I made a mistake. I have always felt that it was the right thing for me to do. After all, each one of us has our life and that's all we have. And I truly believe that if we are – this is very intimate what I'm going to tell you now. I truly believe that if we are committed to use that life in the best way that our special talents will permit us to use it, I truly believe that we will be divinely guided into the kind of use that we were intended for. And I believe that writing was it.

Now I have never enjoyed writing the way I enjoyed teaching. It's hard work. When I finish a book it just sounds terrible to me. It sounds just like ditchwater. But after a number of years, if I read it, it sounds so good that I think why was I ever able to write like that. And I think I must have deteriorated because I can't write like that now. I guess it's just a matter of not being tired of it anymore. So, apparently I am pleased with what I have written, but I'm not pleased while I'm writing it. It's hard work.

One's opinion of what one has done rises and falls – not always rationally. Sometimes when I read over what I have written I think it is golden, and other times when I read over it, I think ugh!

Does it sound bad at first and good later to you?

No – just the reverse.

I just love the lake. You know there's an affinity. I think this is real, between prairie dwellers and the sea. I think that's very deep-seated psychologically. Well, anyhow, I love the lake, and so if I had a little spare time when I was at the University [of Chicago], I would go out and look at the lake. There was a pier going out in it, and I didn't have but a few minutes and I had a book in my hand. And I thought I'd go out on the end of the pier and look at the lake, and read the book a few minutes and then I'd hurry back. I was walking just as fast as I could down that pier, and I saw a

policeman prick up his ears and walk real fast. He thought I was getting ready to end it all. I didn't go to the end of the pier; I sat down where I was. And I took the book out; and I calmly started to read. And then he calmed down.

Interviews with Angie Debo, #3
December 12, 1981.
(Box 2/folder 4)

Well, were you able to finance your education in Chicago?

Well, I didn't receive a huge salary. I had been teaching in the high school at Enid. I did receive enough so that I saved enough to finance it.

You were frugal enough in your daily doings as you taught so you were able then when you needed to take time off?

Yes.

The last time we talked substantially about your experiences in Chicago. So now we want to talk about your graduate training at OU. You finish up, you get your book published, teach and come back to OU for your doctorate. Could you talk about your experiences in working with Dr. Dale and research on the Choctaw Republic?

Well, I had been greatly encouraged by the University of Chicago history people and the fact that my thesis was published, and that it did attract some attention. I don't know how much, but I did read in some places comments by historians who had read it and who did consider that it was a discovery that I had made, so I felt quite encouraged. At the University of Chicago, I had chosen my courses in the field of international relations. I had history as a major and government as a minor, but I took international relations courses in government also. So, I had hoped that I could continue in that field and do more writing and research, but I think I told you one time how I found out that college history positions were shut and barred against women. And so what I had intended to do was to continue the sort of thing I had done at Chicago. But that gave me a confidence that I never lost in times of discouragement. When things weren't working out right, I always knew that I could do it if I had the opportunity. I think I'd like to go back and mention again how very careful the history faculty at the University of Chicago was in fanning every little spark that they found of ability or interest. There was a very fine group of graduate students that I met there, and they encouraged all of us. They didn't just encourage me, but I told you about how they encouraged me. I think I might possibly mention that there was a tall, lank, very young boy who was studying for his Ph.D. I didn't know him personally. I used to see him around. He would sit in a chair with his long legs sort of tangled up because they were too long to manage in any other way. And I knew that the history people had a great deal of interest in him; and they did succeed in helping him to get a very fine scholarship to do a piece of work in – I believe it was Sweden – it may quite possibly have been Norway [It was, in fact, Denmark]. I knew his name, although I didn't know him. His name was Henry Steele Commager.

Well, there were people like that and they did get help – just the same as I got help. And they were very careful to help all of us. And if they found that we didn't quite have it, they were careful about that, too.

There was a girl that I knew quite well. A very attractive girl. I learned later that the history faculty had been quite impressed with her. She was working for her Ph.D. They decided after that she had an almost photographic memory, but that was all she had. And she just didn't have the ability – the interpretation – she didn't see any special meaning in the things she did discover. And so she had done a year or two beyond her Master's degree. She had done a year or two beyond her Master's degree on her Ph.D., and they came reluctantly to the conclusion that they had to tell her that they didn't think she was Ph.D. material. They dreaded to talk to her about it, but they did. I don't know, one member of the faculty probably took the burden. She said very brightly and smilingly, she said, "Well, I have come to that same conclusion myself. I am engaged to be married pretty soon, and I'm sure I shall be very happy." And so that was the end of her ambition. So they did really do some very serious evaluations of the students they had, and helped us in every way they could. And that did furnish the confidence that I needed.

Well, when I found out that I couldn't – and no woman could – get the kind of history position that I wanted, well, I believe there was a woman on the history faculty at the University of Chicago, and I talked to her. I said, "Women are sometimes on history faculties. How do they get there?" She said, "When in time of war or some other situation where it's impossible to get a man they had to take a woman – temporarily." And then she acquitted herself so brilliantly that they had to keep her. And so that's the only way that a woman ever does get a position.

Well, then I came back home and I wrote to all the colleges that I could find the addresses of. I even wrote to Texas A&M. I didn't know that was just a man's school. I have always been appreciative of the courteous letter that I got from Dr. Bizzell, who was later president of the University of Oklahoma, but was president of Texas A&M. He wrote me such a courteous letter explaining that it was not a co-educational school. Well, I did get two offers, both of which I would be doing demonstration work. I thought that I would continue graduate work at the University of Chicago. But in choosing the school, of the two, one of them was the West Texas State Teachers College, and the other was much older standing than the West Texas State Teachers College. I chose West Texas State Teachers College because it was in the Texas Panhandle, and it was a pioneer situation. My own background was homesteading, of course; although my father had not been a homesteader, but then we came so soon after the homesteaders came to Oklahoma.

And in the Texas Panhandle, this was at Canyon, just out from Amarillo, it's now the West Texas State University. It was a cow country background, but it was still a pioneer background, and somehow I had the feeling that I'd rather work in a place like that. So I went out there and when I got there I found out how very important that college was to the whole Panhandle country. Texas Tech was not in existence yet, and it was the only college in that whole pioneer area. The young people that came to that college had the same background that I had – of no opportunity for high school education or for books or for anything else. And I found so much that was interesting to do that I just wasn't able to continue with the research that I intended to continue from Chicago. And I really was very happy there. I did find that the college was serving

the community in a very fine and special way. It was mostly old-time teachers. Several of them didn't have any degree but a bachelor's degree, but they were building up an educational background in the whole Panhandle, and I was able to help at that in various ways. Working with students and so forth I wasn't able to continue with my research, and I became perhaps even more interested in my own pioneer background. That was when I wrote this so-called short story that I sold so quickly and readily, but never did succeed in selling anything else. I don't even think they got to their destination. I think they came back too soon. I think that they just got half way there and then turned around and came back. I pretty near used all of the money I got on the one so-called short story on postage I think, and decided that I just didn't know.

I had never had any training at all in any kind of writing except historical writing. Dr. Dale had – as I told you before – had been given that in a class in the history of the American colonies that I took when I was a sophomore. When I was at Chicago, they had a course in history methods, but I didn't take it, and apparently I never needed it. I never did need any more training. He gave us such careful training because he came back from Harvard with the same enthusiasm that I had come back from Chicago – only that he had the opportunity being a man. He had the opportunity to continue and it was blocked for me. So I decided to maybe if I went to the University [of Oklahoma] I might somehow find out how to close that gap between my writing and publication. When you take graduate work you have to state what degree you're working for so you – I wrote Ph.D., although I wasn't interested in it at all. What I was really interested in was my dissertation. That was the only thing that I knew how to write. As I told you, they didn't have any courses in professional writing at the University [of Oklahoma]. As you know, that was The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic. That was a period in which I had plenty to discourage me and yet I knew if I could just find the way I had something because of my success with that Master's thesis. Well, I took all the courses I could where you'd have to write term themes and seminars and so forth, and all of those were published in historical magazines. But that still is the only kind of writing that I had ever been taught to do. Later on, because it's expected of you – it's expected of candidates for a doctorate – I did take a course in historical methods, which was a good course, by another member of the history faculty at OU. But I didn't need it. I still was drawing on what Dr. Dale had taught me. I think I told you how very fortunate I was that the University of Oklahoma Press had been established, and that they did have a place for my dissertation. I believe I told you, too, the only reason I had for choosing that subject was that Dr. Dale pointed out to me the manuscript acts of the Choctaw Council that they had received there at the university that had come from what had been the Choctaw capital in the days of the independent Choctaw Republic, and had recently come to the university, and nobody had ever used them. That was the only reason I had. I didn't know anything about the history of the Choctaws.

Well, I did choose that subject and was fortunate, and I still don't know why that I was so fortunate in the extensive reviewing that that book got. I think that it could be possible. . . . There were only a few books at that time that came before my Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic. One of those was John Joseph Matthew's Wah'Kon-Tah, and it had not been chosen as a Book-of-the-Month Club. And people were not at all interested in Indian history in those days. They thought you were sort of queer if you were interested in it. But everybody liked that book, and it became so popular that that could be the reason they read mine. I don't know. Anyway, I

was so encouraged that I decided to leave my work at West Texas State Teachers College and write another book.

You really didn't have any models for the kind of book you wrote in The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic where you incorporate anthropological material – information about clans – information that anthropologists deal with, but historians usually don't. So it's really an interdisciplinary book. What gave you ideas to incorporate such a variety of sources and materials?

Well, I didn't consider doing anything else. Now, the subject of my dissertation was the history of the Choctaw Nation from the end of the Civil War to the close of the tribal period. I felt as though it ought to have a preliminary chapter that would help the reader – in that case it would be a scholarly reader, a historian. But at least it would help the reader to have a background. And so I wrote one preliminary chapter, and it seemed as though it was the natural thing to do. And in that preliminary chapter I did give that anthropological material that you asked about. If I had any reason for doing that it must be that I have always been tremendously interested in the history of Greece. I'm more interested in Greece than I am in any other subject I believe except subjects that I have pursued professionally. And Greek history always starts that way. You have the Trojan War, you have Homer, Odyssey, and so forth. You always start that way. You have the Cretan civilization and so forth, and I suppose that's the reason I did it. It seems that was the way you started the history. You needed to know that.

Well, later when the University [of Oklahoma] Press was getting ready to publish it, I felt as though that first preliminary chapter ought to be enlarged, and I asked them about it and they agreed. So, I did some extra work on it and made three chapters in which the ethnology is described or presented. I didn't do that very carefully. I didn't do any intensive research on that. I just used mainly secondary material. And I just did it to help the reader so that when he got to the place where my research really started with Reconstruction – rather briefly the Civil War and Reconstruction after the Civil War – he would have a background. So that has not been done as carefully as the rest of it. I just wanted that to help the reader. Now that doesn't seem like a very good reason. It just seemed like the only thing to do. I didn't think about it as being anything new, and I never thought about it as being something that was told from outside about the Choctaws. I felt as though it was something that should be told from the inside, from the Choctaws' own account which I was able to get from the time they settled in Oklahoma on. I was able to get that. So I did present it that way. I didn't think about the subject of ethno-history. It just seemed as though if they were here I ought to tell how they got here, and what happened to them before they got here.

So then you write the book, OU Press publishes it; it's widely reviewed, and you find out it's won the Dunning Prize. We'd like to hear you talk about how you felt when you found out your book had

won a very prestigious prize from the American Historical Association.

I was really quite deeply moved about that because I had had a number of things that had been very discouraging. And I had tried to keep up my spirits on the memory of what happened years before at the University of Chicago, but that was quite a ways in the background. And so, I was really quite deeply moved when I learned about this Dunning Prize – and they forgot to notify me! I don't know why – I think I would actually have got the money somehow. It was right during the [Great] Depression, but I think I would have got the money somehow, and would have been present at the time it was awarded because I still needed a job pretty badly. Some of the people from the university went there at the meeting, and it was announced there. They wrote and congratulated me, and I still didn't hear anything about it, and I wanted to know if I really did get it! And so I wrote to them and I told them that I had been congratulated on receiving a prize, but I hadn't heard anything about it. So, then they sent me the large sum of money – the \$200.00 which really helped me very much. I used that to pay my insurance policy premium, and then notice of the award. Well, it really did encourage me, of course, quite a good bit.

The book was published in 1934, and the reviews came almost immediately after and that is when I took a risk because it was right in the depth of the [Great] Depression, as you know. I took a risk and quit my work at West Texas State Teachers College, and decided to write another book – and I didn't know what I was going to write about. And I think this might be a good time for me to say something about my choosing subjects for a book.

I don't have any romantic reason for choosing to write about the Choctaws. Dr. Dale said nobody's ever used this material and you can use it; and I didn't know anything at all about the Choctaws. Well, I didn't know what I was going to write about the next time. And I remember, of course, they had parties for me and so forth as people do when you leave a place. And I remember a good friend of mine said laughing, she said, "I think this is the funniest thing that Angie has quit her work here and is going over to the University of Oklahoma to write a book – and she doesn't know what she is going to write about!" And that was absolutely the truth.

Well, I went to Norman first and I talked to Mr. Brandt. And I did some thinking and finally decided since my Choctaw book had ended with the liquidation of the semi-independent Choctaw Republic – I didn't know – nobody had written – I would like to know just exactly how these five self-governing Indian republics were liquidated. And so, after talking with Mr. Brandt – who was the director of the University [of Oklahoma] Press, I decided that I would take that subject. That's my only reason for taking it. It wasn't any romantic reason or any special reason why that I wanted to follow that up. It just seemed as though I needed a subject, and that was something I didn't know anything about – and nobody else did – and I could write about it.

That has been my experience with just about every book I have written. It happened recently that I have been reading some of the notes that Prescott wrote to himself every Sunday. Well, on account of his eyes, he didn't usually do the writing; he had a special kind of pen that he could write with sometimes when he was almost blind, but usually it was a secretary who would do the writing. But he wrote the things that he was planning and the things that he was thinking of, and he did that every week. And when he chose a subject, he thought of a number of reasons why he

chose it. Now, I didn't do that; I never did that. I just took something that I didn't know a thing about, and it seems as though something had happened and I had wanted to know what happened. And I didn't know at the time I chose that – I didn't know that the – well, all of eastern Oklahoma and Oklahoma in general was dominated by a criminal conspiracy to cheat these Indians out of their land after their own tribes were broken up, and after their tribal holdings were broken up into individual allotments. That is a track of land to each Indian. I didn't know that. And the reason I didn't know – it would be hard for any of you people to understand how little we knew about the eastern part of the state over here in the western half where there had been twin territories. And Indian Territory was as far removed from our experiences as though it had been in the Orient or somewhere like that. And that was true not only during the years of the liquidation of these five tribes, but it had been true at the time of the Constitutional Convention, and during the first years of statehood – that had been true. Then, of course, I had left Oklahoma to go to Chicago, and I had been in Texas, so I didn't know of this criminal conspiracy. I just thought it would be a story of how the land was divided and things like that. But when I got into it and found out what happened, it was not possible for me to drop it.

I felt as though that would be a dishonest thing to do. I think I was not brave enough to have chosen that subject if I had known what it would let me in for. But after I did get into it and realized what was happening, I felt an obligation to go on with it. And about the most unhappy experiences of my life, I think, was the time when I was doing the research for that book when it seemed as though everything I touched was slimy. I saw people destroyed. I saw Kate Barnard destroyed. Kate Barnard had been the ideal of my teenage years, and I didn't know what had happened to Kate Barnard. I hadn't known. And when I found out what happened to Kate Barnard and other people – when I would walk through a kind of a dark corridor because I was working in basements mainly on material that had never been used before – I – I just felt afraid. And here would be – I'd pick up a newspaper and here would be on the front page would be the prominent names of people who had attained their power and prominence by robbing the Indians. And this was criminal, too, a criminal conspiracy! And when I would look at the society page, here would be their wives and the other women of their family. And it just seemed as though it was a terrible experience. I think maybe I told you that Dr. Dale – because he had worked on the Meriam Survey that you probably heard about – he knew some people that were at that time connected with a reform Indian administration under John Collier. He got a letter for me from John Collier directing everybody in the Indian Service to help me and to open every file and to let me see everything. And never was the slightest attempt made to influence me in any way. I was just given a free hand with this material. And he never knew until after the book was published whether I was going to oppose him or whether I was going to support him. But he wanted the thing to be known so that helped me very much, of course, because I went into material that was not available for anybody else. Well anyhow, I worked at it.

I started in 1934, and I got it finished in 1936. And in 1936 was the very worst year of bad weather we had in Oklahoma. I won't say the Dust Bowl because, of course, Oklahoma was not in the Dust Bowl – any of it except the Panhandle, and a little bit of Harper County, and a little along the edge there. Because the Dust Bowl was a phenomenon of the high plains. I know all about the Dust Bowl. I was in Canyon, and I know all the terrible happenings of the Dust Bowl.

But we had the worst summer that we had ever had in Oklahoma, and, of course, we didn't have air conditioning. And when I submitted this manuscript to the University [of Oklahoma] Press, they sent it out to readers – somebody who is a specialist in that field – some special person. Well, it had been greatly praised by these people to whom the manuscript was sent, but they said it was too long. They said that it would cause people not to read it. More people would read it and it would have a much stronger effect if it were cut down. And so I cut it down, and I did it during that terrible heat – the perspiration would just run off my face while I was sitting at my typewriter, just running off my face and off my body while I was sitting there, and I finally got it cut down. But they said they would publish it the way it was, but they'd hope I'd cut it down – which I did. Now I've saved all of those sheets that I discarded and, of course, the most interesting part is the part I discarded because you all know when you shorten your manuscript, your article, or your book, the skeleton has to be there. And the interesting details are the things you have cut out. So I did have to cut out the most interesting things, but I did cut it down. I cut out about a third of it, and I submitted it, and the University [of Oklahoma] Press accepted it. And I still have the manuscript with the markings that they placed on it – the editorial markings that they placed on it for the printer. They did their own printing at the plant in those days. That was the fall of 1936. They announced that they would publish it the following year. Then I got to thinking about it, and I realized how much trouble it would cause the press if they published it.

The legislature was dominated by this criminal conspiracy – not just of the Five Tribes Indians – the story of the Kickapoos had not been told yet. But Arrell Gibson has since written what happened to the Kickapoos, and it's just as bad – but that had not been written yet. But even yet, practically all Oklahoma historians dodged that part of the story. They didn't tell that when they write a history of Oklahoma. And I had told it, and I had named names. And the legislature had destroyed Kate Barnard and several other people. And this dominated so much of Oklahoma. The Republican and Democratic parties had said some righteous things about what the federal government might do to the Indians – and how they'd protect them. But only the Socialists had come out to condemn the wholesale exploitation of the Indians. And I realized – and also I knew – that the University of Oklahoma Press was not especially favored by the legislature. They weren't caring very much for the international recognition that the University [of Oklahoma] Press had acquired. I think I should have told you that when I went to Washington in 1931, when I was working on my Choctaw history, the first work that I did in the files in Washington, that everybody I met was talking about the achievements of this young university press. And people in Oklahoma didn't realize it, and the legislature didn't realize it – and they were about to cut it off anyway! They didn't care very much about it. And I just felt so sure that if these stories came out that all these peoples' names who were in there would certainly destroy the University [of Oklahoma] Press – just as they had destroyed some other things.

Well, I went down and I talked to Mr. Brandt about it, and he said, "I have a sense of obligation. You have done a very thorough piece of research and you have proved it all, and I have a sense of obligation to publish it. And I feel as though if the press is going to be destroyed – which it may be – I would very much rather that it would be destroyed on something like this than just to be dropped because the people weren't interested in it." But some of his young members of his staff were there and they looked so frightened, and I have always been glad that I made the suggestion. And I said, "Mr. Brandt, I don't think you ought to publish this book. I just believe that the University [of Oklahoma] Press is too important to go into this kind of a fight that would cause it

so much trouble and probably wipe it out. And I think you just not ought to publish it.” Well, he said, “I believe I will talk to the president about it.” And Dr. Bizzell was the president and Dr. Bizzell was a real scholar who valued the literary achievements of the University [of Oklahoma]. But the press had already announced that the book was to be published and so I said, “Now, what shall I do about this when people ask me, when is your book going to be published? And I have to say it’s not going to be published. What will I tell them?” And he said, “Tell them the truth. There’s no reason why you should take the rap.” Now, those were his exact words. He said, “It’s we that are responsible and we should take the rap and you shouldn’t take it.” So what I’m telling you is not confidential, and I haven’t needed to tell very many people, but if I needed to I have always felt free – if I needed to I always felt free to do it.

Well, he said that he would submit it to Dr. Bizzell before he came to a decision and Dr. Bizzell submitted it to – well, I believe I’ll tell you to whom he submitted it to. All of the things I have told you about Dr. Dale are true. I have the admiration for him that I have expressed in many ways and in many places, but his idea about telling the whole truth in writing history is different from my idea. He feels – the words he used would be, “It’s too early to tell that story yet. Now it’s alright to say that Benedict Arnold was a traitor, but it’s too early to tell that story [*And Still the Waters Run*] yet.” I feel as though that if you discover something that you ought to tell it all – that you’re obligated to do it, and that if you leave it out it’s just about as bad as though somebody who was carrying on cancer research would leave out some of his findings. I feel as though it’s the same thing, because these findings might change people’s attitude – might change the attitude of society! And so they submitted it to Dr. Dale, and Dr. Dale expressed great appreciation for the good research, but he said, “Now so and so is doing this and this for the university – we shouldn’t publish that.” And so they decided not to publish it – which I think was alright – I think that was the right thing. And then the University [of Oklahoma] Press kept the manuscript and hunted a publisher. They did their best to find a publisher and they thought they could find one easily, but they never succeeded in finding a publisher. I don’t know why. I don’t know whether commercial publishers and scholarly publishers were too much afraid to publish it also – even though they were outside of Oklahoma – or whether people just weren’t interested in what happened to some Oklahoma Indians. I think probably that is it. Anyhow, they didn’t succeed in finding a publisher.

Then Princeton University Press called Mr. Brandt to become the next director of the Princeton [University] Press, and just as soon as he got there he called for my manuscript, and Princeton did publish it. The Princeton [University] Press sent it to a distinguished Presbyterian layman, who was also a distinguished attorney, to report on possible lawsuits that might come up. Everything in the book could be proved and double-proved, but a university press doesn’t like to be sued – it costs money, and Princeton [University] Press is not rich, although Princeton [University] is. They thought that he had better look it over. And he saw something that neither Mr. Brandt nor I had seen because we were too local in our thinking. That the names of some of these grafters didn’t really matter to anybody outside of Oklahoma. Now, Oklahomans might read with relish or anger the names of some people who were prominent in Oklahoma, whose dirty deeds were recorded there, but they were not known outside the state. And this book would be intended for general reading, and he said he thought their names might just as well be left out. There was one grafter in particular – Muskogee – that he said there was nobody that knew him outside of Muskogee, and there was no special reason why his name should be mentioned. He thought that there might be libel suits. Even though they couldn’t win, there might be libel suits that would be

a way of getting some money out of Princeton [University] Press – getting a settlement or something like that. And so he thought those names should be left out because, after all, the events were the important thing – what happened – and the local grafter whose name was not known outside the state was not important. Well, it seemed sensible to me and to Mr. Brandt also.

And so I told Mr. Brandt that I would not be willing to delete the names of people who were in a position of authority – people like Senator [Robert L.] Owen and Governor [Charles N.] Haskell. The governor was really not nearly as guilty as several people who were not condemned as badly as he was. All he did was some illegal speculation in town laws. It wasn't nearly as bad as some of the things that were done. And the chairman of the Dawes Commission, whose son at that time was editor of the Muskogee newspaper, and people like that. I felt as though they had to be named, and Mr. Brandt agreed. But except for naming them, I removed the names of all the small grafters. Now, I got Senator Owen's transactions from the county records – the deeds in the Registrar of Deeds office and places like that. Well, we left the names of people in a position of authority, but we took out all of the small grafters. They still thought that probably there would be some libel suits, but they were going to stand for it. But I would say that if anyone wants to know the names of these grafters, all he has to do is to check the footnotes because, in the footnotes, if he will check the documents which are cited, he can find out who they are – if he really wants to know.

But I thought I wouldn't have a friend in Oklahoma when that book came out. It came out in 1940. But I never heard one word of criticism. Not one word. And I still don't know if grafters don't read, or whether they were afraid to tell the whole story, and tell a lot more than I had space to tell in the book. I still don't know. But anyway it never has interfered with any of my – I'm going to put it this way – I'm going to say – undeserved popularity – because Oklahoma has been pretty good to me, and I have written the worst things about Oklahoma that anybody else has ever written that touched a typewriter. And yet nobody seems to blame me for it. Nobody seems to hold it against me.

Now I did have to change the title. I had a title that I liked very much. I chose the title, "As Long as the Waters Run." But during those four years while the University [of Oklahoma] Press was trying to find a publisher – and failing – Oliver La Farge came out with a book, As Long as the Grass Shall Grow. Well, I couldn't use the title, "As Long as the Waters Run." A young friend of mine – I always think young people are better at what I would call epithets than older people are – somehow they know just what words to use. She said, "Why don't you call it And Still the Waters Run?" That changes it. It takes away from Oliver La Farge's title; it gives it an ironic quality, and I liked it very much. I liked it better than the original title, but I didn't think of the 23rd Psalm – and the still waters. And still when they write about me they call that book something about still waters, and so it wasn't a very good title after all.

Well, it came out at the very time in 1940 – at the very time that people were watching in agony – watching Hitler's march across the Low Countries and into France, and I received wonderful reviews from scholars, but it didn't attract very much attention – not the attention that I had hoped it would attract. Because I felt as though – that what happens to Indians when their reservation is broken up ought to be known. There are too many people that think a reservation is a prison, and they'd like to set the Indians free. Good people think that. They're uninformed about it. But what

it really means is that you destroy the Indians' group authority – group strength – and the Indian stands alone. He loses the land that he could have kept if he had been allowed to keep his reservation. I wish that more people had read it because as I have stated in this, History of the Indians of the United States, this same thing comes up again and again – to set the Indian free from the reservation – set them free from these prisons. In other words, break up their land so that you can get it in shape so that the white people can grab it. That's what it really means. I feel sure that this is the most important book I have ever written. In fact, I feel that it is so much more important than the others that if I would put all the others on one side of the scale – everything else I've ever written – and put it [*And Still the Waters Run*] on the other, it would overbalance them. It's important on account of its subject matter and the fact that it has been largely neglected – almost entirely neglected by writers in the history of Oklahoma and of the other states where this same thing occurred. Even at present, I don't know of anybody except myself and Dr. Gibson's Kickapoos where the story is told fully. It's important for that reason, I think, but it's also important because it seems to be the most complete of any book I have ever written. In most other books I would find something that I couldn't follow through, something I couldn't answer, something that perhaps never will be answered. But in this book everything is complete. If I would find out some grafters happening in a certain place, then I could find out who the grafters were and how they did it. I always got the whole story; I don't believe there's an incomplete place in the book. And that also makes it very satisfactory to me. Now, in Geronimo, for instance – as you probably know, when I wrote the life of Geronimo, there were a number of things about Geronimo I couldn't find the answer to. I have everything complete in And Still the Waters Run.

How did the indigenous peoples of Oklahoma react to the book?

The Indians have always been wonderful to me. I always feel hesitant because I'm not an Indian. And I always feel that I'm writing from outside, and that they have perhaps a reason to feel resentful that somebody from outside tells their story. But they don't seem to be that way. They've always been perfectly wonderful to me.

Dale-Debo Correspondence
1925-September 1932

(This series of correspondence comes from the Edward Everett Dale Collection, Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Libraries and is used with their permission. A copy of this correspondence also resides in the Archives, Oklahoma State University Library, as Collection #94-023, and this material is from Folder #1 of that collection.)

Folder #1

1. The West Texas State Teachers College

Department of History

Canyon, Texas

L. F. Sheffy
Hattie M. Anderson

Mary McLean
Angie Debo

January 16, 1925

Dear Dr. Dale,

I am sending you a copy of my thesis as it was published by Bassett. It has given me a great deal of pleasure to see it in print. I have always been very glad that you took the time to supervise our note-taking and organization of material when you asked us to write a term paper. I wrote a number of term papers when I was an undergraduate, but you were the only one who showed us anything about procedure. And of the graduate students I knew at Chicago, I seemed to be the only one who had been taught how to do research. I hope that you are still able to give time to your students' papers, and that a few of them will continue their work in more advanced fields. I remember that I wrote a rather poor paper for you, but it was worth a great deal to me that I learned the proper method.

I am very happy in my work here in the Panhandle. It is a new country like Oklahoma with its school system in the making. There is a great deal of historical material going to waste all around us, but I seem to be too busy to salvage any of it.

My best wishes as always go to the University of Oklahoma; I am planning to take a summer or semester off as soon as I can afford to continue that interrupted Oklahoma history course I once started.

Yours very truly,

Angie Debo

2.

1 – 21 – 1925.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I wish to thank you for your kind letter of January 16th and also for the copy of your thesis. I have not yet had a chance to read the latter but I shall do so at the first opportunity. It is very encouraging to me to say that you got valuable lessons in methods of historical research under my direction. I have always had a very deep interest in my students and it is a real joy to me when they make good and do really worthwhile things as you are doing.

I am leaving in about ten days for Washington, D.C. where I am to write a bulletin for the Federal Government on "A History of the Ranch Cattle Industry on the Great Plains." I spent a week during the Christmas holidays going to Fort Worth, Austin and San Antonio gathering material. I should like to have come out to the Panhandle but did [not] have the time. I am wondering if you would be willing to make some inquiries as to material on the ranch cattle industry; if you can find me any old letters, brand books, account books, or other material, I would esteem it a great favor if you would let me know. If I could borrow this material for only a few days I could return it by registered mail as soon as it had served my purpose. Also, I am deeply interested in photographs dealing with ranch scenes of some years ago. I have understood that you have a photographer at Canyon who has done a lot of that work. Sometime, at your convenience, will you make an investigation of this for me and if you have a photographer who has some good ranch scenes I would be delighted to have a few prints of them and would, of course, be glad to pay all the expenses connected with getting these.

I was delighted to know that you are happy in your work and that you are going to get a leave of absence as soon as possible and continue your work in Oklahoma History.

Again thanking you for your good letter and for the copy of your thesis, and with kind personal regards, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

EED:dlg.

3.

The West Texas State Teachers College

Department of History

Canyon, Texas

L. F. Sheffy
Hattie M. Anderson
Mary McLean
Angie Debo

June 4, 1925

Dear Dr. Dale,

I have been ill and have not had much opportunity to look for the pictures you wrote for a month ago. I hope that it is not too late, for I believe I ought to be able to find some good ones for you. It will be a real pleasure for me to find them, for I am very much interested in the work. I am going to be out of town for a week, and will try to find some when I am gone. I shall be very sorry if they come too late to be of any assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Angie Debo

4.

June 27, 1925

Miss Angie Debo
West Texas State Teachers' College
Department of History
Canyon, Texas

Dear Miss Debo:

Your kind letter of June 4 was forwarded to me from Washington, as I left that city on the first of June. I am sorry to learn that you have been ill, and sincerely hope that you are quite well by this time.

I should be delighted to have you send me the pictures, provided you can find a few good ones, but hope you will not go to a great deal of trouble about it. My manuscript was completed and filed with the department before I left Washington, but I can make additions to it at any time before it actually goes to the printer, so if you can send me three or four good photographs I shall still be able to use them just as well as though I had received them before I left Washington.

We are very busy with the summer school work, so I shall not write much, but will write you again a little later. Thanking you very much for your good letter, and for any pictures you may be able to find for me, and with best wishes, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale

5.

June 30, 1925

Miss Angie Debo
West Texas State Teachers' College
Department of History
Canyon, Texas

Dear Miss Debo:

I wrote you a letter just a few days ago, but have just now received your kind letter and the package of pictures which were forwarded to me from Washington. The pictures are very interesting, and I deeply appreciate your collecting for me. I will look over the older ones to see if it might not be possible to have some copies made of them, and will return them to you in a few days.

I think it is very kind of you to say that I may keep the new ones for my files, but I must insist upon paying whatever the charges are on them, unless the photographers at Canyon are very different from any I have elsewhere. They do not give you these things, but make a small charge for them, which, of course, you must allow me to pay.

I shall be delighted if you will continue to search for cattle pictures for me, and send me anything that you think would be of interest. I can copy those that must be returned, and get the originals back to you within a few days.

Again thanking you for all of your kindnesses, and with best wishes, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale

6.

Canyon, Texas, July 14, 1925

Dear Dr. Dale,

The round-up picture I sent you was taken on the ranch of Judge C.J. Word which was 6 or 8 miles north of Canyon. Some of the old cattlemen say it must have been taken in the 90s – probably after 1896. I have heard interesting stories of the old ranch days, but pictures seem scarce – they say they never thought of taking pictures when cattle were so plentiful. But several people are interested in my quest so perhaps something interesting will turn up yet.

I think the prints cost about a couple of dollars, but never mind paying it now – perhaps I can send you some more.

Yours sincerely,

Angie Debo

7.

July 15, 1925

Miss Angie Debo
West Texas State Teachers' College
Canyon, Texas

Dear Miss Debo:

Just a little note to thank you for the picture of the round-up which I received a day or two ago. I think this is a very attractive little picture and I shall be glad to add it to my files. I am returning to you the old photographs sent me some time ago within a few days.

Summer school is coming along very nicely and we are all looking forward to the close and a little vacation.

Again thanking you for the picture, and with best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale

8.

Canyon, Texas, Nov. 30, 1925

Dear Dr. Dale,

Last summer I lent you some pictures that I thought might interest you. As I remember they were not pictures of cattle, but pictures of various outfits that worked on the ranches in this section back in the 80s and 90s. As I have never received them I am becoming uneasy for fear they were lost in the mails. I am not at all worried about the pictures if you still have them, and of course I want you to keep them as long as you need them; it is only the fear that they might have been lost that makes me apprehensive.

Mr. Dale, can you tell me where I can get a copy of the poem you wrote for the 1924 Sooner? It was written on the order of Shakespeare's "All the world's a stage," etc. I heard you read it to a class I was visiting and have wanted it ever since, but I have never happened to run across a 1924 Sooner.

Yours very truly,

Angie Debo

All Oklahoma is a stage and all its men and women merely players. They have their exits and their entrances, and each old settler in his time viewed many sights.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College
Canyon, Texas

Dear Miss Debo:

In running through my correspondence I find a letter from you written about the first of December; but the truth is the letter came when I was ill and somehow became mislaid with some older correspondence and so has been overlooked. I am returning you herewith the photographs sent me. I believe you said you only wanted the older ones back, did you not? Please let me hear from you and if you want the recent prints, I shall be glad to send them to you. I seem to remember that you told me the cost of making these is about Two Dollars. I am therefore sending you a check for that amount, and am also inclosing in the same package a copy of the "Oklahoma Teacher" which contains my alleged poem beginning "All Oklahoma is a stage". I am sorry that I overlooked this matter of the pictures so long but I assure you that I am very grateful to you for sending them to me. Please let me know if you want the recent pictures back and if so, I will return them to you at once. Things are coming along very nicely at the University of Oklahoma and I trust that you are having a good year there.

Again thanking you for your good letter and with best wishes, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History

EED:dlg.

10.

The West Texas State Teachers College

Department of History

Canyon, Texas

L. F. Sheffy
Hattie M. Anderson
Mary McLean
Angie Debo
W. L. Vaughan

February 10, 1926

Dear Dr. Dale:

I received the pictures all right a few days ago. Yes, you sent all that I care for – the others were recent prints and I meant for you to keep them. There was no hurry about returning the pictures; I only wanted to be sure they had not been lost in the mail. I also received the poem; I am so glad to have it. As I have lived through most of the stages of Oklahoma's development, and the romance of the frontier is in my blood, the poem reads to me like an epic. It moves me too much for me to be able to judge as to its literary merit.

Just now we are preparing to celebrate the annual meeting of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Association. It is very interesting to hear the old timers tell of a picturesque age that has about passed. Last year Norfleet was here and told the most fascinating story of his experiences. I do not know just what treat is in store for us this year. The association has secured the cooperation of this whole section in a way that will bear fruit when the history of the Panhandle comes to be written.

Yours sincerely,

Angie Debo

11.

2 – 15 – 26

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Department of History,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I have your kind letter of February 10th and am glad to know that you received the pictures all right and also the poem. I am delighted to know that you liked it.

I very much regret that I was unable to attend the annual meeting of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Association. I am sure you had an interesting time there and only wish that I might have been present. At some future time I hope that I might have the opportunity to come.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

EED:dlg.q

12.

The West Texas State Teachers College

Department of History

Canyon, Texas

L. F. Sheffy
Hattie M. Anderson
Mary McLean
S. H. Condron
J. Evetts Haley
Angie Debo
A. A. Grusendorf

November 17, 1927

Professor E. E. Dale
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

Ever since I succeeded so well with my master's thesis I have wanted to continue with that line of research, so I am applying for a fellowship from the American Association of University Women. I wonder if you would be kind enough to write me a letter of recommendation. I realize that you have not been closely associated with me since I was an undergraduate, but they want to check up on every phase of an applicant's academic career.

I am making application to Dr. Agnes L. Roberts of Bryn Mawr who is chairman of the committee on fellowships, but I am afraid I will have to ask you to send the recommendation to me so that I can send on all my credentials together. I am sorry they employ this method, for I realize one can write an estimate of a student much more freely if it is a confidential communication.

Perhaps my chances of securing one of these fellowships are not very high; I am eligible for only two or possibly three of them and they are open to candidates in all possible fields. But they are especially desirable fellowships and it will do no harm to try.

In the meantime I am investigating the fellowships offered by various colleges. Do you have anything at Oklahoma for which I should be eligible? If so I should like to make application for it; there is a certain piece of work that I have always wanted to do there.

I know that you are very busy and you must be bothered very often by such requests for assistance; the interest you always take in your students and your willingness to help them is my only justification.

Yours sincerely,
Angie Debo

13.

November 21, 1927.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I was very glad to have your kind letter of November 17 and will say in reply that it is a real pleasure to me to write you a letter of recommendation. I sincerely hope that you may secure one of these fellowships and I know that you will make excellent use of it if you do secure it. There is nothing at Oklahoma, I am sure, that will be of interest to you. You know we do not have any fellowships here to amount to anything.

Drop me a line when you can find the time, for it is always a pleasure to hear from you. With best wishes, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

EED:bh
Encl.

E.E. Dale,
Professor of History.

14.

November 21, 1927.

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to state that I have had Miss Angie Debo in my classes in the University of Oklahoma and have always found her to be an excellent student. She is industrious, careful in her work, and has real ability in the field of historical scholarship. I regard Miss Debo as one of the most competent young women I know, and am sure that she is the type that will make best possible use of a fellowship, should she be granted one.

I recommend her to any Committee on Fellowships as worthy of every consideration in the matter of awarding fellowships in history.

Very sincerely yours,

EED:bh

E.E. Dale, Ph.D.,
Department of History

15.

Canyon, Texas, December 18, 1927

Professor E. E. Dale
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I thank you so much for the recommendation you sent and for the letter that accompanied it. I shall send in my application within a day or so.

I am planning to spend my Christmas vacation in Oklahoma with my parents. I should like so much to visit the university but our holidays and vacations always coincide, and I know nothing more disconcerting to an alumnus than a deserted campus. I have almost dropped out of things in Oklahoma – a bad habit, but we are so busy here.

I do not suppose I shall receive this fellowship since there will be so much competition; but I am trying and no harm will be done if I fail. If I receive the appointment I shall let you know. If I do not receive it or any other fellowship I intend to spend next year in study anyhow – and I am thinking rather seriously of spending some of it at the University of Oklahoma.

My very best wishes to you and the college always.

Sincerely,

16.

January 5, 1928.

Miss Angie Debo,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I wish to thank you for your kind letter of December 18 which came during the holidays. I am sorry I did not get to see you during that period for I was hoping that you might find time to come to see us. When you come back to Oklahoma again to visit your family, I hope that you may be able to do so.

Please let me know if you receive the appointment in question, and if you do not receive it and want to come to the University of Oklahoma, we shall be very glad to welcome you back. We have plans pretty well under way for the Ph.D. degree now and already have at least four or five students who have begun work on that degree.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

EED:bh

E.E. Dale,
Professor of History.

17.

The West Texas State Teachers College

Department of History

Canyon, Texas

L. F. Sheffy
Hattie M. Anderson
Mary McLean
S. H. Condron
J. Evetts Haley
Angie Debo
A. Grusendorf

May 21, 1928

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

Since you were kind enough to help me in my applications for fellowships perhaps you would like to know how I succeeded. I was not able to secure any appointment except one so small that I did not care to accept. I am not much disappointed since I am planning now to attend the University of Oklahoma where I really preferred to go anyhow; there is certain work that I have always wanted to do there but I was led to consider the other places because of the attractive fellowships they offered. I am very grateful to you for the recommendations you wrote for me; I am sorry I was not able to make better use of them but I did my best.

Yours sincerely,

Angie Debo

18.

May 24, 1928.

Miss Angie Debo,
W. T. S. T. C.
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I was delighted to have your kind letter of May 21. I am sorry to hear that you did not secure the fellowship you wanted but that sorrow is very much tempered by the knowledge that you are to be with us at the University of Oklahoma. I feel that we have a good department here, and that you will enjoy further work with us. Let me know if there is anything that I can do to help you, and you may be sure that I will be glad to do it.

With best wishes, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

EED/YP

19.

Cuchara Camps, Colorado

August 15, 1929

Dr. E. E. Dale

Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I dislike to trouble you when you are so busy at this season, but I should like to know whether you will be in residence at the University this winter and if you are planning to offer that Oklahoma history course. I sent for a catalogue some time ago thinking that I would not bother you, but it has not arrived yet, and I am needing to make my plans soon.

I remember telling you a year ago that I expected to be in the University last winter, but my plans miscarried. I hope for better success this time provided I can secure leave of absence from the West Texas State Teachers College where I am teaching.

I hope that I have not troubled you too much and that I may see you next September. I do not like to make definite plans until I find out whether you will be there or not.

Yours sincerely,

Angie Debo

20.

Richmond, Kansas

March 18, 1931

Dr. E. E. Dale
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I was called here so suddenly two and a half weeks ago by the illness of my brother and I have been so busy ever since that I have hardly had time to think of letting you know where I was.

My brother has had an operation and is recovering so rapidly that I expect to be back in Norman soon. Of course I have lost a great deal of time, but I shall work as steadily as I can the remainder of the semester. Just now I do not see my way clear to continuing my work after that – I have acquired some additional responsibilities the last few weeks – but I shall try to return to the university soon for such additional work as I shall need. In case I am not able to do that I shall return the amount of my fellowship to the university. But all this is in the future; for the present I shall devote the remainder of the semester to my dissertation.

I managed to unearth my father's old atlas which contains a map which I may use. It gives the towns in the Choctaw Nation in 1886, but does not give the county divisions.

As things are going now I hope to be back at my work within a week.

Yours very truly,

Angie Debo

21.

March 23, 1931

Miss Angie Debo,
Richmond, Kansas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I doubt very much if you will receive this, as your letter indicated that you expected to be back here within a week from March 18, but I shall write a brief line anyhow to acknowledge receipt of your kind letter. I am sorry to learn of your brother's illness, but am happy to know that he is rapidly recovering.

With regard to your future plans, I shall be very glad to discuss them with you when you get back. I am glad that you seem to have found some additional material. I assure you that we shall all be very happy to have you back with us again. I have missed you from the seminary room very much.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

EED/Mc

22.

140 East 12th
Oklahoma City
June 30, 1931

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am finding some very good newspaper material here. In fact I have been able to learn the complete working of the political party organization.

There is no way of knowing how long I shall stay here because I do not know just what material I shall find, but I believe I shall finish this week. In that case I hope to see you in Norman Monday afternoon. If you find the opportunity to learn about rooms in Muskogee from those students who teach there I can ask you about them then. Also I probably shall not see you again before I leave for Washington, and I shall be ready to receive whatever instructions you have to give me about my work there.

When I talked with you last you thought there might be a possibility that I could secure permission to use the law library. If that should be possible I shall do that while I am in Norman; I have the citations on the cases I want, and it ought not to take me so very many hours to look them up. I could have done that before commencement, but somehow I did not think of its being closed during the summer.

It is entirely possible that I may not see you Monday. I intend to stay here until I have finished what I can do in the historical collection.

Yours sincerely,

Angie Debo

23.

July 2, 1931

Miss Angie Debo
140 East 12th Street
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Dear Miss Debo:

I am glad to know that you are finding some good newspaper material. I hope you will come to see me Monday afternoon for I shall be in the office at that time, and I should like very much to see you before you go to Muskogee and Washington. I will try to see the law librarian in order to get the use of the law library for you. I think you had better run down and see me before you go to Muskogee if it is at all possible for you to do so.

I shall certainly want to see you before you got to Washington in order to give you some letters that I think will be useful. With kindest regards and best wishes, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale
Professor of History

EED:TL

24.

1632 P St. N.W.
Washington, D. C.
July 26, 1931

Dear Dr. Dale,

I worked at Muskogee for some time and then came on here. Everybody both here and at Muskogee has been most kind in giving me every facility for study. I was not able to locate anything at the Congressional Library, but I am finding a great deal at the Indian Office. I have been able to round out one or two topics about which I was uncertain when I left Oklahoma City. Most of what I have found, however, only confirms what I already learned. Unless I run into something very important I intend to stay only a few days longer; I am about ready to begin writing.

Everybody has been most kind and friendly. I am staying with Mrs. Saunders, but I have met Mrs. Borchars and like her very much. Your name is one to conjure with around here, and Mrs. Dale and the boy are certainly beloved. I have met the Risters, and a man I know from the history department at Trinity.

After the manner of rubes I am trying to see everything at once, and am enjoying it all shamelessly. Today I am going to Gettysburg as soon as the city wakes up sufficiently to furnish me food and transportation.

Please give my regards to Mrs. Dale. I have been called on several times for statistical information as to Ed's rate of growth; I made it strong, for a growing boy can usually be trusted to make any exaggeration come true.

Sincerely, P.S. I forgot to tell you that I received a great deal of help from the Choctaw attorney, Mr. Grady Lewis of Muskogee. I suppose you know that he is the brother of our Dr. Lewis, and a very brilliant man. Mr. Foreman was also very kind and helpful – in fact the best material I found at Muskogee was [unintelligible].

25.

Marshall, Oklahoma
August 17, 1931

Dr. E. E. Dale
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am almost sure you do not want to see my dissertation now during vacation. But I am not quite easy about not sending it, because you said you wanted each chapter as soon as it was completed – I think, however, that does not apply to vacation.

I have one chapter completed. I will send it to you if you wish, or will keep it until school starts and then send it to you. I should certainly appreciate the assistance of your advice and criticism, but I will wait until it is most convenient for you to give it.

Please give my regards to Mrs. Dale.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo

26.

Canyon, Texas
Sept. 29, 1931

Dr. E. E. Dale
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I was very sorry to learn that you had been sick. I hope that your rest will enable you to start the year in good health and strength.

My brother who was ill last spring has been failing very rapidly the last two months. For several weeks I have been with him night and day, and so I had no opportunity to write any more on my dissertation or even to mail you the two chapters I had already completed. I am sending them to you now, however. I hope you will like them. I have left a few question marks opposite some references to remind me of points that I must check. Please mark up the papers as freely as you wish because I must have my final copies made by a better typist than I am, and this is only a rough copy at best.

Our school seems to be starting very nicely with an average enrollment, though some of the students are making a heartbreaking effort to remain in school.

Yours sincerely,

Angie Debo.

P.S. If it would not be asking too much of Mr. Records I should be very grateful if he should examine a few pages of these chapters to see if he approves of the form.

October 7, 1931

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I have your kind letter of September 29 together with the Introduction and first copy of your dissertation. I have gone over these copies with a good deal of care and then passed them over to Mr. Wardell and Mr. Records both of whom have read them. You will find our notations scattered along the margins and various places.

My first criticism in which both of these other men join me is that your introductory chapter is too long especially in view of the fact that much of your material seems to be taken almost entirely from secondary sources. Mr. Records has checked over the matter of italics and general forms for references while Wardell and myself have confined ourselves namely to subject matter. I think your introduction would be better if you would shorten it very much. The second chapter, or rather Chapter 1, "Peace and Reconstruction" I think is better. A few criticisms occur to me. I do not think you should ordinarily use such things as Thoburn and Wright or at least you should not lean so heavily on these secondary accounts. You must remember that while Mr. Thoburn and Miss Wright are both well informed on the history of Oklahoma, neither of them apparently has had much historical training and their book is not in any sense a contemporary document, but is written from such sources as they themselves are able to find. If Thoburn and Wright can find these sources, it seems to me that you should do the same. To a certain extent, the same thing applies to Abel in her three volumes, though Miss Abel is a woman who had a very rare opportunity to secure material and is, of course, very well trained in historical research. I would suggest, too, that when possible, it would be better to use the Statutes at Large rather than Kappler's Indian Laws and Treaties, since Kappler's book is written entirely from the Statutes at Large.

What I have said about Thoburn and Wright applies equally to the various articles in Chronicles of Oklahoma which you cite. The writers of these articles are, in most cases, people of comparatively little historical training and unless the article in question is a contemporary document, I would use it with a good deal of care. I note, too, in your thesis that you, at times, give a little life sketch of some character, as on page 8 of your Chapter 1. I do not think this will add anything much to your thesis, for the question will naturally arise, "why select this particular individual and leave out many others whose names are mentioned and whose part in your story may be equally important." The natural answer to this question is that you had the information on this individual and did not have it on

the others. This is not a very satisfactory answer, I am sure, and unless you are prepared to undertake the task of giving a brief life sketch of every important character mentioned in your dissertation, I think it would be better to leave them out entirely.

Now with this adverse criticism, permit me to say I think your thesis reads interestingly and with provision, I think you will get along all right. I would suggest that you do not attempt to make too many corrections now, but go ahead and finish a rough draft of the thesis. By that time you will have had a chance to think a little more fully on the subject and let your ideas crystallize a bit more and you can go back to the first and try to put it in final form. I am not at all certain that you will be able to put it in final form, however, without more work at Washington, for I know that there must be many thousands of pieces of manuscript here on the Choctaws that you could not examine in the brief stay you had there. In general, my suggestion is not to lean so heavily upon secondary accounts, histories, articles in Chronicles of Oklahoma, etc. and to use more of your documentary sources and manuscript materials.

I am sorry to hear of the serious illness of your brother. Let me hear from you at your convenience and send me some more of the dissertation when you have it ready.

The other members of the Department join me in kindest regards and best wishes.

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

EED/Mc

28.

Canyon, Texas
October 9, 1931

Dr. E. E. Dale
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I was very glad to receive my manuscript with the suggested changes. I realize that it must have involved a great deal of work to give it such a careful reading. When I saw that you had taken the trouble to correct the many typographical errors I was sorry I had not proofread it more carefully. I am going to hire a better typist than I am to make the final copy.

I was somewhat troubled by the criticism that I had used too much secondary material, but I went over the manuscript carefully and if I may express myself so bluntly I do not think I am guilty. My study begins with June 19, 1865 – the date of the surrender of the Choctaw forces. I have counted the numbered citations in the chapter I have written, and I find of 128 only six are secondary. It seems to me that each of these six could be justified on special grounds, but if there should be objection to them they could, I suppose, be omitted. Besides this there are about ten other numbered citations where one secondary reference was given along with from one to six source references, but if one counts each reference instead of each numbered footnote there are about three hundred, and so the proportion of sixteen to that number does not seem to me to be excessive. I expect to use about that proportion all through the work, for almost every bit of evidence I have is from original sources.

Of course I do not pretend to have made the same type of study of the period of which I am not writing. I think I read a great deal more than would have been required or expected of the period before 1865, but I did it because I wished to get fully into the spirit of the later period. A large part of this reading was from secondary works, but even here the most of it was either from source material or from contemporary secondary accounts such as the reports of travelers. Nearly every reference to Thoburn and Wright is to the source material collected in the appendix, and the interpretation in every case is my own. Of course this is using a prepared source collection instead of pursuing independent study, but I think I am justified in doing that to a period which does not come into the scope of my investigation; I find only one reference to Thoburn and Wright after 1865, and that is to a personal experience of Miss Wright's which could not be duplicated easily.

I think it will be best to leave the problem of the introduction unsettled until the dissertation is written. If it seems too comprehensive some of it can be omitted; but as I see it now the succeeding chapters will be more easily understood in the light of this background. If there might be objection to the use of secondary material perhaps it would be possible to give no citations at all until I come into my own period; I did feel

that there ought to be some record of the extensive – but not intensive – reading I did to prepare myself and the reader for the period covered by my study. This is a problem in mechanics that can be worked out better in the light of the finished work.

If you do not care for the biographies I can omit them. I thought, however, since these Choctaw statesmen are in most cases entirely unknown even to the trained historical reader and consequently their biographies cannot be found in any book of reference as is the case with the political leaders of better known races, it might be interesting to have them in convenient footnotes. There is no danger that I will run out of biographies or that I should be reduced to the expedient of writing only those I know and omitting those of equal importance which I do not know. I know them all. I thought I would select only the Principal Chiefs and those who figured very prominently in the diplomatic or political life of the tribe. I could have written up all the great leaders before the Civil War, but I did not do so because I was not writing a history of that period. I did write a few more for the Reconstruction chapter, but I decided not to use them because I did not think they were people who would be mentioned in the story enough to justify the extra space. I will either include or omit the biographies according to whether or not you think they add to the value of the book, but I think there is no danger that I shall not observe a sense of proportion in selecting the subjects for the sketches. If there is danger that any critic would suspect me of such a lazy historical method as selecting them on the basis of accessibility of material I could omit all but the Principal Chiefs. Surely a reader would have to be very careless to misunderstand me then.

I think the wording of some of my sentences is very greatly improved by some of the changes suggested.

Thank you for the inquiry about my brother. He died just a week ago today.

Please give my thanks to Mr. Records and Mr. Wardell. Please do not think the vigor with which I am defending myself indicates any lack of appreciation for the kindly criticisms which I have received. It is only that I have the whole study in mind, while naturally all you have upon which to base your judgement is the beginning.

Yours sincerely,

P.S. I will use Kappler while I am writing because I cannot change now. Then after it is finished I will go to a library and change the reference in every case to the Statutes at Large. That will not be so very much trouble, and will pay if it will give a better appearance to the book. I had ignorantly supposed that the use of Kappler would show greater familiarity with Indian literature and so I had been careful to refer to him in all cases except where the Statutes at Large was the only source I could find.

29.

October 14, 1931.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I have read your kind letter of recent date with much interest. Some years ago I was directing a dissertation for a mature person who had taught for many years in college. Almost with the first conference I discovered that every criticism or suggestion I offered immediately became the subject of a protracted argument which eventually took many hours of time and in every case seemed to end with each of us feeling exactly as we did before. Perhaps this was a part of the price I was paying for my extremely informal way of dealing with students, since I cannot imagine my arguing very much with Professor Turner, the director of my thesis, in regard to his suggestions and criticisms. Anyhow, I eventually came to dread those conferences like a West Texas blizzard and when the thesis was finally finished a year or two later I heaved a sigh of relief and registered a solemn vow never to argue again with a student on something in a dissertation. I am telling you this story so you may understand why I do not offer any counter defense and so that you may not expect it in the future. I shall be glad to give you the benefit, such as it may be, of my criticisms and suggestions and to have your reaction toward them, but I shall never attempt to defend them. After all, it is your thesis and not mine and you must do it in your own way, taking my suggestions and criticisms for what you think they are worth. Of course, you must bear in mind that the thesis must at least be acceptable to your committee, but of this I am only one member.

Now please do not think that I object to your defense of the matters which I criticized. No person is worthy of a Doctor's degree who does not think for himself and I have no sympathy with the idea that the teacher's opinion is sacred and must not be questioned. I fully realize my own limitations and I realize that by this time you know a great deal more about the subject than I do. Suggestions and criticisms will not be made, however, except after careful consideration and while I shall not attempt to defend them, I shall be glad to answer any questions or give any explanations if there is anything I have not made quite clear. Perhaps I ought to say, however, that Mr. Records and Mr. Wardell both fully agreed with me upon every point.

-2- Miss Angie Debo.

Please send me some more chapters as fast as you get them ready and I will get them back to you as soon as possible. I thoroughly agree with you that it will be better

to leave the problem of the introduction until the dissertation is complete and then we can decide as to whether or not it will be best to condense it. Also, I think I would not worry much about the other chapter sent me right now, but go ahead and try to get a first draft of the dissertation in shape. I have discovered that a manuscript which is laid up for a while becomes easier for the writer himself to evaluate and correct than when he attempts to do it immediately after it is finished

I am so sorry to learn of the death of your brother.

I hope you will push the thesis along as fast as you can, for I am eager to see you finish up and take your degree as soon as possible.

With kindest regards and best wishes in which my wife heartily joins, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

EED/Mc

30.

April 6, 1932.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I have just read your article "Southern Refugees of the Cherokee Nation" in the Southwestern Historical Quarterly and have enjoyed it very much. It is well written, full of information and I congratulate you with all my heart. I feel that the editors showed their good judgment in giving your article the position of honor as the first article in the number. I hope you secured some reprints of this, for I think that is always a desirable thing to do. Keep the good work up and let me know if there is anything I can do at any time to help you.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E.E. Dale,
Professor of History.

31.

West Texas State Teachers College

Department of History

Canyon, Texas

**L. F. Sheffy
Ima C. Barlow
Angie Debo**

April 14, 1932

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I did appreciate your note so much. It was so kind and friendly – so characteristic – of you to take time out of such a busy life to say that you liked my article. I am glad you liked it for I think I made you suffer enough by asking you so many questions while I was in the throes of composition. You remember I wrote it as a seminar paper that semester when we interpreted Southwestern History to mean Oklahoma History. I sent it to Dr. Parker at that time, but he misplaced it and just unearthed it this winter. I was a little afraid that it was remorse that caused him to publish it so quickly when he did find it, but since you like it, too, perhaps it had some merit.

Please give my love to Mrs. Dale and Alberta. Tell Alberta I will write to her some time.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo

32.

April 21, 1932.

Miss Angie Debo,
Department of History,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I was glad to get your kind letter of a few days ago and wish to assure you again that I think your article is an excellent one and I hope you will continue the good work.

My wife joins me in kindest regards and best wishes.

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

33.

Marshall, Oklahoma
June 29, 1932

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I wonder if you will be so kind as to return the chapter of my dissertation that I sent you a little while ago. I need it to finish the chapter I am doing now. I suppose you have not had time to look over it, and so I will return it to you as soon as I have finished with it.

I hate to trouble you by calling it in again after submitting it to you. At the time I sent it I really thought it was entirely finished, and that I would not need it any more. But I can't make the one I am working on now come right without a different organization of material.

Yours sincerely,

Angie Debo

34.

July 1, 1932.

Miss Angie Debo,
Marshall, Oklahoma.

Dear Miss Debo:

I have your kind letter and will return the chapter of your dissertation tomorrow. I hope by that time to have it read at least hurriedly. It was my intention to pass it on to another member or two of the Department, but you can return it to me for that purpose.

We have been terribly busy lately and my wife has been ill which has also cut into my time somewhat.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

35.

Marshall, Oklahoma. July 5, 1932

DR. E. E. Dale
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am indeed sorry that Mrs. Dale has been sick. I hope that she is entirely well by this time.

I am afraid you will be as sorry to see all this as I am glad to be rid of it. I followed your suggestion and moved the section about citizenship into another chapter, where it seems to me it fits better. I don't seem able to move the intruders – any more than the Choctaws could – for I want to tell about permits where I am telling about other tribal revenues. I also added another section about public finance that doesn't seem to fit anywhere else but just there; I tried it in the chapter on government, but it didn't work.

The next time you send me any corrected copy will you please tell me how to cite from the books in Mrs. Allen's office? Should I cite them as Indian Office Files or Indian Office Library? I did the latter, but was not sure.

I did not trouble to correct the chapter I am returning because that is routine work that can be done any time. Also I did not change the numbering of footnotes after I rearranged the material; I may have to change it again. But I did use Indian police and Indian agent with small letters instead of capitals in later pages. I am pretty sure you are right about it.

About the other capitals I have a pretty consistent reason for my choice, but perhaps the rules I followed are so obscure that nobody but myself can understand my system. But Choctaw Nation is the official name of the country like United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland or United States of America, hence I capitalize it. If I use just part of the title as Nation I still capitalize it as one does in United States or United Kingdom. I do not use capitals when speaking of Indian nations in general. Also I do not capitalize country, because that is not the name of the nation. In capitalizing such words as Principal Chief, General Council, National Agent, and using lower case letters in such words as sheriff I follow the usual custom in works on the American government where President, Congress, and such words are capitalized. If one speaks of Congress as the national legislature he does not use a capital. But if I go into this much more it will be as tiresome to read as my thesis which is sufficient task to read, I am sure.

Sincerely, P.S. I did not make the changes you suggested regarding agriculture, but will do it later. I think I have plenty of material I can use.

36.

Marshall, Oklahoma
July 17, 1932

Dear Dr. Dale:

Here is some more bad news for you in the form of another chapter of my dissertation

I am also sending a copy of the paper I wrote about you a couple of years ago. I do not know just how much you will care for it, but Mrs. Dale was good enough to read it and approve, and so I thought you might like to have it. I do not know what became of the original, for it had citations, but since all the references were from your own books I suppose the absence of citations will not make so much difference.

I have intended to give you a copy of this paper ever since I wrote it, but I am a poor typist as you have occasion to know, and I never got around to making a copy before.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo

EDWARD EVERETT DALE, HISTORIAN OF PROGRESS
(From the Angie Debo Collection, Box 7/folder 3)
Angie Debo

During most of the forty-odd years that Oklahoma has been blazing her way in headlines across the front pages of American journalism very little attempt has been made by citizens of that state to interpret their own history. People who are making history so rapidly seldom have time to record it. On the other hand articles written about the state by casual visitors were usually inaccurate; the “scientific detachment” so painfully acquired by the self-made historian is often only another name for ignorance of the feelings and aspirations of the people about whom he writes. It is therefore fortunate that this startling young commonwealth in the Southwest has finally become articulate through the teaching and writing of a typical Oklahoman, Edward Everett Dale, dean of Oklahoma historians, and head of the department of history in the state university.

Dale learned one lesson well from Frederick Jackson Turner – that American history furnishes a concrete illustration of social evolution through various stages from savagery to a complex industrial civilization. To this generalization of his great teacher Dale adds this significant particular – that only in Oklahoma was this process rapid enough to take place within the memory of a generation not yet old. He regards this fact as the dominant influence in the peculiar development of his state.¹

Dale’s own life reads like an American saga. He began life as a typical Oklahoman by being born outside the state – in Texas in 1879.² He came from rugged pioneer stock that had followed the frontier across the continent, always lured by the call of open spaces and virgin

¹ Dale and Wardell, Outline and References for Oklahoma History (Norman, 1929), Introduction, vii-ix.

² The facts of Dale’s life have been taken from an article by C.C. Rister, “Making Doors of Opportunity”, The Cattlemen, Jan. 1930 (Vol. XVI), a sketch accompanying “Those Kansas Jayhawkers”, Agricultural History, Oct. 1928 (Vol. II), and Meriam, The Problem of Indian Administration, (Baltimore, 1928), 81.

lands. When he was nine years old his father moved to what is now Greer County Oklahoma and took up a claim. At that time the title was in dispute between the United States government and the state of Texas, and settlers were drifting in lured principally by the fact that the federal government had warned them not to enter. Here young Dale grew up in the proud, hardy poverty of the American frontier. To this day he smiles whimsically at the thought that he and the other sturdy youngsters of that region would be classed by social workers as “underprivileged children” – attending infrequent terms of school, roaming over the prairies, helping with the sketchy farming carried on in a new country, and eating with a huge appetite the plain fare that their parents somehow managed to provide.

If the primitive life of this frontier settlement imposed too many of the restraints of civilization upon young Dale he could escape to the native wildness of the neighboring Kiowa-Comanche reservation, undeterred by the warnings of United States marshals against “trespassing on Indian lands”. He hunted and fished and trapped all over this beautiful region of prairie and stream and mountain, and cultivated with a boy’s curiosity the acquaintance of its inhabitants, the recently tamed nomads of the plains.

When Dale was ten years old he attended a four months’ term of school taught by a woman who had a good library and a keen appreciation of literature. She recognized a kindred spirit in the active intelligent lad who rushed out to meet life so eagerly; she told him stories of knights and chivalry, and lent him copies of Dickens and Scott and Cooper, which he devoured with an eagerness difficult to understand in this age of “required readings”. It was probably this experience that taught the boy to view the unfolding history of his young state in the high light of romance. His imagination was kindled also by the glowing nationalism of Barnes’ grade school history; in those frugal days when a textbook was a possession to be prized and gloated over he

read it through until its stirring sentences became permanently fixed in his memory. In the same way the phraseology of the King James Bible passed so deeply into his speech that today he quotes it unconsciously.

When Dale was seventeen a Supreme Court decision joined Greer County to the new territory of Oklahoma that had come tumultuously into existence as the government had thrown one Indian reservation after another open to the wild rush of settlers. Thus through the accident of judicial interpretation Dale became an Oklahoman.

The next year young Dale took an examination in the common school subjects and received an imposing document stating that in token of having passed the “course of study prescribed by the Board of Education of the Territory of Oklahoma” he was awarded an eighth grade diploma. Few young people of the territory could boast of similar academic achievements.

With his education completed he now became a cowboy. Nobody who ever read his books or listened to his lectures in which he discourses expertly on the duties of a “line rider”, the equipment of the “chuck wagon”, or the handling of a herd on the trail, “which is after all very similar to teaching school”, will ever forget this phase of his career.³ It was also at this time that as deputy sheriff he came into contact with several of the wild and picturesque outlaws that flourished as a sort of by-product of frontier newness in an essentially sober and honest population.

After a few years as a cowboy Dale and his brother made some ambitious plans to go into the cattle business on a large scale. They went to Kansas City and borrowed money with which they bought cattle to stock their range. But their career as ranchmen ended, as many others at that time ended, in disaster; the cow business in Oklahoma was about over with the coming of the

³ For example of his familiarity with the actual business of ranching see “The Passing of the Range Cattle Industry in Oklahoma”, The Cattleman, Nov., 1924 (Vol. XI).

settlers, and the Dales, unable to meet their obligations, were obliged to sell at a loss. When their debts were paid they each had a horse and saddle and a joint capital of fifteen dollars.

Positions were not plentiful in that bare frontier settlement, and young Dale could not be particular; he found a job picking cotton at fifty cents a hundred pounds. The lank young cowboy accustomed to days and nights in the saddle found it difficult to fold his long limbs to the stature of the stubby Oklahoma cotton plants; the first day he netted seventy-five cents and went to bed too tired and stiff to sleep. As he learned to manipulate the exasperating prickly bolls he soon began to earn \$1.25 per day – a very good day’s picking for a grown man unaccustomed to the work.

One day a man came riding in looking for a school teacher. Young Dale remembered his eighth grade diploma and expressed his willingness – not to say eagerness – to abandon the cotton field. He took an examination at the county seat, secured his certificate, and began his career as an educator in a one-room country school at thirty-five dollars a month for a three months’ term. He discovered a great joy in teaching – the same release of creative energy that an artist finds in his work. To this day he speaks proudly of himself as a “school teacher” innocently unconscious of the fact that many college professors avoid that title by every device known to snobbery.

The next year occurred the last great “Opening” in Oklahoma when the Kiowa-Comanche reservation was thrown open to settlement. Young Dale taught the following winter in one of the schools that the new settlers with characteristic American courage were establishing in a region that had been virgin prairie six months before. He lived with a homesteader’s family in a one-room sod “dug-out” where he managed his dressing under an improvised tent of bedclothes while his hostess was preparing breakfast in the opposite corner of the room. His account of his first

day's teaching is an interesting description of an event that will hardly occur again in American history.

The schoolhouse, which was one of the first built in the country, stood on a low hill about half a mile from a little stream. It was a rough board structure thirty feet long and twenty wide. On the morning school was to open, I arrived early and waited for the children to appear. The schoolhouse was unpainted and contained not a single bit of furniture. The children had been told to bring with them chairs, boxes, or benches on which to sit. At about eight-thirty two big girls appeared, each carrying her books under one arm and a large empty can under the other. . . . A little later two boys appeared, each carrying an empty soapbox; then a man came driving up in a wagon, bringing his three girls and a kitchen chair for each of them. Other children carrying boxes, benches, or chairs appeared later; by nine o'clock thirty pupils were present, each having some object that might serve as a seat. All had brought their books, and as the children's [*sic*] parents had come from many different states these books were of every variety. . . .

After a month a carpenter was employed to make ten long benches; when these were ready for use the children became more comfortable. Yet even from the first they did not seem to feel that anything was lacking. Most of the homes in the district were dug-outs or rough cabins having few conveniences and little furniture, so the children were quite accustomed to sitting on trunks or boxes at home. Almost all of them were eager to learn, and studied hard with the result that they made wonderful progress in spite of the disadvantages.⁴

One day this school was somewhat dramatically interrupted by a tornado that picked up the building and moved it, children and all, a distance of thirty or forty feet. A temporary recess had to be declared until the men could move the building back and patch it up.

Dale taught this school for two years and established quite a reputation as a teacher – a much more difficult achievement than to attain similar recognition in a university. He was next elected as principal of a six-teacher school in one of the new towns of the community. This was a long step upward for the young educator. Such a promotion involved academic preparation, and Dale began in 1906 to attend summer sessions at the territorial normal school at Edmond. As he

⁴ J. S. Buchanan and E.E. Dale, A History of Oklahoma, (Evanston, 1929), 346-347.

had never been to high school – there were very few high schools in the territory at that time – he was enrolled in what he says “was very appropriately called the ‘sub-normal department’”.

From this time on Dale’s progress parallels that of a Horatio Alger hero. Although he taught most of the time he managed, by attending summer school and an occasional winter session, first at Edmond and later at the University of Oklahoma, to receive his bachelor’s degree from the university in 1911. His unusual ability attracted a great deal of attention at the university and he was encouraged to continue his studies. He entered Harvard in 1913 and received his master’s degree the following spring. He then became an instructor in the history department of the University of Oklahoma. Later he returned to Harvard and in 1922 was made a Doctor of Philosophy.

Strangely enough the gaunt ex-cowboy achieved instant popularity at Harvard. He was in great demand as an entertainer both as a story teller and a poet, for he had long been writing homely verses with the fresh Oklahoma prairies as their setting and the touching simplicity of great truths in their sweep.⁵ The history faculty, especially Frederick Jackson Turner, encouraged him to carry out his studies in his own way without any attempt to force his individuality into a standard mold.

It was while he was at Harvard that there occurred the famous Boston police strike. When the helpless city was invaded by criminals he became a volunteer policeman and achieved an unexpected celebrity in Boston newspapers as the “two-gun man from Oklahoma”. The gentleness of manner that had made his office a haven of refuge for every frightened freshman on the Oklahoma campus was interpreted as the deadly quiet of the strong silent killer from the West.

⁵ Dale, The Prairie Schooner, (Guthrie, 1929), 9-10.

Dale received his appointment on the faculty of his state university in 1914. Since that time he has risen steadily through various ranks until he became head of the history department in 1924. He has received many honors and held numerous offices in state and national organizations, valuable in the doing, but tedious [*sic*] in the enumeration.⁶ Perhaps the most interesting of his special duties was his work as a member of the staff appointed by the Institute for Government Research to tour the various Indian reservations and make a survey of conditions and a detailed recommendation calculated to guide the government in its problems of Indian administration. During seven months of intensive field work with this group of specialists he talked with many sets of government agents, addressed gatherings of Indian school children, and met many tribes in conclave and visited them in their homes, seeing everything with his clear understanding of elemental problems of living, always the sympathetic, open-minded scholar willing to listen and to help. The knowledge he gained in this survey has been invaluable in his courses in Indian history in the state university which is rapidly becoming a center of Indian culture.⁷

Dale has taught as a visiting professor at the University of Texas and at William and Mary. Texas was not radically different from his own school, but he fairly reveled in the unfamiliar atmosphere of the old Virginia college. "I was a new sort of professor to them," he said whimsically, "but they seemed to like it." He has recently been invited to the summer faculty of the most blatantly modern of the great Northern universities – a school so determined to be iconoclastic and "liberal" in its outlook that it searches out and punishes the uncritical loyalties of the average American with all the zeal and intolerance of a new inquisition. One wonders how he

⁶ The following are the most important: Pres. Okla. Folklore Assoc., 1915-1919; Associate Editor Chronicles of Okla., 1921; Pres. Agricultural History Society, 1926-27; Research Agent for U.S. Dept. Agri., 1925; Member Indian Survey Staff appointed by Institute for Government Research, 1926-27. Rister, "Making Doors of Opportunity", 17 Meriam, Problem of Indian Administration, 81, biographical sketch accompanying "Those Kansas Jayhawkers", 167.

⁷ As economic specialist of the staff Dale wrote Chapter X of The Problem of Indian Administration.

would have fared in this new environment if he had been free to accept the appointment. No doubt he would have found himself as much at home in that center of sophistication as he had been in the dwellings of the proud and sensitive aborigines, in the scholarly seminar at Harvard, or the tradition-soaked atmosphere of the old Virginia capital; and one can be sure that though every word he spoke was heresy they would have “liked it”.

Like the great and simple people from which he sprang Dale has always been fascinated by the power of the printed word. Long before he discovered higher education he began to record his vivid impressions of the life around him in a sort of homely verse; it was probably only a chance that turned this urge to write in the direction of historical authorship. When he was an undergraduate in the University of Oklahoma he was enrolled in a class where he was expected to prepare a series of papers on the territorial acquisitions of the United States. This was no distasteful task to be accomplished with the minimum of mental effort necessary to secure a credit in the course, but an outlet for creative powers that he had hardly suspected. The advance of American conquest across the continent became to this son of the frontier a great heroic epic; he had the naïve unconscious imperialism of the American pioneer who went out into the wilderness with the innocent determination to own it all. With a pride too sincere for modest posing, the superintendent of schools at Blair – wherever that is – realized that he had done a good piece of work and resolved to print it.⁸

This first published work furnishes an interesting revelation of Dale’s developing scholarship. It is refreshing if one is sympathetic toward his viewpoint of joyful interest in American achievement, but painful in the extreme to the writer who has subscribed to the orthodox creed of historical methodology. He begins by saying that the territorial expansion of the

⁸ Territorial Acquisitions of the United States, (Blair, 1912), Introduction.

United States constitutes a “very wonderful story”. While the patriotic citizen rightfully “points with pride” to the heroes of the Revolution he should realize his obligation to “those other brave men who continued the work so nobly begun.” If those students and teachers “who are so interested in the wonderful history of the development of our nation” shall find the book “helpful and interesting” and be encouraged to study further “even in a very few instances” the author will be repaid for the time and labor expended. He then develops his thesis in a series of chapters written with remarkable clearness and reasonable accuracy, with the single exception of his inclusion of the Whitman legend,⁹ a mistake for which one should blame the inadequate library rather than the author. He closes by the observation that the story is not yet finished, for the next quarter of a century will doubtless see a continuation of territorial expansion, and the “patriotic citizen born and reared under the protection of the Stars and Stripes will be ready to say in all sincerity, that in the light of past experience, the sovereignty and protection of the United States cannot fail to prove an unmixed blessing to any people that may come under its jurisdiction.”¹⁰

It is easy to smile at the uncritical nationalism of the untrained writer. The eager boy who had memorized the grandiloquent pages of Barnes was now a man who had discovered college and the fascinating wealth of detail that lay back of the story he had first grasped in heroic outline. He was to learn in later years that American history is a mixed story of sordidness and heroism, but it has never ceased to be for him a “very wonderful story”.

In many respects this early work reveals the traits that students have learned to regard as characteristic. There is the penetrating humor that is never sarcasm. There is the happy confidence that American history is not finished and that the future chapters will be even more interesting than the past. There is the clear cut organization for effective teaching that Dale had learned while

⁹ Territorial Acquisitions, 37-38.

¹⁰ Territorial Acquisitions, 53.

instructing thirty children of all ages and degrees of advancement in a one-room school with no equipment; this is seen most clearly in the choice of simple words and sentence structure, and in the careful transition from one chapter to the next that is so marked a feature of his later writing and even of his classroom lectures. Most significant of all is the instinctive feeling on the part of this undergraduate [i.e., Dale], who had not yet discovered Turner, that all the American history did not occur along the Atlantic seaboard.¹¹

At this time Dale had received no instruction in methods of research. The Oklahoma faculty was composed of excellent classroom teachers too absorbed in the practical and immediate problem of making a little knowledge grow where none had grown before to devote any time to initiating anybody into the technique of scientific investigation even if they had understood it themselves. There was no one to call his attention to the sources or to instruct him as to the proper form to follow in historical writing: he made no citations and threw all his titles at random in a mixed list at the end dignified as a bibliography. He used purely secondary material, but anyone familiar with the university library of that time will testify that he used it all. The mere technique of writing a history paper can be memorized by a moron in a few weeks, but an undergraduate student who will carry on his work with such independent thoroughness is as promising as he is unusual.

Shortly after this Dale began his graduate work at Harvard where he learned the methods of historical authorship. It was a fascinating discovery, and when he returned to Oklahoma as a member of the history faculty he instructed his own students with all the zeal of a new convert in the technique of note-taking, painful fixing of citations, and approved arrangement of bibliographies. A few of these students have since made a beginning as historical writers, and

¹¹ Territorial Acquisitions, introduction.

whatever they may accomplish they will attribute to his happy confidence that a group of unpromising undergraduates was eager to enter the field of scholarship.

From this time on Dale became increasingly prominent as a writer. It is significant that the studies he chose for his various degrees were in the three phases of American history which have since come to be recognized as his peculiar fields. In the days when he was graduated from the University of Oklahoma all candidates for a degree were required to present a so-called thesis – a requirement that usually resulted in a piece of work painful to write and even more painful to contemplate; he chose as his subject, The Location of the Indian Tribes in Oklahoma. For his master's degree at Harvard his thesis subject was The White Settlement of Oklahoma. For his doctor's dissertation he submitted The History of the Ranch Cattle Industry in Oklahoma. His life has fitted him for a peculiar understanding of these phases of American history – his boyhood acquaintance with the Indians, which has since been enlarged by his travels with the survey, his teaching of citizens of many tribes in the University of Oklahoma, and his many friendships with prominent Indians throughout the state;¹² his experiences as a cowboy and a ranchman, which have given this phase of his writing an authoritative reality not achieved by the purely academic historian;¹³ and his life as a pioneer in the Kiowa-Comanche country, the last great virgin settlement in the United States.¹⁴ A list of his published works will reveal that with one or two accidental exceptions, such as the discovery and subsequent editing of the Lafayette letters, all of his work follows these major lines of interest.

Although a list of Dale's books and magazine articles is sufficiently imposing it would be a serious mistake to judge his influence solely by them. First of all he is a great teacher.

¹² Tales of the Tepee, (Boston, 1920), introduction.

¹³ For example, see The Ranch Cattle Industry of the Great Plains (Norman, 1930), especially Chapter III, "The Northern Drive".

¹⁴ History of Oklahoma, 235-244.

It is impossible to describe the charm of his classroom lectures. He has never been known to meet a class on time, not because he is negligent but because it is so difficult to tear himself away from the delightful activities that center around his office. As he hurries in he selects some carefully arranged papers from his battered brief case – for notes are sacred, and must be handled with order and system – and lays them precisely on the desk where they lie untouched throughout the period. He never begins immediately; the presence of a class in the room is always such an unexpected pleasure that he must spend some time in greeting. Then suddenly he launches into his lecture. His first word sweeps his hearers into an enchanted land – a land of wild and virgin beauty as it lay brooding through the centuries. Over it moves the soft-footed native with his loves and hates and problems, the cowpuncher watching his herd beneath the lonely splendor of the stars, the rugged settler with the bare poverty around him and the light of the future in his eyes. And all through the lecture is a sparkling thread of joyous humor that differs from the utilitarian “joke” of the hard driven professor as the mountain brook differs from the fire plug. Any person who has ever come under the spell of his narrative is forever disqualified from giving an unbiased estimate of the man’s life and work.

Almost as important as his lectures are his individual contacts with students and people of the state. “I have yet to be convinced,” he says, “that a grouchy temper is a sure indication of scholarship.” People pour into his office by streams and overflow into his seminar room – all kinds of people, youngsters in trouble, returned alumni, important looking official delegations, Indians, graduate students in grim pursuit of knowledge. And always he is the same – listening more than he talks but talking a great deal, always courteous with the courtesy of unaffected interest, always happy, reaching out eagerly to life and its experiences. The number of organizations of which he is president or trustee, or before which he must make a speech is

enough to appall the chronicler. If a scholar must live in academic retirement there is no doubt that Dale wastes a great deal of time.

A study of Dale's books, an attendance on his lectures, and contact with him in office and seminar all reveal the same intellectual traits and historical outlook. His viewpoint both in its breadth and limitations is the viewpoint of the American pioneer. In spite of his two degrees from Harvard, his Phi Beta Kappa key, and his careful discipline as a research historian he is still "The Average Man" of his poems.¹⁵ This quality has given him a strength that most historians lack. He is able to read a government document and visualize instantly what its translation into action will mean to the individual people whose economic life will be affected,¹⁶ and he can penetrate human motives with an accuracy impossible to one whose training has been mainly academic.¹⁷ He does not belong to the snobbish school of historians, and yet he is not troubled by any abstract theory of democracy: he simply loves and trusts so many people that he knows humankind in general is worthy of love and trust. He has a shrewd grasp of economics based entirely on sympathy with individual struggles to make a living.¹⁸

On the other hand his viewpoint is limited by the frontier. He knows European history but only as a series of personal narratives like an historical novel. Diplomacy and world politics for him do not exist – he can visualize people but not peoples. Imperialism, if he thinks of it at all, is the march of civilization across the waste places of the earth. Even the World War which brought such a tremendous upheaval in the beliefs and loyalties of his contemporaries was only a crusade for the right in which America and France were once more comrades in arms.¹⁹ The

¹⁵ The Prairie Schooner, 50-51, 54, 85.

¹⁶ "History of the Ranch Cattle Industry in Oklahoma", Report of American Historical Association for 1920, 315.

¹⁷ "John Rollin Ridge", Chronicles of Oklahoma, Dec. 1926 (Vol.IV), 312-321.

¹⁸ The Ranch Cattle Industry of the Great Plains, especially Ch. VIII, "Reflections of the Range Cattle Industry and the Corn Belt."

¹⁹ The Prairie Schooner, 75, 82.

Lafayette Letters, (Oklahoma City, 1925), dedication.

pronouncements of modern thinkers awaken his amusement and surprise; they seem so artificial and insincere. All of this is no doubt very provincial, but it is no more provincial than the viewpoint of the intellectual who has lost touch with the great mass of humanity, and it is more genuine than a sham cosmopolitanism.

Dale's scholarly work is done with care and accuracy. Perhaps its greatest excellence is the minute knowledge of physical setting²⁰ and the intimate details of the life he describes – a knowledge gained from personal contact and intelligent observation.²¹ His editing is especially good because of his skill in interpreting character and motives.²² His children's books show knowledge of the child mind unusual in a mature scholar²³ – probably a legacy from his difficult apprenticeship in teaching, or a result of his reverence for personality. But his best work is in the field of interpretation – such articles as “The Spirit of Soonerland”²⁴, where he attempts to explain and define such an intangible thing as the Oklahoma spirit; “The Romance of the Range”²⁵, where he interprets the life and ideals of the “cow country”; or “Those Kansas Jayhawkers”²⁶, where he analyzes the apparently unreasonable antagonism between the people of two great states.

It is to be greatly feared that Dale has a Philosophy of History. Even more appalling is the suspicion that he does not realize the enormity of his heresy against the craft. His philosophy may be summed up in the one word Progress. The whole movement of human life marches upward

²⁰ For example, see “Ranching on the Cheyenne-Arapaho Reservation”, Chronicles of Oklahoma, March, 1928 (Vol. IV), 35.

²¹ “The Ranchman's Last Frontier”, Mississippi Valley Historical Review, June, 1923, (Vol. X), 34-46.

²² For example “Some Letters of Stand Watie” Chronicles of Oklahoma, Jan., Oct., 1921, (Vol. I); “Letters of the Two Boudenots”, Ch. of Okla., Sept., 1928 (Vol. VI); Readings in Oklahoma History, (with J. L. Rader joint editor, Evanston, 1930).

²³ Especially Tales of the Tepee, A History of Oklahoma, and verses to his son in The Prairie Schooner, 80-81, 84.

²⁴ Chronicles of Oklahoma, June, 1923 (Vol. I), 167.

²⁵ The Cattleman, Nov. 1929 (Vol. XVI), 33.

²⁶ Agricultural History, Oct., 1928 (Vol. II), 167.

toward the stars, and Oklahoma occupies the most interesting part of the parade. Unlike Turner, who can explain the influence of the frontier but is somewhat vague about the next step²⁷, Dale regards the future as the most interesting advance of all. The material forces have been conquered; the dream of the pioneer has been realized; it is the next task to make similar conquests in the realm of culture, the kingdom of the spirit, the achievement of the large life.²⁸ The hardihood developed in taming the wilderness will win this greater battle and he has full confidence in its ultimate triumph. He knows that dreams come true; in his own career and in the life of his state he has seen the dramatic power of their fulfillment.

For this reason Dale goes blithely on his way in an age of disillusionment. A story so fascinating has to have a happy ending. Doubt is nothing new to him; there were homesteaders who feared that a living could never be wrested from the tough Oklahoma soil, but the optimists proved to be the better prophets. In his eyes is the light of the vision that guided the first frail ships to the western world and built a nation out of faith and hope and dreams. And as even an uncritical faith is more potent than doubt, and movements are mightier than those who would define them this "Average Man" may have sensed more truly than the profound thinker the trend of history. But whether his philosophy be true or false he voices the deepest feelings of the crude young state from which he sprang.

²⁷ Frederick Jackson Turner, The Frontier in American History, (New York, 1920), 156, 175-76, 221, 268.

²⁸ This is the dominant note in all his writing. A characteristic statement is found in The Prairie Schooner, 11-13.

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(Continuing correspondence from the Edward Everett Dale Collection, Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Libraries. used with their permission.)

37.

Marshall, Oklahoma
July 23, 1932

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am sending you another chapter of my dissertation. I hope that you will approve of the work I am doing. As soon as my committee has finished with it I intend to spend some time at Norman checking a few references and making whatever changes are necessary. I do not know when the summer term will close, but I am trying to send as much to you as possible before vacation, so that I may start making needed changes.

I am afraid you are pretty badly swamped with theses and dissertations this summer. I feel guilty to add to the pile, but I am certainly glad whenever I finish a chapter.

You may be interested to know that the Mississippi Valley Historical Review has accepted my chapter on reconstruction [*sic*]. You know we talked last summer about the expediency of offering some of it to a magazine before it was completed, and neither of us knew whether it would be wisest or not. So I just left it lie all winter, and then just before I started writing these last chapters I got to thinking that since I have been so slow about finishing somebody else might beat me to this subject. I thought if part of it were published it might serve to establish my right to work on it. As a result I sent it to the magazine and it has been accepted. I still do not know whether it was the best policy or not.

Yours sincerely,

38.

July 28, 1932

Miss Angie Debo,
Marshall, Oklahoma.

Dear Miss Debo:

I am returning, under separate cover, chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5 of your thesis. This is all except the chapter which came in yesterday and which I have not yet had time to read. I will get to it within the next few days and return it to you – possibly tomorrow or next day.

I am quite pleased with your thesis and with the way it is coming on. I am glad you expect to spend some time at Norman checking your references and making the changes that may seem necessary. I confess, however, that I do not believe your thesis committee as a whole will be able to get your thesis read before the close of the summer school and you may have to do your checking merely on the basis of what I tell you. As you know your thesis committee consists of myself, one other member of the History Department and a member of the Government department, but they will all be leaving town as soon as summer school closes and during the next week nobody will have time to read your thesis critically. In fact, nobody has had time to do it this summer except myself and I am not quite sure just how critical I have been. I wish you would, at your convenience, make out a table of contents giving perhaps half a page or a page outline of a chapter under the chapter title. I have had to read your thesis piece meal when I could and when it is fully completed I want to read it again, but a rather complete table of contents will be a guide to me and the other two members of your committee. What we will in all probability have to do is to let you finish it up or as far as you can in August and let the other two members of the committee read it after school opens this fall. I think the mechanics of your paper are, on the whole good. After all, I am not very much concerned about capitalization and such things as long as you are consistent. The important thing is not mechanics, of course, though proper mechanics will be taken for granted when the final draft is made. In putting in your foot notes the very short lines are sometimes confusing, making your thesis difficult to read especially due to the fact that they come very close to the underlining which goes under the title of the book. I think the other two members of your committee might appreciate it if you would get someone to take a rule or a straight edge and run those lines, which are only about an inch long or less, clear across the page either with a pen and ink or a black, fairly soft pencil. This is a small matter, but it would cause your foot note citations to stand out and would save time and the danger of confusion in reading.

I shall not be here in August, but some members of the Department will be and when you have finished your thesis or done all you can, leave it all including the first chapter and this table of contents mentioned above with Professor Wardell. Or if you prefer to take it with you, you can send it to me about the 15th of September. I will then get your committee to read it carefully and critically as a whole and if it is as good as I think it will be, I do not anticipate there will be a great deal of revision to do.

I have been having a lot of trouble with a Doctor's dissertation this summer – so much trouble that I wish to give you some advice which may obviate the possibility of similar difficulties in your case. First of all, do not hurry your work or hurry the men who are responsible for its final approval. It would be entirely useless for me to hand over chapters of your thesis to members of the Department now. Every man has his time budgeted to the limit until summer school closes. There is no possible chance of getting a critical reading of your whole work by the middle of September. Second, if your committee offers suggestions with which you disagree, explain to them why you thought it should be as you have given it, but if they insist on changes, make them promptly and cheerfully. Remember that it “never pays to argue with a traffic cop” and that these men are judging your work rather than the other way around. Finally, do not, under any circumstances, permit yourself to get into a nervous state over this work. After all your degree cannot be conferred until next June and there is abundant time to get your thesis exactly right without hurrying yourself or someone else. Take time to read your thesis over very critically and very carefully before it is finally submitted to the committee as a complete piece of work for their judgment and remember that the members of your committee have many things to do besides read your thesis and that they must have reasonable time to read it carefully and critically. I feel sure that you are too sensible and too good a scholar to need this advice, particularly, but my trouble this summer makes me feel that I ought to warn you about these things at any rate. Personally I like your thesis very much and I do not anticipate that you are going to run into too much difficulty, but I hope you will check it very carefully both for mechanics and such matters before presenting it to your thesis committee as a whole.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

E.E. Dale,
Professor of History.

EED/Mc

39.

Marshall, Oklahoma, Aug. 4, 1932

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am certainly grateful to you for taking time to read the chapters of my dissertation that I have completed. I can wait until fall for official approval, now that I have your opinion as to how I am getting along. I shall embody your suggestions in the draft which I shall submit to my committee next fall. And I shall have the outline ready as you suggested. I already have a very complete outline which I made for my own convenience before I started writing, but I have departed from it in a few places.

I hope that you will enjoy your vacation, and that you will forget that such afflictions as graduate students exist.

Although I do not anticipate any such occurrences still if it should happen that you should be approached by a president in need of a history teacher please steer him in my direction. I know that this is an unpromising time to seek a new position and that I should be thankful that I have the opportunity to return to Canyon next fall, but I am still somewhat dissatisfied by the increase of Peabody and Columbia Teachers' College graduates with what seems to me an underestimate of purely academic work. This does not destroy my pleasure in my work, but only in my attitude toward the administration, but for several years I have been increasingly desirous of a change. But I am not seriously dissatisfied; I just hoped you would keep me in mind in case something did turn up.

Please give my regards to Mrs. Dale. I hope that she is entirely well by this time.

And this is the very last you will hear from me until about the middle of next September.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo

40.

September 20, 1932.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

I went over to the Graduate Office this morning to look over the report of our committee. I find that the committee report says that you are to take your examination on American history second half and on government and the latter only to satisfy the requirements of the Graduate School. The above means that the Department of Government will ask you comparatively few questions and those will be based, I imagine, upon that part of government which mostly concerns American history since 1789. You will accordingly do your reviewing of American history since 1789 and I imagine that the bulk of your examination will be on nineteenth century American history.

I have not, of course, checked up fully with Dean Dodge, but your committee also reports that you should enroll for full time in the second semester of 1930-31 which a memorandum on your folder indicates that you did.

We have been so busy that I have not had time to look at your thesis yet, but I may get started on it tomorrow and will push it right along. When I have finished reading it, I will then turn it over to another member of this Department and a member of the Department of Government. Once they have both read it, we will have a conference and make recommendations as to corrections and revisions and I will return your thesis by express and then write you a letter explaining everything that needs to be explained. I have every hope that too much revision may not be required.

My wife joins me in kindest regards and best wishes,

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

1933

Received the Doctor of Philosophy degree in history from the University of Oklahoma. Dissertation entitled *History of the Choctaw Nation: From the Close of the Civil War to the End of the Tribal Period*.

1933-1934

Curator of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, West Texas State Teachers College, Canyon, Texas.

1934

Publication of Debo's doctoral dissertation as *The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic*. Began a career as a freelance writer. Moved back to Marshall, Oklahoma.

1934-1936

Conducted research and completed manuscript for *And Still the Waters Run: The Betrayal of the Five Civilized Tribes*, funded in part by a grant from the Social Science Research Council.

1935

The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic was awarded the John H. Dunning Prize of the American Historical Association. Taught summer school at Stephen F. Austin State Teachers College, Nagadoches, Texas.

1937-1939

Researched and wrote *The Road to Disappearance: A History of the Creek Indians*, funded in part by a grant from the Social Science research Council.

1937

Participated in editing and conducting interviews for the WPA Indian-Pioneer Project which resulted in the Indian Pioneer Papers.

1940-1941

Supervised the Federal Writers Project in Oklahoma.

1940

Publication of *And Still the Waters Run: The Betrayal of the Five Civilized Tribes* after some revisions made to the manuscript.

1941

Publication of *The Road to Disappearance: A History of the Creek Indians*. Publication of *Oklahoma: A Guide to the Sooner State*, a product of the Federal Writers Project in Oklahoma.

1942

Named state's "Outstanding Woman" by Theta Sigma Phi, honorary professional journalism fraternity for women, Oklahoma City chapter. Alfred A. Knopf History Fellow.

1943

Publication of *Tulsa: From Creek Town to Oil Capital*.

1944

Publication of *Prairie City: The Story of an American Community*, Debo's only work of fiction, based on the history of Marshall and nearby towns. Death of her father, Edward P. Debo. Licensed as a local preacher for the United Methodist Church in Marshall.

Dale-Debo Correspondence

October 1932-1933

(Continuing correspondence from the Edward Everett Dale Collection, Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Libraries. used with their permission. From Folder #2 of the OSU Library's copy of the correspondence, Collection #94-023.)

1. October 8, 1932.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I have now finished reading your thesis with a good deal of care and have turned it over to the Department of Government. The Graduate Committee of the Department of Government have assigned it to Dr. Ewing who is reading it now. As soon as he has finished with it, he will return it to me and I will have it read by a second member of this Department – probably Dr. Rister. We will then have a conference, come to a definite agreement upon any changes which we think may be necessary and I will send the thesis to you. I think that I can perhaps get it back to you within the next two or three weeks, though I cannot be quite sure, for of course, I have no way of hurrying these other men. Personally, I think you have done a good piece of work and so far as I am concerned, I do not feel that much revision will be necessary. I have marked a few points, some of them mechanical and others matters that I think better if slightly restated, but my suggestions are very few and comparatively unimportant. I am sincerely hoping that the other men will feel as I do about it and that you will not have much more work to do before it goes to the typist for the final copy.

When the time comes to make the final draft, I would suggest that you secure the services of a thoroughly competent and experienced typist, because it has been my experience that this will pay you in the long run.

With kindest regards and best wishes in which my wife heartily joins, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

2.

Canyon, Texas
October 19, 1932

Dr. E. E. Dale
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I wonder if some arrangement cannot be made that will not necessitate a special trip to Norman for my written examination. It is very inconvenient for me to leave here since we have a six day schedule, but frankly the greatest difficulty is the expense. My one way ticket out here from Oklahoma City cost me a little more than fifteen dollars. It would not be possible for me to come out with less than [*sic*] forty dollars for the trip unless the Rock Island would happen to run an excursion at that particular time. Of course I will have two trips anyhow – one for my orals, and the other for commencement. I wonder if one of these plans that I am going to suggest might not be accepted by Dean Dodge, and the others who are in charge of my work.

Of course the first plan I would think of – but perhaps it would not appeal to the Dean – would be to ask to be relieved of the written examination, since my work all along has shown that I am not in danger of failing it. This suggestion is not so unreasonable as it sounds, since I am almost positive that when I first enrolled in the fall of 1929 there was no such requirement. Some colleges, notably the University of Texas, have the practice of graduating students under the requirements that prevailed at the time of entrance. I know, however, that most of them change the rules at will during the term of residence, but I know cases where courts have decided that the student is legally entitled to fulfill only the conditions expressed in the catalogue at the time of admission. Of course I am not trying to insist upon such a construction of requirements, but I was hoping that Dean Dodge might be satisfied by this arrangement.

I thought also that it might be satisfactory for me to take the written examination here. The questions could be sent to the president and I could take the examination in his office. I think, however, that such a method might be open to the objection that an examination of the dignity and importance of this one ought not to be farmed out in that way.

Could I take the examination during the Christmas holidays? That would mean that somebody would have to bother with me during the all-too-short vacation, and perhaps I should not request that.

Failing all these could I take the written examination on the morning before I take the orals? If the committee who is to give me the orals could meet a little early to pass on the other perhaps it could be done.

I should not ask any of these favors if I had not complied so fully with every other requirement, and if there had been any weak place left over from my preliminaries. It is not that I mind taking the exam, but I do not seem able to budget an extra trip to Norman this winter.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo

3.

October 24, 1932.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I do not blame you in the least for not wishing to make two trips to Norman – one for the written and one for the oral examination – and I do not believe that will be necessary. On the other hand, there is not a ghost of a chance that you can be relieved of the written examination. So far as I know the written has always been required, but even if it had not been, I feel sure that the Graduate School would insist on your meeting requirements that I know have been enforced for the last two years. This is a matter, of course, over which I have no control. The rule was made by the Graduate faculty and no one but the Graduate faculty could waive it, and I feel reasonably certain that they would not do so.

As to the question of your taking the examination there, I will raise the matter with Dean Dodge when he returns which will be within the next few days. Personally, I would have no objection to this, for frankly, I do not believe in the written examination at all, but it is quite possible that the Dean might feel that an examination of this much importance ought not to be given except here and of course, there is always the matter of a precedent involved. I see no reason why you could not take the written examination during the Christmas holidays. Some of us would undoubtedly be here and I imagine the examination would take only a half day, so it would not work a great hardship on anybody. This might be the best solution. Of course, you must not think of taking the written examination on the morning before you take the orals. In the first place, sufficient time must elapse between the writtens and orals to enable your committee to look over your writtens and in the second place, I would not give it to you on the same day that you take the orals. The oral examination for the Doctor's degree is a pretty serious undertaking and you will need all your strength to go through with it without being worn out by writing in the forenoon. Moreover, I would not come up for orals immediately after a hard trip after a night spent in a Pullman. You should plan to give yourself a little time for rest before the examination.

Just as soon as Dean Dodge returns, I will talk the matter over with him and will write you again. The matter is largely a Graduate School matter and is something that I cannot do very much about.

Perhaps it would not be out of order if I point out that in my opinion the institution for which you are working is the one that should grant you special concessions rather than the one from which you take your degree. We have here

two men who expect to take their final examinations at Chicago at the end of the school year. When the time comes for them to go, this Department will be glad to take care of their work for any time necessary for them to make the trip in comfort and give them ample time to rest a bit before coming up for the examination. I shall be glad to see that their work is taken care of for a week or more if necessary. I can see no reason why Canyon should not do as much for you. If they are unwilling to do so, it seems that they do not appreciate the importance of the Doctor's degree or the hard work which you have done in order to prepare yourself for it. The taking of final examinations for a Doctor's degree is not a mere incident, but is a culmination of many many years of hard study and research. I would suggest that you talk the matter over with your departmental chief and the President if necessary, and ask that you be given a week or as much of that time as it may take to come here for your writtens and orals. You can take your written examination on Saturday and then take your oral on Monday or Tuesday and still not miss a great deal of time from your work.

Your thesis has now been read by three members of your committee and we will have a conference on it soon and I will write you again with respect to it.

With best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

4.

November 2, 1932.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

Your committee, consisting of Dr. Rister, Dr. Ewing, and myself, met yesterday for a consideration of your thesis and I am returning the manuscript to you today by express, collect.

I got along somewhat better in the conference than I had hoped to do. Your committee as a whole has very little objection to your thesis as submitted so far as the larger aspects of the work are concerned. The criticism made are largely criticisms of style, involving questions of punctuation, capitalization, citations and occasionally sentence structure. About all we think needs to be done is to make these minor corrections which have to do largely with mechanics and not with the content at all. On the margins you will find written in pencil these mechanical corrections suggested. I believe they will, in most cases, be clear to you and in cases where they are not, I will try to explain.

Since the thesis was read independently by each member of the committee, you will find a few margin suggestions by some members of the committee which we, in conference, decided might be disregarded. The most important of these is Dr. Rister's suggestion that you use op. cit. instead of repeating the titles of sources frequently quoted. Dr. Ewing and I pointed out to Dr. Rister, however, that a repetition of a title is perfectly clear and is in fact, somewhat less confusing to the reader than the op. cit. or ibid as the case may be. You may, therefore, disregard entirely marginal requests to use op. cit. and ibid. I will not take the time to go through and mark them out, however, for that will not be necessary after you have been told to disregard them. The same thing applies somewhat to another criticism made by Dr. Rister about matters that seem to be of no great importance sometimes have four or five citations. Rister suggested that in many cases four or five citations could be reduced to one or two. I pointed out, however, that this is a matter upon which I hesitate to base judgment and that in all probability you should be the final judge as to multiple citations. If you feel they are necessary, by all means leave them in. In cases where you feel that they are not necessary, I think it would be better to cut out those which you think can be spared. Examples are pages 10, 12, and 13 of the introduction. Disregard the penciled notations on this point by Dr. Rister and be your own judge as to whether or not some of these citations might well be omitted. The committee is entirely willing to accept your judgment in the matter.

The form of these multiple citations does not, however, conform to the best standards in the opinion of your committee. Instead of indenting for each separate citation, making each citation stand out as though it were a paragraph, the better form seems to be not to indent and merely to separate your different citations by semicolons. I believe that you have substituted U.S. Statutes in most places for Kappler. In the case of Kappler for example or other authors that are cited frequently throughout the thesis, the committee suggests that you cite the full title first and perhaps drop in a footnote saying "cited hereafter as Kappler" or whatever the author may be. In other words, citations from sources frequently used will not need the complete title every time. Be sure to be consistent in this matter, however, and having noted that you will cite only by author, do not after that, inadvertently put in the whole title. In a few cases you have used op. et loc. cit. Your committee does not quite understand this and suggests that it be omitted. I believe this is all about citations except let me repeat that you should check very carefully to make sure that you are consistent in your citations all the way through.

My own feeling is that the chapter on the "Political History of the Choctaw Nation" should come before the chapter on "Economic Development", though I am not quite sure about this and if you have what seems to you good reasons for making it the fourth chapter rather than the second, I have no particular objection. I feel, however, that the titles of chapters 8 and 9 "The Surrender of the Tribal Institutions" and "The Dissolution of Tribal Interests" are not the best titles. They are too nearly alike. Ewing suggests they might be called merely "The Surrender" and "The Dissolution", but I do not like that either. It sounds fictional to me. I wish you would think about this a little and see if you cannot improve these titles. One is clearly the beginnings of transition and the other the final break-up of tribal institutions.

The chief criticism made by your committee has to do with minor matters of punctuation and style. Parentheses and quotation marks should be placed outside the comma. You will find bad spelling appearing in quotes sometimes checked with a question mark which merely means to call your attention to it in order that you may be sure that it was spelled that way by the person quoted. You will, of course, not change if it is so spelled. You are not always consistent in the use of caps and this is, of course, very much a question of opinion when applied to such words as "chief", "council", and other terms. The best advice I can give you is to be sure you are consistent at all times. If in doubt, use lower case. Ewing, in particular, calls attention to many colloquialisms as "rank favoritism", "destitute of education", "strolling around", "shipped in whiskey", "or else that" and numerous others. Will you have these carefully and change to a more formal statement. Expressions like "innocent of books" come, of course, from Whittier's Snow Bound. I would not use, or if used at all I would put it in quotes. You occasionally have a long loose sentence which would be better broken into two or three and in some cases a reverse order in the sentence would be better. Example, chapter 6, first sentence. We think it would be better to turn the sentence around and say: "The supervising authorities of the United States stood in the background of the Choctaw control of government etc."

Watch your spelling of Indian names and try to conform to most common usage, for they are, of course spelled in various ways. "Tuskohoma" [*sic*] is a case in point. I do not know whether it has one or two m's, but since the route is the same as "Oklahoma", it would seem only one is preferable.

I believe this is about all I can tell you and it may seem like a great deal, but when you begin to analyze it, you will find that your committee has offered very little criticism and that it will be, in most cases, merely a matter of going over your thesis with pencil or pen and ink and making these very minor corrections. Be sure to do this with great care, erasing or crossing out suggestions made by members of the committee so that everything that happens on the page is to be typed by your typist in exactly the form it appears on that page. If necessary, feel free to cut and paste in cases where sentences are to be recast. Once it is in exactly the form that you want it typed, try to get the best possible typist and unless the person is thoroughly experienced in this kind of work, you had best follow through the typing pretty carefully. That is, when one chapter is done, read it over carefully to make sure it is right before letting the typist start on the second chapter. We can, of course, have it done here if you prefer, but you could probably find a typist there who might do it for less money.

Let me say in conclusion that every member of the committee is much pleased with your thesis. We think you have done an excellent piece of work and one that ought to be published. If you run into any difficulties in making the corrections suggested or if there is anything I have not made clear, be sure to write to me and I will try to help in every way possible.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History

P. S. I have not yet seen Dean Dodge with respect to the written examination, as he has been out of town most of the time. Of course, you cannot take the written examination anyhow until the thesis is put in final form and approved by the committee, so let us not worry about more than one thing at a time. Let us get the thesis in shape and I will in the meantime, see what I can do about the written examination. Be sure to send us the bibliography at your convenience.

E. E. D.

5.

Canyon, Texas
November 3, 1932

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

Thank you very much for your letter in answer to the inquiries about my written examination. I am glad you think it will not be necessary for me to make an extra trip to Norman for it.

I hope that Dr. Dodge will consent to my taking it here. I can understand that he may think that undignified and not in keeping with the seriousness of a doctoral examination, but I hope that he will allow me to do it. I shall be glad to submit to any safeguard that he may see fit to impose. If he will not consent to my doing that I will plan to take it on the Saturday before taking my orals on Monday according to the suggestion you made. That will not be bad, except that I would a little rather not have anything on my mind but my orals at that time.

I suppose you will soon be sending my dissertation for correction and changes. I have several holidays in the near future which I am holding open for that work.

I sent a little fragment of my dissertation to the Chronicles of Oklahoma. They published it, but they made typographical errors that made me writhe. If I ever had any reputation as a careful writer it is gone now. The Southwestern Historical Quarterly is so very much more careful.

Please give my regards to Alberta and Mrs. Dale.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo

6.

Canyon, Texas
November 5, 1932

Dr. E. E. Dale:

I received my dissertation and the report of my committee yesterday evening. It came at a convenient time for me, for our classes are dismissed today in honor of a home-coming football game and I can begin work on it at once.

Naturally I am immensely gratified by the approval of my committee. It is difficult to keep faith in oneself during a long period of protracted effort, especially when one is painfully conscious of many errors in judgment and inability to express oneself clearly; and yet one must maintain such a faith in order to accomplish anything in the way of productive scholarship.

I shall certainly be glad to change the method of placing multiple citations. I should have known that my method was wrong; but somehow I did not, until after my manuscript was completed. I can correct that error by instructions to the typist without needing to rewrite the citations.

Dr. Rister misunderstood my object in making the multiple citations. In no case are they duplicates unless it is clearly stated in the footnote. Since I used source material almost entirely it was sometimes necessary to collect material from half a dozen different places for what seems like a simple statement. If I had omitted all but one of the sources the citation would not have been complete, and I should not have been able to justify my statement. I know that the multiple citations look awkward, but if they are checked it will be seen that they are necessary.

There is only one exception to this practice – the case of using both Kappler and the United States Statutes at Large. The two citations in those cases are duplicates. I wonder if you would prefer that I use only Kappler. I remember that when we talked about it you did not feel that it made a great deal of difference. Perhaps it would be better not to refer the reader to two sources for exactly the same material. I will follow whichever practice you prefer.

I am really shocked at the errors in grammar and sentence structure unearthed by the vigilance of my committee. I am not so surprised by the mistakes in spelling, for long ago I reached the melancholy conclusion that I am a poor speller. I am of course very grateful for these corrections, for there is nobody else so deeply concerned as I am in the ultimate result. I am almost as grateful for the suggestions that will enable me to improve places in the writing that are not actually correct.

Since you made it optional with me about the position of the chapter on government I shall leave it as it stands. I wish I could change that – I

see the reason for your preference – but I am afraid to attempt it. It would involve so many internal changes in the three chapters affected, not only in the subject matter but even in the form of the citations that I am afraid I should do it incompletely and break the continuity of the work as a whole. I tried to make each chapter lead up to the succeeding one, and I do not believe I could do that now if I were to change the arrangement.

I concur most heartily in your judgment regarding my poor titles for two of my chapters, except that I would extend the condemnation to all of them. I have never been satisfied with the title of anything I have ever written. I shall do my best, however, to invent some better titles for those two chapters. What I wished to convey in one of them was the idea of surrender to the federal government, and in the other the idea of carrying out the terms of that surrender. The unity of the chapters is perfectly clear, but it is not expressed in the titles.

I talked with Alberta while I was in Norman about typing the thesis. I certainly want a good typist, and I do not know anybody whom I should prefer if she will be able to do it. I believe, however, that I shall speak to the secretary of our president first, since it will be more convenient for me to be at hand to make necessary suggestions. But in either case I shall take great pains to secure an expert typist. I suppose since my committee was good enough to accept the subject matter it will not be necessary to submit it again until it is finally typed. There is no danger of my disregarding any of the corrections since my own reputation as a scholar is at stake. Of course if I should find instances where I still preferred my own form I would endeavor to secure the approval of my committee before I would disregard their suggestions.

Just what is the procedure when one is ready to place the dissertation in permanent form? Are there not some instructions one should secure from the library or the graduate council? And how does one secure these instructions? Is there a fee, and is the paper furnished by the university? I am anxious to attend to this as soon as possible, for I wish to submit my manuscript to a publisher. I am working for a fellowship, and I need all the prestige I can secure. A book accepted by a publisher sounds much better than a doctor's dissertation strongly recommended by the author.

I hope that I have not burdened you too much by these many inquiries. There is so much that I do not know.

Angie Debo

7.

November 7, 1932.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I have both your letters this morning for which I wish to thank you very much. I called Dean Dodge this morning with respect to the matter of your written examination. As I had expected, he feels just a little reluctant to establish the precedent of giving the written examination in absentia, but he is entirely willing that you take your written Saturday morning before the oral on Monday afternoon. On the whole, I am not certain that this would not be better, for I do not estimate that the written will be such a tremendous task for you and by taking it on Saturday, you would have Sunday for a little rest and recreation before coming up for the much more serious ordeal.

I was much pleased with your letter concerning the thesis and I am sure the other members of the committee will be, too. It is not at all surprising that there should be some mechanical errors and faulty sentence structure, but I am sure you can straighten all these things out without much difficulty. Nearly all these things can be corrected with pencil. I am sure Miss McCann will be willing to type your thesis if you wish her to do so and she, of course, does excellent work and would consult with me about any matters concerning which she might be in doubt. I think she has typed the doctoral theses of every candidate we have had except Miss Lewis. Of course, you can no doubt secure an entirely competent typist who might do the work for somewhat less money and you could follow it through yourself. This matter is entirely one for you to decide. My only concern is that you be sure to get someone who will do the work right, for it would pay you to do this even though it costs a little more. Miss McCann is enclosing a leaflet, giving instructions to typists of Master's theses. The same general rules apply to the Doctor's dissertation. The Library does not furnish paper, but the leaflet will explain to you the kind to be used.

With regard to Kappler and U. S. Statutes at Large, I think it would be better to use the Statutes alone and not cite Kappler at all, for Kappler is merely taken from the Statutes. If you have a copy of Kappler there, I believe he gives a marginal reference each time to the Statutes, but of course, if you are quoting from a specific thing, you would not have the exact page. Frankly, I do not think it makes a lot of difference if you use the United States Statutes and Kappler both and I think I would prefer to have you do this rather than to have you use Kappler alone. I am willing, however, that you should use your judgment in the matter.

Thanking you again for your good letter and with kindest regards
and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

8.

Canyon, Texas
November 23, 1932

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am sending you the draft of my bibliography. I have been very slow about sending it, but I waited until I received my corrected thesis so that I could go over every citation and check it against my bibliography. I am sure that it is correct so far as material is concerned, but I have several questions about the form.

I should like to know if you think I have used the proper classifications. I have never attempted any other classification except as source and secondary material until I attempted this. I tried to model it after your Range Cattle Industry, but it did not help much because the subject and sources are so different from mine.

I am beginning to think I made a mistake in italicizing titles of unpublished material like the Acts of the Choctaw Nation, Union Agency Files, Phillips Collection, etc. I have looked at a good many books, but I do not seem able to find out. Do you think I should change that?

We are having three days vacation [*sic*] this week, and I expect to use them in working over the thesis itself. I try to work on school days, but it takes most of my time to make a little history grow where none grew before.

I hope that you are not working too hard, and that you and Mrs. Dale and Ed may have a very pleasant Thanksgiving. I am sure you have much to be thankful for in the prospect of getting me off your hands.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

9.

Canyon, Texas
November 28, 1932

Dear Dr. Dale:

I overlooked one thing in preparing my bibliography which I thought I had better mention to you so that you would be spared the trouble of going over it and correcting it. You told me that you wanted me to place the comma inside the quotes [*sic*] in citing a title of a magazine article. I have already gone over my dissertation and made the necessary changes, but I neglected to do it in my bibliography.

When you return my bibliography I should like for you to tell me how many copies of the thesis I must furnish the university. The information Miss McCann furnished me stated that two copies were required, and possibly three. The extra copy seems to be based on a departmental requirement in the history department, but I wanted to be sure before engaging a typist.

I am still working over the thesis and trying to put it in the exact form I want. It will be a little while yet before it will be ready to submit to a typist. Naturally I am trying to prepare it as soon as possible because I hope to find a publisher for it, and the recognition that will come if I should be successful. At the same time I am taking plenty of time to do the work as carefully as I can.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

10.

December 5, 1932.

Miss Angie Debo,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

The other members of your committee are now looking over your bibliography and I shall not be able to return it to you for a day or two.

In regard to the number of copies of your thesis to be furnished the University, I will say that only two copies are required. There is no extra copy based on a departmental requirement.

I do wish to call your attention to the fact, however, that you must prepare an abstract of your thesis for publication in the Abstract of Theses and that you must also prepare the copy for the printed announcement of your examination. I am almost certain we gave you some samples but if we did not, please let me know and I will send them to you at once.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

11.

Canyon, Texas
December 6, 1932

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

When we were talking of the subject that I should choose for my dissertation I remember that you suggested a study of the process by which the land embraced in the old Indian Territory passed out of the possession of members of the Five Civilized Tribes to whom it was allotted, and came into the possession of the whites. I did not choose that subject, for I was not able at the time to understand its significance. I think I do now, and I believe I know how to undertake it; consequently I am applying to the American Association of University Women for a fellowship to enable me to carry out this piece of research.

I should be very glad if you would write to them recommending me for an appointment. Since my dissertation has not yet been published I should be grateful for anything you could say regarding its value as an historical study, as well as for any estimate of my general ability as a research student. Also since they prefer that their candidates have doctor's degrees I should like them to know how close I am to the doctorate. If I should receive the appointment my study would begin in June, and surely there is no doubt that I can complete my work by that time. I am not minimizing the difficulty of the final examination, but I cannot imagine myself so careless as not to make sufficient preparation for it. If there were a commencement earlier I would try to complete my work for that so that I could really claim the Ph.D. in my application.

I am sure that you must be asked to write hundreds of these letters, and yet they are so important to the one who is applying for a position that I suppose we will keep on requesting them. I shall be very grateful for any assistance you can give me. The recommendation should be sent to Miss Mary H. Smith, Secretary, Committee on Fellowship Awards, 1634 Eye Street, N. W., Washington.

Sincerely yours,

Angie Debo.

12.

December 9, 1932.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I have your kind letter of recent date and take pleasure in writing a letter to Miss Smith in your behalf. I am sending this letter out today.

I shall return your bibliography within the next few days as we have been delayed a little in checking it over. Everyone is terribly busy just now owing to the fact that Christmas is coming and we are trying to get certain things out of the way before we dismiss for the holidays.

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

13.

Canyon, Texas
December 27, 1932

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I wonder if this is about what the Graduate Council wants in the way of an abstract. I do not know exactly what is expected, and so I have written a sort of preface. Since I have no idea what is meant by a "recipe style," I may have violated that prohibition. It may be too long, for the instructions say that ordinarily the abstract should contain not more than three hundred words. This runs slightly over four hundred. If it is too long I can easily leave out part of it, but I wrote it that way because if I can find a publisher I want to use all – and more – in my preface.

I am all ready to let a girl start typing my final copies of the thesis tomorrow. I am going to try a girl here because it will be more convenient for me; but if I find that she is not able to do it well I shall try to secure the services of Miss McCann. I spoke to Miss McCann when I was in Norman, and she thought at that time that she could probably find time to do it.

I hope that you are enjoying the Christmas season.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

14.

Canyon, Texas
January 5, 1933

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I suppose you received the telegram I sent you yesterday asking if you would recommend me to Professor Robert C. Binkley of Western Reserve University. I do not know whether the place is filled or not, but at least there was a vacancy there, and I am hoping it will not be filled until they will have time to hear from me. It may be there is no hurry at all; they may want a teacher at the end of the semester, but I was afraid to risk losing any time. I hope they will not think I have been too eager, but they ought to realize how desperate one feels when he is out of employment. This is the first vacancy I have discovered during the two years I have spent all my spare time hunting for work. I did learn of the death of two history teachers, and though I felt like a ghoul I wrote the minute I heard the news before they had time to be decently buried. But one place was already filled when my letter arrived, and they distributed the work of the other among the other members of the department and did not employ a new teacher.

Please tell me how much you spent on the messages, so that I can take care of it. And I know that you did the very best you could for me, and I am sincerely grateful. If you can think of any other member of the faculty who might have some personal contact with Professor Binkley I should certainly appreciate it if you would tell him of my application, and perhaps he might write too.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

15.

January 6, 1933.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I was glad to have your kind letter of December 27 with the abstract of your thesis enclosed. I do not think this is too long and I shall refer it to the abstract committee with the request that they give it the once over and decide whether or not it is all right. It may have to be retyped according to a set form, but I imagine Miss McCann can do this for you.

I trust you had a Happy Christmas and that you will have a Happy and Prosperous 1933.

With kindest regards and best wishes in which my wife heartily joins me, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

16.

January 10, 1933.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I am enclosing, herewith, your bibliography. This has been checked over pretty carefully by Dr. Rister and myself and we think it is all right, though he has made a few suggestions.

With respect to the Congressional Documents and your query, I do not know that it makes any difference which way they are listed. I think either one would be correct, though if the Mississippi Valley seems to prefer the second way and it is not much difficulty to put them in that form, it might be better to do so. I think, however, that either method would be correct and acceptable.

With best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History

17.

Canyon, Texas
January 24, 1933

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am applying to the Social Science Research Council for a grant-in-aid to assist me in carrying on the study of the alienation of Indian land which I mentioned to you last fall. While I was working on my dissertation I collected a great deal of material which I could not use, since my study closed with the allotment period, and which would make a good beginning for this other project. I have complete notes on the land policy of the United States, rather extensive statistics regarding the alienation of Choctaw and Chickasaw land, and the official land policy of the Choctaw government. I also acquired familiarity with many of the collections of documents which I should consult for such an investigation. I feel as though I have a fairly good start on this subject and I should like to finish it.

I took the liberty of giving your name as a reference to the Council. I suppose they will write to you if I have been able to interest them sufficiently in my application. I shall be very grateful if you can say a good word for me in answer to their inquiries.

I shall not hear from my application to the American Association of University Women until after the first of March. I appreciate all you did in my behalf. I do not know how good my chances are, because of the fact that the fellowships are not limited to the field of historical investigation.

The girl who is typing my dissertation is doing an excellent piece of work. I am expecting it to be completed within the next two weeks.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

18.

February 2, 1933.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I have written you a letter to the Social Science Research Council on the blank form which reached me a day or two ago. I trust this will be of some service to you and I sincerely hope that you may secure this Grant-in-Aid.

I have looked over your abstract and it seems to me all right. It will have to be retyped in special form, but since it is only two pages, I am sure Miss McCann will be glad to do it for you here. However, you will have to furnish me the other information for your folder. That is, your personal and academic history, fields of study, etc. in accordance with the general scheme of folders I sent you.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

19.

Canyon, Texas
February 11, 1933

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

Thank you so much for writing in my behalf to the Social Sciences Research Council. I think the fact that they took the trouble to investigate the reference I furnished looks a little bit favorable. I failed to secure the fellowship from the American Association of University Women, but I am none the less grateful to you for your assistance.

Dr. Dale, I should like to borrow that abstract of my dissertation for a few days if it is not too much trouble. I neglected to make a copy because I did not understand just what was to be done with it, and so I expected that it would be corrected and returned as the dissertation was. I think I should like to use it as a preface to the copy I am getting ready to send to a publisher. I am sorry that I did not keep a copy and save you that trouble.

Will you please tell me what is the exact title of my dissertation as it is recorded in my application for a degree? The instructions you sent me say that the title that appears on the dissertation must be exactly the same as on the application. Again, I could have saved you this trouble by keeping a record, but I did not know that it made a great deal of difference what I named it.

I hope to have everything done within the next two weeks. My typist is slow but I have not hurried her for she is conscientious and accurate.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

20.

February 17, 1933.

Miss Angie Debo:

I was glad to have your kind letter of recent date and hope that you are successful in securing what you are asking for from the Social Sciences Research Council.

I am returning the abstract of your dissertation herewith, but will ask you to return it to me when you send your thesis and the material for the announcement of your examination.

We have investigated the matter at the Graduate office and found that apparently they do not have the subject of your thesis on file. I am therefore enclosing a thesis card and will ask you to fill it out, stating the title which seems to you most nearly to cover the subject of your thesis. You will, of course, use reasonable care to see that the title submitted is not awkward or unwieldy, but is as brief as possible to cover the subject.

My wife joins me in kindest regards and best wishes,

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

21.

Canyon, Texas
February 21, 1933

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am sending my thesis subject on the blank you sent me. I am never very well satisfied with the title of anything I write, but I suppose this title has the merit of being accurate, and perhaps that is as much as one can expect in a work of research. I have always been dissatisfied with the title I gave to my master's thesis, but even yet I cannot think of one that would have suited me better.

My typist has the work all done but the bibliography. We spent all my spare time last week proofreading it. She has been so accurate that of the thousands of citations in such technical material as I have used there were only about two mistakes. There were a few typographical errors in the text, but not many. She has been working on it ever since Christmas, but I have not tried to hurry her.

I received another inquiry from the Social Science Research Council. I think their evident interest in my project is encouraging, and so I hope that I shall receive an appointment. I am very grateful to you for your assistance. Meanwhile I should appreciate it very much if you would keep me in mind if you should hear of any teaching vacancy. I liked my work here very much when I first came, because I saw the possibility of building up the educational system of a pioneer community, but I do not see much prospect of its realization. The teachers' colleges are under strong fire just now in Texas, and I am afraid that to a certain extent the legislative hostility is justified. I like the professional spirit one finds here, but I do not think a fine professional spirit can be made to substitute for academic thoroughness.

Please give my regards to Mrs. Dale, and Miss McCann. I have been thinking of Mrs. Dale so much recently, because several of my students have been reporting on Frontier Trails.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

22.

February 24, 1933.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I was glad to have your kind letter of recent date with the card enclosed. I am glad to know your typist has about finished your thesis. When it is done, please send it in and also send me the material for the announcement of your examination together with a statement of about when you would like to take the exam. Naturally, you will have to give us considerable time, for the announcement must be printed after we have had a chance to go over the final draft of your thesis. I would suggest that you should not plan to come up before the latter part of March or sometime in April.

I hope that you may be successful in securing some help from the Social Sciences Research Council. I think their interest is encouraging. I will keep you in mind if I learn of any position, but I must confess that I almost never learn of anything any more. Under no circumstances should you think of leaving your present place until you are positively certain that you have something better elsewhere.

With kindest regards and best wishes in which my wife heartily joins me, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/McCann

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

23.

Canyon, Texas
February 28, 1933

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I packed my dissertation up today and will express it to you tomorrow. I put the abstract and biographical material in with it. I may have sent some things you do not care for, but I sent them in case they are required. For instance, I listed honors – not a formidable list – and publications. I did not give my age in the biographical sketch, but if the graduate council thinks it is essential it is in the records of the office. During the first years of my professional experience I was handicapped by my youth, and that difficulty was hardly over until the disqualification came the other way.

I used the abstract as a preface to my dissertation. If there is any objection to using it in that way, please throw away those two sheets, and it will not have a preface. It seemed to me it made a fairly good preface, and I thought it might as well do service in both places since the people who will read the dissertation will not read the abstract.

I should like to come up for my examination early in April. I wonder if it will be possible to delay setting a definite date until it is possible for me to find out about excursions on the Rock Island. Such attractive rates are offered frequently on that road and the regular fare is more than thirty dollars. I am finding it necessary to be rather stingy this year because the future looks rather dark for me right now.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

24.

Canyon, Texas
March 31, 1933

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

Would it be all right for me to take my written examination April 22, and my oral April 24? I had really hoped to get it over long before this, but I have had so many things to do that I have let it slip. If that date is not convenient another will do, but I hope I can take it about that time. I think it will be good for me to have a definite date set so that I will not let other things crowd it out of my thinking. Just now I am working on a pageant for the opening of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Society museum. It seems to be a bad habit of mine to become tangled up in so many things that I neglect important duties that are not so immediate.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

25.

April 7, 1933.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I cannot say just now whether or not it will be possible for you to take your examination at the time indicated. I am afraid we cannot get ready by that time, as your material will have to go to the printer and time must elapse for copies of your thesis to circulate among the members of your committee. I shall try to see Dean Dodge today or tomorrow and get things in motion. We shall, of course, have to set an exact date when the material goes to the printer and I am wondering if you can come most any week-end. I wish you could write me at once and give me a couple of other dates after April 22 when it would be convenient for you to take your written with the oral on the Monday following.

I would like to have it as early as we can, but some delay is necessary in order to give time for the printer to get his work done and the members of your committee a chance to read your thesis. I cannot be sure who all the members of the committee are until the material is ready to go to the printer.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

26.

Canyon, Texas
April 9, 1933

Dr. E.E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I believe it would really suit me better to take my finals April 29 – May 1 instead of the date I suggested in my first letter, because our interscholastic meet comes at that time. I should hate to take them later than that, but of course I can if necessary. I want to get them over and have a little breathing space before our finals descend upon us. Just set the date that is convenient for you and I will adjust my plans to that, but if it is at all possible it will make it much easier for me to have it not later than April 30.

It will be good for me to have the date definitely settled. I have done wrong to neglect it so long. I suppose it was the consciousness that there was no hurry that caused me to put it off. But I find myself becoming a little nervous over the fact that it is still unsettled, and I know that I shall study to much better advantage when I have a fixed date to look forward to.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

27.

April 12, 1933.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

April 29 and May 1 will be satisfactory to us for your examinations and I am having the announcement printed accordingly. As soon as these are ready, the Graduate Office will send you some copies.

This is the date of our Scholastic Meet, so if you get through with your written before Saturday noon, you will have a chance to go out and see something of the meet Saturday afternoon. Certainly, you should not attempt to do any studying between your written and your oral, which could hardly come before three o'clock on Monday afternoon. It is almost impossible to get a committee together earlier than that because of class work.

Please do not get nervous over your examination. At the same time, do not fail to consider the seriousness of it and use every reasonable effort to prepare yourself so that you make a good showing.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

28.

Canyon, Texas
April 18, 1933

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am very glad that the date I suggested for my finals will be convenient for you. I am glad, too, that you advise my taking the written examination in the morning. I am sure that I shall be more fresh [*sic*] then, and besides I am thinking of dashing home over Sunday. I have not seen my parents since last September, and I think a visit home would be a good way to employ the interval between the two exams. Of course I will return Sunday evening to Norman so that I shall be rested by Monday afternoon. I will call at your office early Saturday morning for the written exam.

Will you please tell me exactly what is expected of me in the orals? I understand that I am to be questioned about modern American history, and perhaps a little bit in my government field, but I do not know what is expected of me about my thesis. Am I to give a summary of it, and if so how long should the summary be? And will they question me about it? I know that in some schools the thesis is all that is considered, but I know that is not the custom at Oklahoma. If there is to be a summary of the thesis, will that come first? I am fairly good at presenting anything to a group – I ought to be, teaching so long as I have – and so I want to use as much time to putting that over as I am permitted.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

29.

April 21, 1933.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I am glad to know that the date for your examination is satisfactory. I would suggest that you report to my office on Saturday, probably soon after eight o'clock and I will find you a quiet place where you can take the written exam. The examination will cover American history since 1789 and there will also be a brief examination on government. The written examination in history will be broad and more or less general. The oral examination will begin at 3:00 p. m. on Monday and should last about two hours and one-half.

You will first be asked to present a brief account of your thesis and will be given approximately twenty minutes to do this. In this, you should suggest the problem involved, the sources you have used, how the problem was developed or worked out and what contribution that you have made. Do not try to give an abstract of the information in your thesis, but only designate the important points developed or the important questions raised and answered. You will not have time to give a synopsis in the twenty minutes. After you have had twenty minutes in which to present this, your committee will question you on the thesis. It is impossible to say just how long this questioning will last. I should like to keep it down to ten or fifteen minutes so that we can have a couple of hours for the examination in the field. In no case will I permit the questioning to run more than thirty or forty minutes, for we must have at least an hour and one-half for questioning in the field of the second half of American history and in government. I have an idea that the various members of the committee will question you by aspects of the field rather than by definite chronological periods. That is, Christian will question you on constitutional aspects of the second half of American history, Thomas on our relations with Hispanic America, Rister on recent contemporary events, I on Western influences, and the members of the Department of Government on American government and its relations to the second half of American history. This is about all the information I can give, for while the chairman of the committee may direct the examination on broad general lines, nobody can foresee what turn the questioning may take. I can only suggest that the final examination will be far more technical and explicit than was the general and that you should prepare yourself with utmost care up until the time comes for you to leave Canyon and then forget it until you actually come to the examination room. In other words, do not try studying after you leave Canyon. If you must read on the train or at any spare time, read magazines and try to forget about history.

I think your idea of going home over Sunday is an excellent one, but you should return to Norman Sunday night as you suggest in order to get a good night's sleep and be rested by Monday afternoon. Whatever you do, do not let yourself get into a nervous state by working too late at night and losing sleep or by worrying over the matter. Everybody thinks you will do well if you are feeling fit, and do not forget that we are all your friends and are extremely eager that you shall do well.

With best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

P. S. I have just talked with Dr. Ewing of the Department of Government and he says that your examination in the field of government will be mainly American government as related to the second half of American history, perhaps giving special attention to your thesis field. That is, to the relations between the Federal Government and Indian tribes, though you should be prepared on all phases of American government which touch the second half of American history.

30.

May 3, 1933.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I called the Treasurer's Office with respect to your bond and asked them to send you a blank bond form. They tell me that the bond is \$200.00 and I think there are instructions on it for filling it out. I believe they require two sureties. You understand, of course, that the bond is merely a matter of course, because before the two years are up, you will undoubtedly have it published or if it is not, by an expenditure of forty or fifty dollars, you can publish the abstract yourself.

You should write to Mr. Kraettli in regard to your cap and gown and I suppose to Mr. Lindsey with respect to your diploma fee.

I hope you are quite rested after the ordeal of your examination and I shall look forward to seeing you at the June commencement. I have heard nothing but the most favorable comments on your examination. I am enclosing a carbon copy of a letter I have just written your President. I feel that he should know what this Department thinks of you.

With best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc
Enc.

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

31.

The West Texas State Teachers College

Department of History

Canyon, Texas

L. F. Sheffy
Hattie M. Anderson
Angie Debo

May 4, 1933

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am so grateful for that letter. I have been a good bit worried the past year; but when anybody does anything so kind as that I feel that one ought not to become upset in a world with so much genuine goodness even though that goodness is not so very apparent in the economic order. Dr. Hill seemed to appreciate it, too. He showed it to me and to Mr. Sheffy, and seemed very much pleased about it.

I wrote to Mr. Wadsack asking him to tell me about anything I ought to know that I have not attended to. I sent the bond to my father. I think as you do that there is no risk, since the expense of publishing the summary of my dissertation is so small. I do not think that I shall need to do that, for I am almost sure that it will be published long before two years have passed; but if I do I can stand to ask my father to bet fifty dollars on me, where I would not have been willing to risk involving him deeply.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

32.

May 10, 1933.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I was indeed happy to get your kind letter of May 4 and to learn that Dr. Hill appreciated my writing him about the splendid way in which you passed your final examination. I am glad you wrote to Mr. Wadsack asking him about what you should do, if anything, in the matter of graduation. I imagine there is nothing except the payment of your diploma fee and paying for your cap and gown. I do not think you need to worry about your bond the least in the world. I am sure your thesis will be published before the two years is up, but if it is not, you can prepare an abstract and print it yourself some time before the two year period.

I am very happy that you are all through as are all the members of the Department and we shall look forward with much pleasure to seeing you at commencement.

With every good wish, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

33.

Canyon, Texas
May 15, 1933

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am so grateful to you for your letters to Mr. Hill. I believe they did me good, too, for Mr. Hill has so many worries on his mind just now that I think he was inclined to forget that he owed me some obligation for the good work I have done here. He feels that the college itself is threatened by legislative hostility, and one cannot blame him for overlooking the plight of an individual. But I do feel that my life is of some importance, too, since it is the only one I have, and I believe your letter called his attention to that fact. I have never been one to haunt the office and demand things, and your letter did for me what I could not have done for myself.

Perhaps I have said more than I should have about the local situation; but I know that your letters to Mr. Hill represented a discreet, tactful, and altogether wise attempt to help me in a desperate situation, and I want you to know that it has done good. I do not know that Mr. Hill or anybody can do anything for me now, but I am glad it was brought to his attention.

Yours sincerely,

Angie Debo.

34.

Canyon, Texas
May 18, 1933

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

You have done so many things for me during the last fifteen years that I hate to ask another favor, but I seem to be doing it just the same. I just got a letter from Mr. Brandt saying that he was trying to complete his publication list by the first of June. As another reader will have to pass on it besides you, I wonder if you can get your report to Mr. Brandt soon. I know that your time is pretty full with students in residence as well as doctoral candidates, and that the work you do in passing judgments on manuscripts is just an added burden; still if it is possible for you to report soon it will mean a great deal to me. I feel as though the publication of that book would be a sort of compensation for all I have lost. Of course it may not be accepted, but I'm hoping.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

35.

May 22, 1933.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I was very glad to have both your kind letters of recent date. I am glad to know that you think my letters to President Hill may have been helpful to you. I want you to know that I shall be very glad to do anything possible for you at any time and I trust you will not hesitate to call on me when you think I can be of service.

With respect to the manuscript of your book, I made my report on it to Mr. Brandt last week. No doubt he will reach a decision in the very near future. I think the only question he has in mind is whether or not he can sell enough copies to make publication of the book profitable. While it is not the primary purpose of the University Press to make a profit from its publications you will understand that if the University Press is to function at all, it cannot go deeply in the red on all published volumes, particularly at a time like this.

I am sending the other copies of your thesis to Mr. Rader and the librarian tells me that there will be a fee for binding of \$1.00 per copy. You can send the check for \$2.00 directly to Mr. Rader and make it payable to him or Mr. J. L. Lindsey.

Do not fail to call on me if I can be of service at any time.

Hoping to see you at commencement and with best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

EED/Mc

36.

July 13, 1933

Miss Angie Debo
West Texas State Teachers College
Canyon, Texas

Dear Dr. Debo:

The graduate school secretary has asked me about an abstract for your dissertation. It seems they do not find one in their files and are not quite sure whether or not you turned one in. I think you understand what they want: an abstract like the one in the announcement of your examination except considerably longer and more complete.

Will you drop me a line as to whether or not you have filed such an abstract, and if not I will do anything I can to help you work one up for them. Let me hear from you when you can find time and tell me how you are getting along and your prospects for next year.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale
Professor of History

EED:V

37.

The Hotel

Lubbock

WEST TEXAS MOST COMPLETE HOTEL

Lubbock, Texas, July 16, 1933

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

Thank you so much for calling my attention to that abstract. I am writing to the graduate office about it, and will be glad to furnish anything they require. I had supposed that the one printed on my examination notices would serve the other purpose also; in fact I prepared it according to the directions for theses sent out by the graduate office except that it is somewhat longer than they desire. I thought that since their instructions are prepared mainly for a master's thesis, it would be expected that a doctor's abstract might be longer. I will send them a copy of that if I kept one – and if that is not satisfactory I shall be glad to prepare anything they require. I do not forget that my research was carried on through a fellowship grant from the university, and I have always felt under obligation for that assistance.

Thank you for your kindly and friendly inquiries regarding my own problems. If I ever do meet with any encouragement I shall let you know immediately; but so far I have not been abler to discover a vacancy anywhere. I have followed up every lead I could possibly think of, and shall continue to do so; one of them may bring results.

I came to Lubbock this morning to talk with Dr. Knapp. There is no vacancy here, but it occurred to me that it would be wise to establish as many contacts as possible while I am still in the teaching profession. I told him frankly that I expected to write to him at intervals to inquire if he had a vacancy, and he said he would be glad to have me do so. Altogether the interview was highly satisfactory to me. I hope I can impress a few presidents enough so that they will remember me when schools start growing again. My greatest fear is that if I once drop out of the profession it will be impossible for me to establish contacts.

I am trying to do some writing, too, while I am still in touch with libraries and historical documents. I have just edited some very interesting letters for the Panhandle-Plains Historical Review. I will send you a copy when it comes off the press. I am going to collect material for some other articles while I am still here. I hope that way to keep in touch with the profession.

Mr. Walter Ferguson has been most kind. You remember introducing him to me at the [unintelligible] luncheon. He volunteered to use his influence in securing a publisher for my dissertation and he asked me to keep in touch with him. He said he would not be able to do anything before fall. I would have written to you about it, but there was nothing definite to write. If I ever get out of the woods I will let you know at once – I am so grateful for your interest.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

38.

July 19, 1933

Dr. Angie Debo
West Texas State Teachers College
Canyon, Texas

Dear Miss Debo:

I was very glad to get your kind letter of recent date and glad to know that you are keeping in touch with President Knapp and with other college presidents with respect to a job. I have been keeping my eyes open for you all the time, but so far I have not found anything which looks at all promising. If I do, you may be sure I will let you know at once.

I do not think you need to worry a lot about being able to get back in the teaching profession once you are out if you continue to write for the historical journals, that is a good way to keep your name before the teaching profession, that is, the historical fraternity.

I am glad to know that Walter Ferguson has volunteered to help you secure a publisher for your dissertation. Walter Ferguson is a man of very considerable wealth and influence, and I am sure he can be a lot of help to you. Also, if I can render any assistance along these lines you will, of course, not fail to let me know.

I do not think you need worry about the abstract for your thesis. The graduate office will tell you just what they want. I imagine a slight expansion of what you had printed in the announcement of your graduation will be sufficient. They would like, however, to have a little more comprehensive abstract than what appears in the examination announcement. Dean Dodge will, I am sure, write you exactly what he wants.

Let me hear from you from time to time as to how you are getting along and if you hear of anything which I can help you to get, do not hesitate to write me and tell me just what you want me to do. This department and the department of Government will support you to the limit for any position you may be seeking. With kindest regards and best wishes, in which my wife heartily joins me, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale
Professor of History

EED:V

39.

Marshall, Oklahoma
September 1, 1933

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

You have had me on your conscience for so long that I know you will be relieved to learn that I have been offered employment of a sort for next winter. You know the Panhandle-Plains historical museum was completed last spring and thrown open to the public. The building is on our campus, and the members of the history faculty have taken turns keeping it open. We found this additional duty quite a chore, for we have had more than fifteen thousand visitors since April. Now I am to have charge of it at a salary of fifty dollars a month. It is supposed to be part time work and will give me an opportunity to do some writing for we have some valuable documents there. I think this will tide me over until something better opens up, and best of all it will give me a chance to keep in touch with the academic world; the thing I feared most was the danger of falling out and never getting in touch again.

I am so happy to find employment that I am not worrying about its inadequacy. Of course I shall continue my efforts to find something better; I said as much to Mr. Hill, and he said he would be willing to release me at any time and would be glad to assist me in any way he could. If you learn of a vacancy anywhere I should be grateful if you would telegraph at my expense; even though the position did not offer any more remuneration than the one I have I should consider it, for it might be in a school with a stronger academic tradition.

I am more grateful than I can tell you for the interest you have shown. In fact I am giving you the credit for my present good fortune, for I think it was your tactful letters to Mr. Hill that first caused him to feel some responsibility in my case. He is a good man, I think, but not a good executive, and he needs urging sometimes.

Please give my regards to Mrs. Dale. I am still remembering the delightful visit I had in your home the Sunday I was in Norman.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

40.

Canyon, Texas
September 21, 1933

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

You have done so much for me that I want you to know of my good fortune. I got a letter from Mr. Brandt yesterday saying that he had secured approval for the publication of my book by the University Press. He is not able as yet to send me a contract because of the quarterly budget plan, but he is confident that we can go ahead and plan the publication. Of course that means a great deal to me just now. It makes me determined to find some way to continue this kind of work. I think the next thing I try to write will be better, for I have learned a great deal on this one.

I know that you were one of the readers, and that your favorable report assisted me to secure this acceptance. I know, however, that your interest in the writer would not have influenced your judgment in the slightest degree, and so I appreciate your estimate all the more. I am sure it was as unbiased a report as it was possible for anybody to make, and it please me very much to know that you thought the work of value.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

41.

October 2, 1933.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I was indeed glad to get your kind letter of September 21 and to learn that Mr. Brandt has secured approval for the publication of your book by the University Press. I know that this must mean a great deal to you and I am sure that your book will be very much worth while. I think it is particularly fortunate that you are able to arrange for publication just now when you are working only part time and will have sufficient leisure to enable you to go over the manuscript with great care and also to follow the book through publication. It has been my experience that a great deal of time and effort is involved in publishing the book even after the manuscript is ready for publication. There is always the problem of reading galley and page proof, of making an index, and of selecting illustrations and maps if any are to be included.

I am so happy to know that you have even a small job which enables you to keep in contact with historical work. I sincerely hope that before the end of the year we shall be able to find you something better elsewhere. I will be glad to hear from you at any time you care to write and if there are any problems in the publication of your book [with which] I can help you, you have only to let me know and I will be very happy to do my best.

With every good wish, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

42.

Canyon, Texas
October 5, 1933

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

Even though my book has been accepted for publication I am not satisfied with it. I think it is all right for a dissertation to have an arbitrary limitation in time and space, but I am afraid for the general reader it would be better not to limit to a certain period in Choctaw history. I think it would be improved by adding a couple of chapters on the period before the Civil War, or rather to expand that brief introductory chapter into three.

I am sending Miss Margaret Camp to Norman to take some notes for me on this additional material. I know exactly where it is and what I want. Miss Camp typed the dissertation, and took more interest in it than anyone has any right to expect of a typist. She is a graduate of our college, and a real scholar; in fact I think she is the most scholarly person we have ever sent out from the history department. Her work on my typing was so careful it was almost a collaboration.

I am writing to ask you a favor. I wonder if you will be quite nice to Miss Camp. She is one of the best friends I ever had even though she is so young. She is out of luck – graduated at the wrong time, and has never had a decent job since. But she will enjoy this work, and I have every confidence that she will do it as well as I can. When she arrives she will report to you for permission to use the Phillips Collection. I think she will be there in a few days.

I got your letter a few minutes ago. I surely appreciate your interest. The same mail also brought me a letter from Mr. Ferguson with an enclosure from Mr. W. F. Semple with a very cordial endorsement of my book which Mr. Ferguson had asked him to read. Mr. Ferguson was greatly pleased, for he says that Mr. Semple has been tribal attorney for the Choctaws and “has the keenest appreciation of the Indian story of any man of my acquaintance.” I am glad you introduced me to Mr. Ferguson; although I have told him that the University Press is going to publish my book, he still takes the most cordial interest in it. He would have helped me find a publisher, if I had not been so fortunate as to secure its publication myself.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

43.

October 10, 1933

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I was glad to have your good letter of October 5. Miss Camp came in yesterday and is now at work in the Phillips Collection. We will be very glad to give her all the assistance in our power.

I am glad to know that you had a letter from Mr. Ferguson and that Mr. Ferguson is pleased with your book. I see no reason why this volume should not have a good sale. Of course it will not be what you would call a popular best seller, but for libraries and supplementary work in Oklahoma history, it should command a considerable sale.

Miss Camp tells me she will be here for two or three weeks perhaps and you may be sure we will give her all possible assistance.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

44.

Canyon, Texas
November 11, 1933

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I saw Miss Vernie Newman, a former student of mine, a week ago, and she told me of her work under you and that she had completed her master's degree except her thesis. She is anxious to choose a Texas instead of an Oklahoma subject, for she thinks it will put her into better touch with her own field of work. She was wondering if it would be possible for her to collect her material here and then write it under your direction.

I do not know whether you would be willing for her to collect material without the benefit of your supervision while she was doing it; but I thought I had better tell you about our material so that you would have all the facts in your possession when she writes to you. We do have an abundance of material for master's theses on any phase of ranching or West Texas pioneering or Plains Indian fighting. A great deal of it is manuscript material, and very valuable. Nobody has used it much because we do not do graduate work here; in fact Evetts Haley with his history of the XIT Ranch is the only person who has really used it. I hate to see all of it going to waste, but we have collected it in the confidence that it will be used some time.

Of course if Miss Newman were working here I should be glad to assist her in every possible way, and I could give her a great deal of assistance since I have no classes to teach. But you may not feel that I would be best for her to work away from your supervision. I know that very few graduate students are capable of independent research, and although I remember Miss Newman as a remarkably promising undergraduate I do now [not] know exactly what she is capable of in working out a problem by herself. But I just thought I would tell you that we have plenty of material, so that if you were willing for her to work here you would know what to expect.

Miss Camp tells me that you want a complete set of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Review for the Phillips Collection. I was not able to give you any definite answer at first, for the directors of the Society had in an excess of zeal placed the price for back numbers at an unreasonable figure. But Mr. Sheffy wrote to them, and they have fixed the price at \$7.50 for the whole set of six. If you want them at that price I shall be glad to send them to you. We are almost out of the second number, and that is the reason that we have advanced the price beyond the dollar each at which they sold at the time they were published.

I certainly appreciate your courtesy and friendliness to Miss Camp. She is naturally a reserved person, and she has tried to refrain from bothering you, and so I suppose you have not seen so very much of her; but she writes of you with so much admiration that I know you have won her heart. When she quotes you she is quoting an oracle, and that settles any matter so far as she is concerned. Vernie Newman speaks of you in the same way; I think we shall have to establish quarantine lines to keep too many of our Texas young people from falling under your influence.

I can hardly wait until my book will be published. If it turns out well I am going to start right in on another. I spent my holiday today in reading Grant Foreman's last book. I enjoyed it very much.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

45.

November 17, 1933.

Miss Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Dr. Debo:

I was indeed glad to get your kind letter of November 11. I deeply appreciate your inquiring about a complete file of the Panhandle-Plains Historical Review for me. I shall be very happy to have the set of six at the price mentioned \$7.50. I am wondering if you could have them sent with bill and I shall be very happy to send you my check immediately upon receipt of them.

I enjoy Miss Camp very much. She is a very interesting girl and is working hard here. I have been hoping we could have her down to our home for lunch or dinner, but we have been busy the last week or two and have not seemed to get around to it. If she is here as much as four or five days longer, however, I want to do this.

With respect to Miss Vernie Newman, I will be very happy to have her do her thesis in absentia if she wishes to do this and I would be especially grateful to you if you could assist her somewhat in her work. I do not think it necessary at all for her to work directly under my own supervision. She will, of course, have to file a thesis subject, approved by this Department. If she is working on a West Texas subject, it might be best for her to work under Dr. Rister, though I am quite willing to direct her thesis if she prefers. Dr. Rister is a little more familiar with that particular region than I am. It will be necessary for her to enroll in her thesis in absentia and file her approved subject in the Graduate office.

I shall be very much interested, too, in seeing your book off the press. I know you will be proud of it and we will be proud of it, too, as we are of you and your work.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale,

Professor of History.

EED/Mc

Interviews with Angie Debo, #17.

Interview Date: June 8, 1985.

(Valencia-Weber and Matthews Interviews, Box 2/ folder 18)

I consider And Still the Waters Run my most important book, but because of its explosive character I had difficulty in publishing it. I have read, recently, stories about my efforts in this direction that are not quite accurate – and I'd like to straighten out the record.

I had published The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic with the University of Oklahoma Press in 1934. It had been my doctoral dissertation. I really wrote it for publication. I didn't care so much about the dissertation, or about the doctor's degree, as I did about the opportunity to write the book. I had – When my Choctaw Republic came out, for some reason that I never have been able to understand, it was so widely reviewed that it gave me great encouragement. For ten years I had been with the West Texas State Teachers College, where I had been training high school history teachers in teaching methods, making demonstration teaching of high school students for them to observe, and guiding them in their practice teaching. But I felt as though I wanted to enter more deeply into the scholarly work of history, and that field was closed and locked against women. And I felt that when my Choctaw Republic came out and was so extensively and favorably reviewed, I felt as though I ought to break loose from a situation that wasn't exactly satisfactory, and start out in free-lance writing. It was a difficult time because it was right in the depth of the depression, but I left the West Texas State Teachers College – where I had been for the last ten years – at the end of the summer of 1934. And came over to Marshall, Oklahoma where my parents lived, to start out my career if I could have one in historical writing. I went to the university and talked to Mr. Brandt who was the director of the University of Oklahoma Press because my Choctaw Republic had been so favorably and surprisingly reviewed. I say surprisingly because nobody was interested in Indian history or in local history at that time. Sometimes I've said to them, "Must not have been very many books published that year." I expected it to be favorably reviewed in historical journals because I knew that I had done a thorough job of research and writing, but it surprised me when newspapers all over the country came out with their favorable reviews.

So I thought I'd start out if I could, even in that difficult time, as a free-lance writer, and because I had written the tribal history of the Choctaws, I thought it was – one of the, because I'd written a tribal history of the Choctaws, one of the projects I had in mind was a continuation – a, just a minute, sequel – I thought I would write a sequel to the tribal history of the Choctaws, and describe the participation of the Five Civilized Tribes who had owned and governed the eastern half of Oklahoma, after their tribal institutions were liquidated, and they became citizens of the United States, and citizens of Oklahoma. That was one of my projects. I went to the university to talk to Mr. Brandt about that since he had published the Choctaw Republic, and there at the University [of Oklahoma] Press, they were excited about the immense publicity that my Choctaw Republic had received. So I mentioned that as one possibility and Mr. Brandt was in favor of it.

But I had no idea of the explosive character of the material that I would uncover. Much of the eastern half of Oklahoma which had been owned and governed by the Five [Civilized] Tribes was dominated by a criminal conspiracy to take away their land. I had grown up while that was happening. But the Indian Territory – which comprised the eastern half of what became the state

of Oklahoma – was as far away from us people in the western half – the Territory of Oklahoma – I started to say as far away as the most remote portion of the globe is now, but I’m going to make it stronger. It was farther away, there’s no spot on the globe that is as far away from my knowledge and understanding as the Indian Territory was when I was growing up in the Territory of Oklahoma. And so I was uninformed about what I should find. All I knew was that some of the leaders of these five tribes had become prominent in affairs of the united state of Oklahoma and at college as an undergraduate, I had become acquainted with many young people, students at the University of Oklahoma, of Indian descent and some white blood who were capable and leaders in many ways. I felt as though their amalgamation with the pioneer white settlers of Oklahoma had been an interesting experience, but a fortunate experience for both races.

I had no idea of what I should find. I spoke to Mr. Brandt about it, and of course I had been out of the state for a good many years and when I was at the university – I graduated in 1918 – that situation in the eastern half of the state was never mentioned. Then I had gone to Chicago; then I had gone to West Texas into another pioneer situation. And I had no inkling of what had been happening to the citizens of the Five [Civilized] Tribes. Mr. Brandt, as the editor – perhaps city editor, I’m not sure, of the Tulsa Tribune – knew about the difficulties with guardians that some oil-rich Indians were having, and he mentioned the guardianships, but I was thinking about the Osages and everybody knew what had happened to the Osages, but that was in just one county of Oklahoma, and didn’t affect the Five [Civilized] Tribes. So his knowledge also was limited as he had been born outside of the state, but had grown up in Tulsa. But [he] had been unaware of the early part of this criminal conspiracy.

After statehood, what we call the east half – that is the former Indian Territory – that had been owned and governed by the Five [Civilized] Tribes, dominated state politics, and to a certain extent it dominated the entire economic situation because the oil fields were in the eastern half – and they were spectacular oil fields – were in the eastern half of the state. The drilling had not yet reached the point where they could drill as deeply as they did later to bring in the oil fields in the western half. And so it was rather foreign to Mr. Brandt also. He knew there might be some difficulty with guardians of a few oil-rich Indians, but neither one of us realized the explosive character of what I should uncover. . . .

And so we decided that my next book to be published by the university press, of course, would be a sequel to my tribal history of the Choctaws, and neither one of us had any conception of what I was going to run into. I probably wouldn’t have been brave enough to have chosen that subject if I had known. If I had surmised how dangerous that subject was, how shocking, it was, but after having chosen it, I wasn’t willing to back down. I feel as though that when one is doing research for a historical, on a historical, subject that to leave out something because it might offend somebody who is living, because it tells the truth about them, or about some of their ancestors, I think that’s just as serious as it would be for anyone engaged in cancer research to conceal some of his findings. So I felt as though I had to tell the whole story no matter what it said. I read each – I did my writing at home – and I did, I read each chapter to my mother as I wrote it. She would say when I finished when I finished reading a chapter, “Nobody will ever publish that,” but I felt sure that Mr. Brandt would. So as soon as it was finished, I sent it to the university [press], and he read it and his readers read it. And they praised it very highly and I still feel that it’s the most important book that I have ever written.

Mr. Brandt felt just as strongly as I do that one should tell the truth no matter what, and that applied to the publisher just as much as it does to the writer. All the – all the laudatory things I have said about Dr. Dale are true. I admire him tremendously, but Dr. Dale has an entirely different idea about unpleasant findings – an entirely different idea from mine about unpleasant findings. He says very frankly, “It’s too early to tell that now.” He would be willing to admit that Benedict Arnold was a traitor but I think that’s about as close to the present as he would go. Anything he finds that’s unpleasant, he leaves out, and he frankly says that a certain historian made a mistake in publishing a certain thing and so he got into trouble about it. So I hadn’t learned anything from Dr. Dale about that, but Mr. Brandt felt the same way that I did about it. But – and so when it was presented to him, he accepted it, he sent me a contract. He advertised that the book was coming out the following fall, or the following spring. I’ve forgotten which, I think it was the following fall. And also – it was even marked for the printer, but in the meantime we had had some correspondence about what would happen when it was published, that probably some of the people that I had named there would bring a suit against me, and against the press, and that made me realize more than I had realized when I first sent it to the press – made me realize that perhaps I was putting the press in danger that I shouldn’t do.

So I went down there and told Mr. Brandt that I thought that we shouldn’t publish it. I felt just positive that as soon as the contents of that book were made known – nobody knew what was in it at that time – nobody except Mr. Brandt, and the readers to whom he had sent it, all of whom strongly approved it. But I told him I thought that the press should not publish it because I was sure that the legislature would destroy the press which they could very easily simply by cutting off the appropriation. They destroyed Kate Bernard and they regretted that they couldn’t destroy her department, but the department is provided for by the constitution so they couldn’t abolish that. They said that some of them said very frankly that they’d like to abolish the department, but they couldn’t do it for that reason.

Excuse me, what department was that?

The Department of Charities and Corrections. So they could very easily abolish the press, and I have always been glad that it was I who made the suggestion. I’m very sure that the press would have ended – that its life would have ended right there, as soon as the contents of that book was publicly known. But nobody knew what was in the book. Well, I – this is what we finally decided. We finally decided that he would talk to the president about it – the president of the university – and the president would submit it to Dr. Dale for his opinion. And it didn’t occur to me at the time that Dr. Dale had a different idea about publishing facts from the idea that Mr. Brandt and I had. He very strongly recommended that it not be published because it would offend a certain person – he named that person – who was a friend of the university, and we were expecting that we might persuade him to do this and that, and so forth for the university. And so we had – that meant that the book should not be published. Mr. Brandt decided that if – Mr. Brandt and I during, in that, during that conversation – that first conversation – decided that if the press didn’t publish the book, maybe I should go back. We decided that it should be submitted to the president first. And if the president didn’t publish the book that the press would try to find a publisher outside of Oklahoma – probably a commercial publisher, and they the press did submit it to the president. The president submitted it to Dr. Dale. So we decided that we would void the contract, and Mr.

Brandt gave me back the marked manuscript that had been already marked for the printer. And I said now this book has been announced that it would be coming out at a certain time, what shall I tell people when they ask me when the book's coming out? I remember Mr. Brandt's exact words. He said, "Tell them the truth. There's no reason you should take the rap. It's not your fault, it's ours. We're the ones that are backing down." So that – it was not published by the press. . . .

Why do people ignore that when they're writing about Oklahoma?
Why do they leave that part out – is it just not something that they
want to get into? Or is it just that –

They don't like to tell that story. It's too bad.

Oh, it's just too bad of a story. Even though it's a true story.

It ought to go in.

Yeah.

But it's left out.

I never did understand why it would be left out. If they felt they
were telling a true story, why they would leave it out.

I don't think so – I don't think there's any excuse for leaving out part of your history just because
it's not pleasant.

I don't either. I always wondered why that was never brought up.

Never is.

And Oklahoma isn't the only place that it's happened, but it's a
larger area where it's happened.

That's it. It's happened in Kansas, and in Georgia, and Alabama – and several places. I'm very sure it must have happened to the Coquille in Oregon, although nobody's written about it. But I'm sure it did. Recently, that is – I say recently, I mean, oh, within the last twenty or thirty years, but nobody's written about it. But anyhow, they just leave that out of Oklahoma. Well now, Dr. Dale – I told you on tape about that he felt that you should leave out unpleasant things. He wrote so much about the Cherokee Strip Livestock Association, and he told one story to his class. Somehow I didn't – it didn't trouble me when I was in his class – because his classes were so enjoyable. It was just – you just – you were just entertained. It was just wonderful just to be there, you know, for an hour. You couldn't have had an hour's pleasure anywhere else as well as listening to his lectures. Well anyhow, he told this story one time to his class, and I've forgotten the details. But in getting the – in forcing the Cherokees to sell the Cherokee Strip, as we all called it, but it was really the Cherokee Outlet, you know – in forcing them to sell it, the government had to have some kind of contract with the Cherokee Strip Livestock Association or something and there wasn't any. And so – I don't know the details, I've forgotten – and so they

wrote a contract, and they put it in covers, and the officers of the Cherokee Strip Livestock Association, and they put it on the floor and they walked on it. They just did all kinds of things to it. They got it looking so – they dated it way back so many years, and they got it looking so old that it really passed as a contract that the Cherokee [Strip] Livestock Association had made with the Cherokee government, oh back a long time ago. And he told that story to the class, and he told how he told it to a group of businessmen somewhere, and how they laughed. They said that was the best story they ever heard, but now that's not in his book about the Cherokee Strip. He would – never would tell anything like that in his book. He didn't tell anything that wasn't pleasant.

This is Dr. Dale?

That's Dr. Dale. Now I admire Dr. Dale for all his good qualities, but that one I just disagree with him completely.

That doesn't sound like a true historian's way of thinking to me.

Well, it's not my way of thinking.

Mine either. That surprises me about – but there was [*sic*] so many people like that, and I don't know if it was the times that caused it. If it was now, if it was right now, would he still do that? You know I wonder.

Well I'm sure he disapproved of every word in that book of mine. He thought that when I discovered that, I ought to just quit, I guess.

That was enough – wait a while, huh?

You'd have to wait a hundred years.

Yes, it's a good thing you didn't.

Well, I guess I wasn't – I probably would have chosen a milder subject if I'd known what I was going to find. I probably wouldn't have been brave enough to pick that one, but after I picked it, I just didn't feel it was honest not to go through with it.

Couldn't put it down then?

Well, I just couldn't conceal it. And neither could Mr. Brandt. . . .

Mr. Brandt then tried to find a publisher, and so did I. But we had not succeeded in finding one, probably because Indian books were not popular at that time. Nobody was publishing them except the University of Oklahoma Press. That might have been the reason, or it might be that they were afraid of legal harassment. We could win any libel suit, but it's a tedious process, and publishers don't like to be involved in them.

Anyhow, we didn't find a publisher, but we didn't have so very much time because – now this is in no way connected with the publication of that manuscript – Mr. Brandt received an offer that he simply couldn't turn it down. So he became the director of the Princeton [University] Press, and just as soon as he became the director, he said to send him that manuscript. And he pub – and, of course, the Princeton [University] Press did publish it. They made one change which I consented to. When it got outside Oklahoma, the names of the local grafters didn't mean anything to people outside – to the general reader. And Mr. Brandt referred it to a, I know – I wasn't supposed to know, but I guessed – to a Wilbur Larow who was a very prominent lawyer, and also a prominent Presbyterian layman. He said that the names of those local grafters didn't matter, and they might just as well be left out. And that would lessen the number of people that would have a grudge against the Princeton [University] Press, and might want to sue the Princeton [University] Press. And I felt as though that was true, and Mr. Brandt did, too. As soon as he got away from Oklahoma, he felt as though some local grafter in Muskogee, for instance, didn't need to be named, or in Pryor, or someplace like that, because it didn't mean anything outside of Oklahoma. I stipulated that I wouldn't leave out the name of anybody who held a government position, or who was in a place where that his rulings would affect the liquidation process of the Five [Civilized] Tribes. So all the people who had authority – prominent people like Robert L. Owen, and our first governor, [Charles N.] Haskell, and people like that, who were involved – they were all named. But the people that were unknown outside the state, we left their names out.

Couldn't you – you could still find who they were, though?

That's right. Anybody that wants to know who they are – all they have to do is to take one of my footnotes, and check that footnote, and find out who did it. If anybody cares to know who did it in Muskogee, or Pryor, or Ardmore, or any other place. That's right. Well, that's the way that it was published and Princeton – as a matter of fact, though, it came out at the time that people were watching in agony as Hitler's forces cut through the Low Countries, cut across France, and captured Paris. So it didn't attract very much attention to the general readers. It was hardly noticed. It received the most laudatory reviews from the real scholars who reviewed it of any book that I have ever written. But it didn't attract very much of a splash such as the Choctaw Republic did because everyone was watching Hitler. Well, of course, as you know it came back to Oklahoma recently. I'm very glad that it came back because it's safe now to publish it in Oklahoma, and it is listed with the books of the University of Oklahoma Press.

And Still the Waters Run: Difficulties of Publication, Correspondence, Notes
July 6, 1938-October 12, 1940
(Angie Debo Collection, Box 24/folder 56)

When I realized the danger the publication of my manuscript would cause the University [of Oklahoma] Press and suggested cancelling the contract, Mr. Brandt reported the situation to President Bizzell, and Dr. Bizzell referred the question to a neutral reader. This reader was Dr. Edward Everett Dale, and the following pages constitute his report. Incidentally, this indicates his own concept of historical writing. I am greatly indebted to Dr. Dale for his influence on my own career, but this concept is different than mine.

A.D.

Miss Debo, As Long as the Waters Run

It is difficult to criticize this manuscript. In the first place a book that deals with so many characters still living assumes a risk, especially when those persons are in the political field and still before the public eye. If the book is an expose the case is different, but this is history. I feel sure that if the book is published as it is, there will be abundant adverse criticism with reference to personalities; on the other hand there will be great praise in that the book is fearlessly written (even then, I suspect some critics would discount the author's ability to weigh all materials used).

The book fills a need. There is no doubt but that the period has long needed treatment, but it is my belief that such a book can be written without dealing with such personal facts as to make it objectionable. I do not know enough about libel and damage suits to know whether there are grounds for such in the book. It is my candid opinion that the University of Oklahoma Press will come in for severe criticism. Too many of the men and women mentioned are friends of the University and we are in no position at the present time to invite criticism.

With eliminations and revisions the book can be presented so as to tell the essential facts of the period without being objectionable. It is true it will lose some of its pointed remarks, but the history will still be there. There is a time when a book cannot be written; later it may be.

A case is before the public now. Only until recently have critics dared to try a book that presents General Custer as he is now being portrayed in his army career. Owen Wister made a mistake with his Story of a Friendship, Haley with his XIT Ranch. Frankly, I am afraid of this book.

Points in question.

- Page LV. “to loot” probably too harsh a term.
- “ 4 “to rob and plunder” again may be true but were the men “invited” to do that?
- “ 34 Why should the author go out of her way to spread the fact that Oklahoma is dishonest? Such a statement is an indictment upon the whole state. We have enough to defend without inviting criticism.
- “ 55 “. . . the greatest of Indian Territory scandals. . . .”
This is a broad assertion and cannot be proved.
- “ 59 “. . . remaining half to the white men. . . .” cannot be proved. At least no proof is offered.
- “ 92 In speaking of patronage, why should the author have to make comparison with the political patronage in the educational field of today?
- “ 127 The chapter heading may be correct but could it not be stated another way. How many people today know that “grafter” was so loosely applied a score of years ago and how will this present generation of readers and those in other states know all that it implies?
- 139-142. In re R. L. Owen and his corrupt methods: The book is history, and the facts are there, but it is dangerous to write in a book about it. It may be permissible for a newspaper to carry such material, but it is different in a book.
- The “GRAFTER” chapter is dangerous.
237. The Moty Tiger and R. L. Owen affair can be modified.
256. In re Kate Barnard: “to trade upon her femininity”
282. Concerning T. Roosevelt and Haskell: the comparisons are hardly correct.

286. R. L. Owen attempting to secure removal restrictions for “a very fair red-headed woman.” This statement will make Owen and the woman, if she is still living, do some explaining.
288. Judge Bradley . . . \$40,000 and Posey estate \$25,000. I doubt this. Proof should be given. I do not believe the Posey estate came in for this amount.
301. The paragraph about T. S. Cobb can be omitted and the narrative will be just as good.
331. “Dr. Stopler” [*sic*]. This man has been mentioned many times before, but this is the first time he is called “Dr.” (This criticism is not in point, but several [*There was not even one such slip*] such slips occur in this book). *Dr. Dale is mistaken here. I called him Dr. Stolper at my first mention. A. D.*
- 346-7. I see no point in giving so much attention to the recommendations for the appointment of Mitchell. Scores of cases might be cited in the book, doubtless.
449. “Shabby” rivalry of Dr. Weeks. This gentleman is a good friend of the University of Oklahoma. Why should we go out of our way to rehash something that he no doubt would like for the public to forget?
482. The Pine and Barnett dialogue is interesting, but again why use it – in this case?
-
485. Landman is from New York and not from Boston.
542. Does not list all the boarding schools.

The last two are academic points.

I typed and wrote these comments Oct. 21, 1981

Dale-Debo Correspondence

1934-1942

(Continuing correspondence from the Edward Everett Dale Collection, Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Libraries. used with their permission. From Folder #3 of the OSU Library's copy of the correspondence, Collection #94-023.)

1.

**WESTERN
UNION**

KMZ74 44 DL XC=CANYON TEX 147P JAN 4

DR E E DALE=

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA NORMAN OKLA

THERE IS A HISTORY VACANCY IN WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY THEY

WANT A WOMAN WILL YOU PLEASE WIRE TO PROFESSOR ROBERT C

BINKLEY AT MY EXPENSE IS DOCTOR HOWARD THERE NOW IF SO PLEASE

WIRE TO HIM TOO HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP ME=

ANGIE DEBO.

216 P.

DIRECT BRANCH OFFICE

781 ASP. FONE 2533

WESTERN UNION GIFT ORDRES ARE APPROPRIATE GIFTS FOR ALL OCCASIONS

2.

Duke University
DURHAM
NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

January 4, 1934.

Miss Angie Debo,

Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I took the liberty of writing instead of telegraphing. I saw Professor Binkley at Urbana and am sure that he will not make his final decision before hearing from me. He inquired about a teacher in Spanish-American history and promised to wait until he received my letter. He did not speak to me with reference to a vacancy in American history – the position which, I assume, you are seeking – but I am sure he will not act until he has heard from me. The letter has just been hurried off. I received your telegram thirty minutes ago, and you may be sure I recommended you without reservation. I also referred him to Professor Dale, who has probably already acted at your suggestion. I sincerely hope that you may obtain the position. You deserve it. Yet there must be a score after it.

Very truly yours,

Fred Rippy

Happy New Year!

3.

January 8, 1934.

Miss Angie Debo,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I have your kind letter following your telegram of three or four days ago. In response to your request I promptly wired Professor Binkley at Western Reserve. I am sorry I did not know of a vacancy there sooner because I saw Professor Binkley at the meeting of the American Historical Association during the holidays and had quite a talk with him. I hope that you may be successful in securing this position.

You need not bother to send me the price of the message. It was, as nearly as I remember, only seventy-two cents. I do not know of anyone here who has contact with Binkley except Dr. Christian, but I think it hardly worth while to ask him to write until we know a little more about the position and are sure that a vacancy still exists.

I want you to feel free to call on me at any time you think I can help you and you may be sure that I shall always be happy to do my best.

With best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

4.

Canyon, Texas
January 11, 1934

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am so grateful to you for the knowledge that I can call on you for help at any time. I have not heard yet from Professor Binkley and probably I shall not secure the position, but I have done the best I can. I am afraid that he wants someone who has done work in Spanish-American history, and if that is true I cannot qualify.

I will tell you all I know so that if he inquires of you further, you will have as many facts as possible. The notice in the bulletin of the American Association of University Professors listed the position as "Modern and Latin-American or Far Eastern and Russian." That sounded as though there was a good bit of flexibility in preparation and assignment of courses. But I telegraphed to Dr. Rippey at the same time I sent the message to you, and his reply sounds as though Professor Binkley wanted somebody who had specialized in Latin-American history. My only hope is that he might naturally emphasize that phase of the work when talking to Dr. Rippey, because of Dr. Rippey's own outstanding work in that field. I have not yet destroyed Dr. Rippey's letter, and so I think I shall just send it on to you for whatever light it may throw on the subject. You may destroy it, for I have already answered it.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

P. S. Will you please hand the enclosed note to Alberta?

5.

THE PANHANDLE-PLAINS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ORGANIZED 1921

OFFICERS

H. E. HOOVER, PRESIDENT, CANADIAN
W. H. PATRICK, VICE-PRES., CLARENDON
J. A. HILL, SECOND VICE-PRES., CANYON
W. L. VAUGHAN, TREASURE, CANYON
TENNESSEE MALONE, CUSTODIAN, CANYON
L. F. SHEFFY, SECRETARY, CANYON
FLOYD V. STUDER, CURATOR, ARCHAEOLOGY
AND PALEONTOLOGY

CANYON, TEXAS

DIRECTORS

T. D. HOBART, PAMPA
J. A. HILL, CANYON
W. H. PATRICK, CLARENDON
H. M. RUSSELL, AMARILLO
JAS. D. HAMILL, FAIRWELL
W. T. COBLE, AMARILLO
A. J. FIRES, CHILDERS
H. E. HOVVER, CANADIAN

January 30, 1934

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

The women's clubs of this district are sponsoring a contest in which their members are asked to submit an essay dealing with some phase of Panhandle history, and the Panhandle-Plains Historical Society is offering first, second, and third prizes for the best ones. We should be so grateful if you would consent to act as one of the judges. We hoped to secure one judge from the University of Texas, one from Texas Tech, and you from the University of Oklahoma. I know that this is asking a good bit of such a busy person as you are, and if you feel that you will not have time I hope that you will refuse, but it will make us very happy if you can serve.

Judging from the inquiries that are already coming in, there is going to be a great deal of interest in this contest. But we thought that we would look through the manuscripts and discard the worst ones, so that you would not have more than ten or twelve at the most. Of course reading and ranking that many is quite a bit of trouble for someone as busy as you are.

I think the contest is to run until March, although I am not sure, for the plans are not entirely completed. And if you feel that you cannot do it, just tell us so.

I am so glad that Dr. Bizzell is coming to our school in the spring. I shall feel a personal pride in everything he says.

I still do not have anything in the way of prospects for myself. I am trying to be patient as I have tried to be for two years, and I am doing all I can. Surely something has to turn out right sometime, for I have made a conspicuous success in my profession. But I am eating regularly, and I was not even assured of that a year ago. I know that if anything does turn up, you will do all you can.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

6.

February 5, 1934.

Miss Angie Debo,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I was glad to get your kind letter of January 30 which reached my desk while I was away on a trip to Iowa City. I will be glad to help you out in your contest if you cannot find someone else, but I really feel that our Dr. Rister here is the logical man to serve as a judge in such a contest. He is much more familiar with the history of the Panhandle than I am and I believe he would serve if you would write and ask him. Naturally, I do not like to ask him myself, for he would promptly say to me, "You go ahead and do it". I feel that he has a little more time for such things than I have but above all, I feel that he is much more competent in that particular field. I wish you would write to him right away and if he will not do it, and you cannot think of someone else, let me know and I shall be glad to do my best.

I am glad Dr. Bizzell is coming to your school, too, for I know that you will like him out there. I am still watching out for a place for you, but the situation is a little discouraging. However, I hope you will make every effort to locate something and if I can help you in any way, you know you have only to call on me and I will be glad to do my best.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

EED/Mc

7.

THE PANHANDLE-PLAINS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ORGANIZED 1921

OFFICERS

T. D. HOBART, PRESIDENT, PAMPA
H. E. HOOVER, VICE-PRES., CANADIAN
J. A. HILL, SECOND VICE-PRES., CANYON
W. L. VAUGHAN, TREASURER, CANYON
TENNESSEE MALONE, CUSTODIAN, CANYON
L. F. SHEFFY, FIELD SECRETARY, CANYON
FLOYD V. STUDER, CURATOR, ARCHAEOLOGY
AND PALEONTOLOGY

CANYON, TEXAS

DIRECTORS

H. E. HOOVER, CANADIAN
T. D. HOBART, PAMPA
J. A. HILL, CANYON
W. H. PATRICK, CLARENDON
H. M. RUSSELL, AMARILLO
JAS. D. HAMLIN
W. T. COBLE
A. J. FIRES

February 13, 1934

Dr. E. E. Dale
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

It was so good of you to say that if we needed you, you would serve as judge in our historical essay contest. We think, too, that your suggestion that we ask Dr. Rister was such a good one. I have written to Dr. Rister, and if he accepts, we shall be very grateful. If he does not feel free to accept, we shall let you know.

I did not tell Dr. Rister that we had written you first. He was not second choice in any real sense of the word, for of course we know that we shall be fortunate if he will consent to serve. I am afraid I have formed the habit of asking you everything, and that I was just following my usual habit when I asked you.

I got my first installment of proof from Mr. Brandt yesterday. It is footnotes and bibliography – not an inspiring document, but I am so happy over the prospect of seeing the book in print that even the prospect of reading proof looks exciting to me. I managed to squeeze in four hours of reading this morning, and I accomplished a good bit. It is in good shape – not nearly so many errors as I have always found before in galley proofs.

Thank you again for your willingness to help us. I think likely that Dr. Rister will accept and that we shall not need to call on you, but we appreciate it just the same.

Yours sincerely,

Angie Debo.

8.

Canyon, Texas
April 17, 1934

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am in a bit of a jam, and I am going to tell you about it hoping you will help me out. But perhaps I ought not to be helped out, and in that case of course I want you to let things take their course.

I just got a letter from Mr. Brandt saying that he fears the free distribution of the hundred copies of my thesis required by the graduate school will reduce our market too much. He suggested that I write to Dean Dodge asking if a summary would not satisfy their purpose.

I certainly do not want to be stingy with the University, for I have not forgotten that it was a stipend that enabled me to go on with the project in the first place. I worked all the time under a definite sense of obligation, and I fully intended if the book did not turn out well to return the money some way. I think when a University puts up money upon the supposition that I can do something worth while it is very necessary that I vindicate their judgment. And it is this sense of obligation that makes me hesitate to ask anything that might be in the least ungenerous.

It does seem to me, though, that the publication of my thesis in a set as important as the Civilization of the American Indian Series has justified their faith in me and the money they spent on me. I feel at least that the success of its fellows is the best vindication of a system of fellowships. And although I have forgotten the exact wording of the requirements for doctoral candidates it seems to me that one is obligated to furnish a hundred copies of the dissertation or a summary acceptable to the department. And if a summary would be acceptable it would help me out very much. Perhaps I ought not to say anything about my finances, and I am certainly not going to say anything about them to Dean Dodge, for I want to do whatever he thinks I ought to do. But I believe I will tell you how it is. The money I am getting here enables me to live, but that is all, and I cannot even do that after a year or two. Without being dramatic or trying to particularize I will say that aside from the salary, conditions here are about as nearly intolerable as it is possible for anybody's life to be. And there does not seem to be a possibility of my securing another position. I have a very little money saved up which I intended to spend this summer in starting another book. I could use that money in furnishing those thesis copies, but I do not see how I could do both. And if I do not manage to get into the writing field it seems to me that I am stuck here forever. And so that is the reason that I am hoping that the request I am making of Dean Dodge will not be

considered unreasonable. Perhaps I should not have mentioned my personal plans, however, for they have no bearing on the question. I did not say anything of the sort to Dr. Dodge, but with you I am putting all my cards on the table.

But no matter how much my personal interests might be involved I prefer to carry out all my obligations to the University first. And so if they would be willing to let me furnish a summary, but if there was any little feeling that they would prefer the book as it stands, I should prefer to do the latter even though they might grant me permission to do the other. They bet on me in the first place, and I shall not let them down.

I have already written to Dean Dodge, and I do not know why I am writing to you except that it is a habit I have. As a member of the graduate council you will do all for me that you think it is right to do, and you would not do more than that even if I were to ask you to. And I shall not at all be disappointed if they decide against me.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

9.

April 18, 1934.

Dr. Angie Debo,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I was glad to have your kind letter of recent date. Dean Dodge is out of town just now, but when he returns I will take up the matter with him. Personally, I see no reason why an abstract or syllabus would not be entirely acceptable to the University. The Graduate Bulletin on page 17 states that "one hundred printed copies either of his thesis, or of a summary of it, approved by the Major Professor and the Dean" be deposited with the University. As Mr. Brandt has indicated, your book is very much more extensive than your thesis and I see no reason why you should be required to deposit with us a hundred copies of this volume. I presume in your printed volume you make some acknowledgments as to those who have assisted you in the work and perhaps may have mentioned the use of the Phillips Collection. I think this would be desirable.

I will be glad to recommend to Dean Dodge that you be permitted to publish and file with us a hundred copies of the summary of your thesis of suitable length – probably sixteen to twenty-four pages. He is, of course, the final authority in such matters, but I believe if this is presented to him in the proper way, he will not object to it. I cannot believe that he would insist upon your depositing with us a hundred copies of the book when it would involve a considerable financial sacrifice on your part to do so. Just as soon as I have a chance to talk with him, I will write you again. If you are permitted to file a summary, it will of course have to be approved by me and by Dean Dodge, but I do not anticipate it will be a great amount of work for you to prepare such a summary nor would it be at all expensive to have it printed.

Thanking you for your good letter and with every good wish, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

10.

Canyon, Texas
April 30, 1934

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I thank you so much for your letter regarding the graduate school requirements for the publication of my thesis. And if Dr. Dodge still thinks I owe it to the university to publish it I shall be glad to comply. I had not thought of doing anything different until Mr. Brandt wrote of the effect he was afraid such publication would have on sales. But I had not at any time planned to supply the copies this year. I had supposed I would not be asked to do that until the close of the two year period specified in the graduate bulletin requirements. And it was the request that I supply the copies now that brought up the subject. But I wrote to Dr. Dodge, and whatever he decides to do will be satisfactory to me.

There is one part of your letter that troubles me very much, for it makes me feel that I have been very ungrateful and ungenerous. I did not make proper acknowledgements in my preface. I knew at the time that I should do it, and I do not know why I have such an unreasonable and illogical prejudice against putting things of that sort into print. I could not have brought myself to write the dedication to my brother, except that it was the only way by which I could connect his name permanently with a work in which he was so deeply interested. And of course at the time I wrote the preface I had no other thought in mind except supplying a hundred copies to the university, and so that would have been an acknowledgement of my obligation to the history and government departments, which have put me under everlasting gratitude, and to the school that furnished me the fellowship. But I think Mr. Brandt feels, and I think he is right about it, that any identification of that book with the dissertation will spoil its chance of sale. I know that people always assume that dissertations are impossible to read. When Dr. Rippy sent my master's thesis to a publisher he was very careful not to mention the fact that it was a thesis. He said that was enough to damn any book in advance. But if Mr. Brandt feels as I think he does about the damaging effect of such an origin of a book, and since I have already been so ungenerous as to write my preface without acknowledgements, it may be necessary for the university to insist on the hundred copies of the whole work in order to get necessary credit. I did mention the Phillips Collection in the preface. So far as I know I did not change it from the way it was when you saw it. In the discussion of sources I said: "During the tribal period the public archives were preserved at the capitol in the care of the National Secretary. After the surrender of the tribal government the original manuscript acts of the General Council and a few other documents were brought to the University of Oklahoma; and fragments of the were placed in the office of the Superintendent for the Five Civilized Tribes at Muskogee." And of course I have cited the Phillips Collection many times in footnotes, and have listed it in my bibliography.

I feel very much ashamed of the absence of acknowledgments in my preface. I am not ungrateful, but I seem to have a positive genius for doing things wrong.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

11.

May 3, 1934.

Dr. Angie Debo,
West Texas State Teachers College,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I was glad to get your kind letter of recent date. I think you are troubling yourself quite unnecessarily with respect to the acknowledgements which you did not make in your preface. I doubt if there is any reason why you should make such acknowledgements, though I am glad that you mentioned the Phillips Collection. As you know, we are hoping to get some more money from Mr. Phillips and anything we can show him as evidence that the collection is useful to persons engaged in scholarly work will be helpful.

I have talked with Dean Dodge with respect to your obligation to the University and he agrees that it will be entirely satisfactory for you to submit an abstract of your thesis to be published in the Thesis Bulletin. You will be expected to pay the cost of such publication which will not be less than \$5.00 nor more than \$10.00. Dean Dodge suggests that perhaps two thousand words or less would be quite sufficient, but you must include with it a footnote to the effect that a book based largely upon this thesis is to be published by the University of Oklahoma Press at such and such a date. Dean Dodge understands Mr. Brandt's position that your giving a hundred copies to the University would interfere seriously with the sale of the book. He understands, moreover, I am sure the attitude of all publishers that it is not well from the publisher's standpoint to tie a book up with a Doctor's dissertation. With this attitude I fully agree, for most doctoral dissertations are rather impossible reading. If you will prepare the abstract of say around two thousand words and send it to me, Dean Dodge and I will approve it if it seems o.k., as I am sure it will be, and Dean Dodge will notify you, I am sure, as to the cost of including this in the bulletin. He told me he thought it would be \$5.00, but it might possibly be as much as \$10.00.

Please forget the matter of acknowledgements and please forget also any thought of going to the extraordinary expense of supplying the University with one hundred copies of your thesis or one hundred copies of the book. The printed abstract will be quite sufficient, since your book is being published. If your book had not been published and there had been no chance of its being published, Dean Dodge would have insisted upon a lengthy syllabus or abstract of perhaps twenty-four pages or more which would give in some detail the gist of your thesis. Under the circumstances, however, the two thousand word abstract will enable the

reader to determine what your thesis contains and the footnote will indicate where the book, based upon the thesis, may be obtained.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

12.

Canyon, Texas
May 7, 1934

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am certainly delighted at the outcome of that dissertation requirement. It is not every day in which one is released from a perfectly legitimate obligation of two hundred dollars. I think it was so considerate of Dean Dodge, because I know that he had been counting on having those books to distribute. And I appreciate what you said about the absence of acknowledgements, but I still feel distressed about it. The copies I expected to furnish would have been of themselves an acknowledgement, but since I am not to furnish them I am afraid the university and especially my committee are not getting any of the credit to which they are entitled when they have assisted a student to achieve something worth while. But it is too late to do anything about it now.

About Mr. Phillips – I do think that every graduate history student owes him something, for that collection is worth a great deal to us. Do you think that I should tell him so, and send him a copy of my book? I should not be conceited enough to think he would care for a history of the Choctaws, except that he must be interested in that sort of thing or he would not give his money to carry it on. And so I thought it might please him to think that his collection was being used for the purpose for which he gave, and I might as well be cold-bloodedly frank and say that he might be more interested in continuing his support. I think the most contemptible thing I know of is to express appreciation to a person for the sake of getting something more out of him, but it seems to me this is a little different; it would just be giving him an example of the way in which his gift is being used. If you think it would be out of place, or too obvious, I shall not do it; but if you want me to I shall be glad to do what I can.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

13.

May 9, 1934.

Miss Angie Debo,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I was glad to get your kind letter of recent date and am pleased to know that you feel quite happy over the outcome of the dissertation requirements. I certainly would not want to see you have to send in one hundred copies of your book to the University, for I think this would not be a reasonable requirement. When you make up the abstract, do it as carefully as you can so Dean Dodge and I can approve it without change if possible.

With regard to Mr. Phillips, I would be most happy if you would send him an autographed copy of your book and write him a letter stating that the Phillips Collection has been useful to you in preparing this study. I am sure he will appreciate it and I will appreciate it too. Certainly any man who donates money for a collection such as this has a right to know how it is being used and whether or not it is valuable to research scholars. Moreover, I think it is the duty of research scholars who use the Phillips Collection to express to him their appreciation of his work. I feel this is true regardless of whether or not Mr. Phillips ever gives us any more money. If he does give us more, we should be grateful. If he does not, we are grateful anyhow and in any case he ought to know that the money given up to this time has been put into a collection that is proving valuable to research students. I will be grateful, therefore, if you will send him such a book if you can spare it. I would like for Patrick J. Hurley to have a copy too, but I will be glad to purchase one for him and send it to him, but I should like to have you autograph it.

Let me have the abstract at your convenience, preferably before the first of June, for I shall be leaving immediately thereafter.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

14.

June 2, 1934.

Miss Angie Debo,
Canyon, Texas.

Dear Miss Debo:

I was glad to get your kind letter and the abstract. If you will address Mr. Frank Phillips at Bartlesville, Oklahoma, it will be sure to reach him.

I am sending your abstract to Dean Dodge and if he approves it, it will be o. k. I have already approved it.

With best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

15.

Canyon, Texas
July 3, 1934

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Nebraska
Lincoln, Nebraska

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am mailing you and Mrs. Dale a copy of my book. I am afraid you suffered with it so much while it was in process of being written that you will not read it enthusiastically, but I am proud of it and so I want you to have a copy. I think the Oklahoma Press did such a good job of it. If the content will only please the readers as much as the physical appearance pleases me I shall be glad.

I have not sent a copy yet to Mr. Phillips, but I am going to send it soon. I shall have to send to Norman and get a few extra copies.

Dr. Dale, I want to ask you a question if you have time to answer it, but if you are too busy I will wait until I see you. Why did you suggest my writing about the Kiowas? Is it because of any special interest in that particular tribe of Indians, or because of some especially good material that you know about? No subject ever seems interesting to me until I get into it, and so it is always so difficult for me to choose what to write about. I remember I felt that same way about the Choctaws, and I know I should have been hunting a subject yet if you had not helped me. My idea when I talked with you [at] commencement was to take one of the civilized tribes, but as I think of it I am afraid there will be so much similarity in land-holding, regulation of non-citizens, and autonomous government that some of the most interesting things I have written about the Choctaws will fall rather flat when I tell it again about another tribe. For that reason the Kiowas appeal to me. Their history would be so very different. But I have been working on them a little, and I am afraid there is not enough about them for a book. That is probably due to the fact that we have not collected enough material here, and so I am as usual troubling you.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

16.

August 8, 1934

Miss Angie Debo
Canyon, Texas

Dear Miss Debo:

I am sorry to have delayed so long in replying to your kind letter. In some ways it would seem better for you to work on the Chickasaws for your next book, but on the other hand, the Kiowas have had a very important history, and so far as I know, nothing has been done upon it. Mr. Richardson's new book on the Comanches seems to be well received, and it strikes me that a book on the Kiowas would be equally interesting and valuable. So far as I know, that is my only reason for suggesting that you take this tribe rather than another of the Five Civilized Tribes, though I can see that so much of the work on another of the Five Civilized Tribes would be so nearly a repetition of what you have already done as to make it a bit dull and uninteresting to you.

Whatever you decide to do, let me know how I can help you, and I shall be very happy to do my best.

With every good wish, I am

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale
Professor of History

EED:SA

P. S. Let me congratulate you on the success of your Choctaw Republic. I have heard many excellent comment on it.

17.

737 East 13th Street
Oklahoma City
April 14, 1935

Dr. E. E. Dale
Head Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale,

I suddenly ran out of material yesterday, so I came up here. I should have seen you before I went except that I did not know I was going until yesterday and then I rushed so to get everything finished before the libraries should close.

I do not know how long I shall be here, but I believe I have done enough work now so that everything I do counts for a certain definite purpose, and the work goes faster when one gets to that stage.

I was so glad of the opportunity to meet Dr. Ryan. I feel that a problem that has bothered me somewhat ever since I started work has been taken care of now. Dr. Ryan is certainly a most delightful person to meet.

I shall write to you when I leave here and keep you informed as to my address, so that if anybody does want a teacher I shall be easily found. In the meantime I have my work cut out for me for the next few months until this book shall be completed, the grant takes care of my immediate problems of financing it, and I shall not start worrying until the time comes.

I suppose that you and Mrs. Dale are spending the day with Mr. Phillips. I hope that you are having a good time, and that the farms of the Panhandle are not howling about your ears as they are here.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

[1935?]

Dear Dr. Dale,

You are so busy, and have been ill besides, and so I will take less of your time to write you a note than I would if I were to see you. I do want to thank you, however, for the tactful way in which you handled a very delicate situation. I am sure I handled it about as badly as possible; it was so entirely unexpected, and it is so difficult (impossible in fact) to bring out one's personal beliefs and exhibit them for their market value. But I will give him every chance to investigate my record, and perhaps he will decide that I am not such a heathen after all.

You gave me such good advice about so many things that I have been thinking I ought to report to you as to the status of my various applications.

I expect to hear from the Council of Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council the first of next month. Both of those organizations are interested in my application for a Grant-in-Aid, and have checked every reference I gave them, so I have considerable hopes of them.

I wrote to Dr. Connor, and received most ungracious permission from a man in his office to fill an application blank. The tenor of his letter was to the effect that he did not desire my application, but if I insisted I could fill out the enclosed blanks. I filled them out carefully and returned them. I thought of sprinkling them with insect powder, but decided it would be more tactful to refrain. I also received letters from the Senators and Representatives to whom I had written, enclosing a carbon copy of the recommendations they wrote. Two of them sent me the man's acknowledgment, which was more courteous than the letter to me, and which assured them my application would receive every consideration. I doubt it, though.

I received a most gracious letter from Dr. Ryan written from Albuquerque, saying that he expected to be in Oklahoma about the first of April and would like to see me. He said he had not yet read my book, but expected to read it within the next week. I answered that I should be glad to see him at Oklahoma City, or Muskogee, or any place he might designate.

Dr. Bizzell was so lovely to me that I shall be grateful to him forever. He said there were several colleges in Texas – he named several in fact – where he thought he had considerable influence. He gave me names of people to write to, gave me permission to use his name in every possible way, and said if he discovered a vacancy he would go to the phone and tell them to give me a job.

I also talked with Dean Gittinger about the junior colleges he helps to accredit. I thought I might have a chance there, for I think those colleges are held to much higher standards than the state colleges are for there is not so much dirty politics in the selection of their faculties. He will do all he can for me, I am sure, and he also advised me to talk with Dr. Connor, who works in Mr. Vaughan's office, with reference to vacancies in the state colleges. I went to the City and saw him and had a most satisfactory interview. He was frank to say he wanted people of my qualifications in the state colleges, but was rather hopeless about the possibility of being consulted. He said he had not been consulted once during the past four years, and that appointments had been made strictly on a political basis and that applications from qualified people were not even desired. I do not think, however, that he will forget me, and I am sure that if he should happen to hear of a vacancy he would do all he could to give me an opportunity to apply.

I believe that brings my activities up to date, except with reference to the half dozen Texas colleges whose presidents I know personally. I shall write to them soon to remind them I am still in the world.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

19.

Marshall, Oklahoma
March 18, 1936

Dr. E. E. Dale
Head Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

Whenever you get a letter from me I am sure you know it is an S. O. S., and this one is no exception. I am applying for a literary fellowship from the Houghton Mifflin people to enable me to write a history of the Creeks when I get this allotment book done. Of course I would not actually write a history of the Creeks without consulting you as to whether you have a student working on it or not; but that would not hinder me from applying to them for the fellowship. If I should receive the fellowship I could make any adjustments later.

I know they want to be convinced of the seriousness and integrity of an applicant, and I know you can write me a better recommendation on that score than anybody else. Of course I am submitting the Choctaw book, and a plan of the allotment book to aid in this. And I shall be so grateful for anything you may be able to do for me. They are receiving the applications from the address at 2 park Street, Boston.

I am still quite a distance from the end of the book I am writing now. I am working on Chapter IX with five more to go. My finances are holding out surprisingly well.

I need to look up a little more material, and so I expect to go to Norman in about a month. I am looking forward to seeing you.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

20.

March 23, 1936.

Miss Angie Debo,
Marshall, Oklahoma.

Dear Miss Debo:

I was glad to get your kind letter of recent date and in accordance with your request I take great pleasure in writing to the Houghton Mifflin people in your behalf. I sincerely hope that you secure their fellowship to enable you to write a history of the Creeks, which seems to me is well worth doing and should prove an excellent piece of work.

Be sure to call on me at any time I can help you.

With best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale
Professor of History.

21.

Marshall, Oklahoma
August 26, 1936

Dr. E. E. Dale
Head of the Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

There was a brief item in yesterday's evening paper mentioning the proposed Government project to collect and edit Indian material. I should like very much to secure a position as director. I do not want you to bother about the matter until your vacation is over, but after you return I should be very grateful for any information you can give me about it. I am also writing to Dr. Clements upon the chance that it may lie in his field also.

It is probably too early yet to do anything, but I surely want the opportunity of applying when the time comes. It seems to me I have every qualification they will want unless politics is considered essential, and I am sure politics will not count if the University has anything to do with it. You know me so well as a student, but you have not seen me in any executive capacity. I have been successful in that too. I believe I was able to inspire greater enthusiasm in FERA workers and to get more work out of them than anybody else in the Panhandle, and as curator of the museum at Canyon I made field contacts and wangled information out of every possible kind of individual. I do my work quietly, but it gets done.

I always know that I have your backing in everything. I am so sure of it that it goes without saying. I am not so much grateful to you for any specific thing you may do in connection with this or any other request, as I am grateful all the time for everything.

I hope you enjoyed your work at Columbia. I have been working pretty hard, too, this summer, but my book is now finished and is in Mr. Brandt's hands. I called it As Long as the Waters Run.

I am so glad Mr. Phillips made another donation.

Sincerely

Angie Debo

22.

September 8, 1936.

Miss Angie Debo,
Marshall, Oklahoma.

Dear Miss Debo:

Your kind letter of August 26 I found upon my return from California. I do not know anything much about the project you mention. I think the work of setting it up was done by Professor Wardell and I would suggest you write to him about the matter.

I am happy to know that your book is finished and I shall look forward with much interest to seeing it in print. You are quite right in saying that you can depend on my help in anything you undertake. I hope you will always let me know whenever I can be of assistance to you. In the meantime I would suggest you drop Wardell a line and find out a little more about the status of this project. I do not think it has been officially approved as yet.

With best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

23.

Marshall, Oklahoma
September 12, 1936

Dr. E. E. Dale
Head of the Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

Thank you very much for your letter regarding the WPA Indian lore project. I shall follow your suggestion in writing Mr. Wardell at once. I am sure, as you say, that it has not been approved yet. I think, however, that I should find out as much about it as I can.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

24.

Marshall, Oklahoma
September 29, 1936

Dr. E. E. Dale
Head of the Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am writing for a Guggenheim fellowship to see if I can get assistance to write a history of the Creeks. I was about to send my application when it occurred to me that possibly you may have some doctoral candidate working on the same subject. I think the danger is slight, for I think I should know it if anyone were working on that subject; but it seems best to write and find out for sure. I will hold my application until I hear from you.

I am doing some more work on my As Long as the Waters Run. Mr. Brandt thought it was too long and I agree with him. It is not my fault that it was too long, for I did not waste any words in telling it; it is just a long story. But there are limits beyond which a book ought not to go if it is going to sell, and I am paying deference to those limits. It is a painful process, for I have thrown away some pretty good pages.

Your Shawnee Indian friend seems to be winning laurels.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo

25.

October 5, 1936.

Miss Angie Debo,
Marshall, Oklahoma.

Dear Miss Debo:

I was glad to have your kind letter and to know that you are getting along all right. So far as I know there is no one writing a history of the Creeks. I am sure we have no doctoral dissertation in progress on that subject, so I think the field is wide open.

I hope you get your Guggenheim fellowship and if I can help in any way, you have only to let me know.

With best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

26.

Marshall, Oklahoma
December 26, 1936

Dr. E. E. Dale
Head of the Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I have just applied to the Social Science Research Council for assistance in completing a history of the Creeks, and I gave your name in my list of references. I have already done considerable work on this project, for I collected material while I was working on my last book. In fact, for a time, I was uncertain as to which I should try to do first. I am going to Norman immediately after the holidays to do some intensive work on it, which will give me three months before the grants will be awarded.

I shall appreciate anything you can say about my general sincerity and ability as a research worker, and I believe you more than anybody else can give an expert opinion as to the worth of the project. I wish you could tell them how I have carried out my obligations to them in writing my book on the effect of allotment, but I suppose you cannot do that unless you have by chance read my manuscript. Mr. Brandt has read it, and I have asked him to report on that. Perhaps that will be sufficient. It is the best I can do anyhow, so long as it is unpublished.

I suppose that you will receive an inquiry about me from the secretary within the next few weeks.

I hope you are having a happy vacation. I am looking forward to seeing you again.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

27.

January 4, 1937.

Miss Angie Debo,
Marshall, Oklahoma.

Dear Miss Debo:

I have your kind letter of December 26 which reached my desk in my absence. I shall be glad to write you a good letter to the Social Science Research Council when they write to me, as I am sure they will in the near future.

I am enclosing a card from the Guggenheim people as evidence of my letter to them about you. I have considerable hope that you will secure this Guggenheim fellowship.

With best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

28.

207 West Broadway
Muskogee, Oklahoma
February 13, 1937

Dear Dr. Dale,

I just want to tell you how well we are getting along over here. The first thing I did after I came was to read straight through the material that had already come in from the field. I know you will be interested to know that much of it is of great historic importance. Of course the workers are not trained but Mr. Foreman's enthusiasm and sincerity has infected the whole organization and they are doing some very fine work. I have seen so much work of this kind that was completely wasted, but I have always believed it was the fault of the director; most people, I think, prefer to do something worth while if only they are given the opportunity. These people have the opportunity, and they are rising to the occasion.

Although officially I am supposed to be the editor, Mr. Foreman thinks – and I think he is right – that it is better for me to concentrate on following up leads suggested by the material that has already come in. Many hints are thrown out that open up possibilities of further investigation, and it takes a little more knowledge of history than the workers could be expected to have to recognize them. We are meeting very wonderful cooperation from the public. Obviously the field workers can not see everybody, and so Mr. Foreman has sent out questionnaires. They came back painfully filled out by trembling old hands giving an eloquent picture of the life they knew. Of course most of this helpfulness grows out of the respect people all over the state have for Mr. Foreman.

Needless to say I am very happy in this work. I still hope that elusive job is just around the corner, but meanwhile I am happier than I have been for – can it possibly be that long – six years.

I wish you could see some of the material that has been collected.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

29.

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
FOR OKLAHOMA
W. S. KEY, ADMINISTRATOR
431 WEST MAIN
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

Muskogee, Oklahoma
February 17, 1937

Dr. E. E. Dale
Professor of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am afraid that your letter of January 14 has not received the courtesy to which it was entitled for all the time that I was trying to get over here these letters were piling up. But we could certainly use the list of pioneers in southwest Oklahoma where you grew up and we shall be very grateful if you would furnish it. As soon as I came over I began at Mr. Foreman's suggestion to follow up all possible leads in sending suggestions to the field workers as to people who seemed to be promising subjects for interviews; therefore this list which you offered to furnish will fit exactly into our plans.

Please give my regards to Mrs. Dale and Alberta and everybody around the office. It already seems to me that I have been away a long time although I am still most happy in my work.

Sincerely

Angie Debo, Editor
Indian-Pioneer History
211 Federal Building

AD:mj

30.

March 9, 1937.

Dr. Angie Debo,
807 West Broadway,
Muskogee, Oklahoma.

Dear Dr. Debo:

I was glad to get your kind letter of February 13 and to know your work is going along so well. I would, indeed, like to see some of the material that you have been collecting.

Things are coming along here very well, but I am getting a bit behind with my work. As a matter of fact, the delay in replying to your letter has been due to the death of my wife's father and since this was the first death in her family it hit them pretty hard and it was necessary for me to take care of all arrangements.

Let me know how I can help and I shall be very happy to do my best.

With every good wish, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

31.

807 West Broadway
Muskogee, Oklahoma
April 2, 1937

Dr. E. E. Dale
Head of the Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

Today I received notice that the Social Science Research Council has granted me a thousand dollars [\$17,000.00 in 2017] to go on with my history of the Creeks. Of course the first thing I think of is to write to my parents – I have just done that – and then to you and to Mr. Brandt.

A thousand dollars seems like a small sum to people who have always had every facility for research, but I have done all my work on a shoe-string and I can make a thousand dollars go a long way. It will carry me through. And I had reached the place where I could not have gone any further.

I do not remember whether I asked you to write to the Social Science Research Council or not. I did ask you to write to the Guggenheim people (I failed with them), and if I did not ask you to write to the S. S. R. C. it was because they already had in their files the letter you wrote in 1934 when I got the first grant. So whether it was your old letter or a new one, I know that your recommendation helped a great deal.

I should be just as grateful for your help if I had failed to secure anything, but it does please me to know that you did not labor in a lost cause.

I shall stay here and work until this project is over, for it is giving me the best possible background. As long as I can learn history and get paid for it, I shall not need to start drawing on the Council's funds. I am still as happy in my work here as I was at the beginning, and I am increasingly enthusiastic over the kind of material we are securing. I am working pretty hard, but I like that.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

32.

April 6, 1937.

Miss Angie Debo,
807 West Broadway,
Muskogee, Oklahoma.

Dear Miss Debo:

I was delighted to have your kind letter of recent date and to know of your good fortune in securing the grant of \$1,000 from the Social Science research Council. A thousand dollars seems like very important money to me and I know you will make good use of it. If there is anything I can do to help you with your research on the Creek people, you know you have only to let me know, and I will do my best.

Yes, I am sure I wrote you a letter to the Social Science Research Council and also to the Guggenheim people, for I remember writing two letters in your behalf. I do not know whether my letter helped or not and really it does not matter. The important thing is that you have the grant and can go on with your work.

Let me hear from you when you can find time.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

33.

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
FOR OKLAHOMA
W. S. KEY, ADMINISTRATOR
431 WEST MAIN
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

Muskogee, Oklahoma
April 6, 1937

Dr. E. E. Dale
Prof. of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

Thank you very much for the fine list of names you sent us. We have already sent out letters to all of these people and no doubt we shall receive a great deal of valuable information from them.

Ever since I have been here I have wished you could see the material that is coming in. It is very inspiring to meet with the cooperation that we are receiving from the public. People write to us often with trembling hands of old age and still more often with the additional handicap of bad spelling and penmanship telling us experiences that read like an epic of American development. They are all so modest, saying that they are afraid what they are sending is of no value and yet they seem to feel in some dim way that they have been privileged to take part in some great events.

Sincerely,

Grant Foreman, Director
Indian-Pioneer History
Room 211 Federal Bldg.

(by) Angie Debo, Editor

AD:RH

LIST OF OLD TIMERS IN WESTERN OKLAHOMA

1. Mrs. J. M. Dale, Hobart, Oklahoma
2. J. P. Dale, Headrick, Oklahoma
3. S. H. Tittle, Magnum, Oklahoma
4. F. E. Herring, Elk City, Oklahoma
5. Elmo Taylor, Headrick, Oklahoma
6. G. D. Thompson, Snyder, Oklahoma
7. C. M. Dale, Mountain Park, Oklahoma
8. Jesse Thompson, Ryan, Oklahoma
9. Eugene Roberts, Sulphur, Oklahoma
10. Wallace Bailey, Altus, Oklahoma
11. Mrs. Jeff Green, Warren, Oklahoma
12. Tome Rowe, Blair, Oklahoma
13. Fred Thompson, Lawton, Oklahoma
14. Eugene Ferris, Headrick, Oklahoma
15. Doc Hawkins, Blair, Oklahoma
16. Jeff White, Cooperton, Oklahoma

34.

April 10, 1937.

Miss Angie Debo,
211 Federal Building,
Muskogee, Oklahoma

Dear Miss Debo:

Thank you for your kind letter of recent date. I will be glad to send you another list of names later, or if you can give me some ideas as to what particular county you wish to contact or the region where your list is small, I can help you by suggesting names of old timers.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

35.

807 West Broadway
Muskogee, Oklahoma
June 19, 1937

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I have been thinking that Dr. Wardell's promotion and Dr. Thomas's resignation might make it necessary for you to add another member to your department. I wonder if you have ever thought of me as a possible applicant for such a position.

I may as well be frank about my one disqualification. I know that few women are employed on history faculties. I have been hoping, however, that my other qualifications might serve to balance this defect. Even at the risk of wearying you I am going to present them, for you have known me only as a student and have never come in contact with the work I have done outside your department.

It is perhaps not necessary for me to mention scholarship except to remind you that I have only one "B" (in minerology) on my entire undergraduate record, and that I was able to carry twenty hours in the graduate school of the University of Chicago with a straight "A" record, and to write my master's thesis at the same time. You know that John Spencer Bassett published this thesis in the Smith College Studies, and that it is still quoted by writers on American diplomacy. Of course you are familiar with my graduate work here, and you know that I have written another book since I received my degree. After all there are not many students at Oklahoma or elsewhere who win national recognition with their doctoral dissertations, and there is no doubt that I could bring distinction in the field of productive scholarship to any college that might employ me.

I am sorry that you have not heard me speak to an audience for then you would be able to judge of my ability as a classroom teacher. Possibly you remember how the other members of the group responded when I read my seminar papers to that late afternoon class that met in the basement of the law building. I have always been able to win this kind of responsive interest from any group. It was, in fact, the desire to use this gift to advantage that caused me to choose the teaching profession.

I have never taught graduate students, and I have therefore received no recognition for my skill in directing research. I have always taken this part of my work very seriously, however, and I have initiated a large number of undergraduates into the technique of historical writing. After all that is the place where most research workers get their start. When I was a sophomore and you were just beginning your career as a great teacher of history you supervised the writing of our term themes with a seriousness and an attention

to method that formed the basis of all my future studies. I remember telling you the year I came back from Chicago that it was this training that had enabled me to write such a successful thesis. Realizing how much this discipline had meant to me, I have followed the same technique in training my own undergraduates, and I have been similarly successful. Serious students have enrolled in my classes for the express purpose of learning to write. I have no doubt that I could be equally successful in directing more advanced research.

I am not boasting when I enumerate these qualifications. I can easily present recommendations to show that I am not exaggerating. I had to leave Canyon only because it was a little school without standards, and I was working directly under a man who had an unfounded distrust of his own ability and a corresponding fear of people with advanced degrees. If you would give me a temporary appointment to your faculty I am sure that the future would take care of itself.

I have hesitated to write this letter because it introduces a new element into the pleasantest relationship I have found in all my academic career. No action that you might take in the matter, however, would alter the fact that it is to your interest and encouragement that I owe whatever success I have achieved in historical studies. There is therefore no occasion for embarrassment if I have made one request that you do not care to grant.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

June 23, 1937.

Dr. Angie Debo,
807 West Broadway,
Muskogee, Oklahoma.

Dear Dr. Debo:

To write me a letter telling me about yourself is very much the same as what the lawyers would call surplusage. Since the time you first enrolled with us here as an undergraduate I have followed your career with a great deal of interest and I know your fine qualifications for a college teaching position as well as any body in the world. When Dr. Thomas presented his resignation I, of course, thought over various possibilities, but inasmuch as he has been here ten years and has done so much to develop the Hispanic American field, I feel it was absolutely necessary that I have in his place some one whose primary training and interest is in that particular field of history. By this I mean some one who has either lived or traveled in Spain or Hispanic America or in both, who has excellent language equipment, and whose writing and teaching has been primarily in that field.

Fortunately I have been able to find several people that seem to answer the above description and I think my decision is definitely made. At least there is only some question as to which one of two I shall take. One of these two I am not quite sure I can get. The other one has already expressed his willingness to come at the salary we have to offer. He has promised to come to Norman for a personal interview and I am sure my recommendation to the President can go within the next few days.

I deeply appreciate all the good things you have said about me, though I am by no means certain that I deserve them. I can reciprocate in kind and you know that I shall be most happy to help you in securing a position at any time I possibly can. The position left vacant by the resignation of Dr. Thomas, however, involves a person's giving nearly half of his time to graduate courses in the Hispanic American field as well as directing numerous master's and perhaps doctor's theses in that field. While I have had four graduate courses in Spain and Spanish America and offered both of these as fields for my doctor's degree, I do not have my primary interest there nor do I feel competent to take this work over and carry it on from a point where Dr. Thomas has left off. I am quite certain that the best interests of the department and of the University demand that I secure some one who can do this.

Let me know at any time I can be of service to you.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

EED/Mc

37.

807 West Broadway
Muskogee, Oklahoma
June 26, 1937

Dear Dr. Dale:

Thank you very much for your letter of June 23. It was certainly kind of you to write so fully. And I do understand the situation so well. I know what a name Dr. Thomas has made for himself in the Spanish-American field, and how necessary it is for the university to keep up the good work he has started. I just wrote on the chance that you might be making some rearrangement within the department. I have not kept track of the new men that have come to the faculty since I left, and I thought possibly some of them might have specialized in that field.

I am planning to leave here as soon as my successor can qualify, which we expect will be the first of the month. In many ways it is the most profitable work I have ever done; it has given me a new insight into the inner life of the people who made this state – Indians, homesteaders, ranchmen, etc. – and it has been a great pleasure to be engaged in work that seems so significant and important. Best of all it has been a privilege to be associated with the Foremans, who are great scholars as well as people of almost unbelievable fineness and considerateness. I think, though, that since I have the grant for the Creek study I should go on with it, especially since this project will probably be extended for six more months. Probably I shall see you at Norman before the summer is over.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

Dr. E. E. Dale
Professor of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

38.

1536 – 16th NW
Washington, D.C.
May 5, 1938

Dr. E. E. Dale
Head of the Dept. of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I did not see you before I left Norman, and so I did not have a chance to tell you how much I appreciate the use of the Phillips Collection. It would be a very expensive process if it were necessary for me to hunt those books in other places. I tried to tell Mr. Phillips something of the sort when I sent him a copy of the Choctaw Republic, and when I wrote As Long as the Waters Run I mentioned this obligation in the preface. I don't know any way of showing appreciation of a constructive thing like that except by using it, and the more I use it the greater my obligation grows.

Will you please hand this recipe to Mrs. Dale? I cannot mail it to her, for I neglected to take your home address.

I had a very pleasant interview with Dr. Rippey in Chicago. I went to see him about this very vital matter of getting a job before I starve. He made some very practical suggestions which I shall carry out.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

P.S. Mrs. Sanders and Miss Hubbard send their regards to both of you – and they were so interested when I told them what a fine boy Ed is. Mrs. Sanders looks terribly worn, but Miss Hubbard is exactly as she used to be.

39.

1536 – 16th St. N.W.
Washington, D.C.
May 8, 1938

Dr. E. E. Dale
Head of the Dept. of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I went to see Dr. Meriam the other day, and he was very courteous and friendly. He said he had recently got a letter from Dr. W. Carson Ryan indicating that something was about to open up in the very field in which I have been working. I wrote, therefore, to Dr. Ryan mentioning my publications, and inquiring if he had any research appointment in which he might need me.

You know Dr. Ryan so well that you know just how one should approach him. I am inclined to think, since he is such a mentally alert person, that if he knows what I have written he will know at once whether he wants me or not. On the other hand, a letter from you might put him in a more receptive mood. I am leaving it entirely to your own judgment as to whether a letter from you would help. I suppose you know that he is with the Carnegie Institution for the Advancement of Teaching, 522 Fifth Avenue, New York.

I am sure you know how highly Dr. Meriam regards you, but he spoke of you with such enthusiasm that I think I should tell you some of it. He said the entire success of the Indian survey in producing a unified piece of work was due to your happy faculty of working with people, that there was no doubt at all that you were the most valuable member of the staff, and that the strong affection the members developed for each other – a fact I have often noticed myself in the members of that group – was due entirely to the influence of your personality. Incidentally, he spoke very highly of Dr. Henry Roe Cloud as having similar traits.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

40.

May 10, 1938.

Miss Angie Debo,
1536 Sixteenth Street, N. W.,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Miss Debo:

I was glad to get your good letter of recent date and I thank you for the recipe for ice box biscuits which I will hand to my wife.

I am glad that you found the Phillips Collection so helpful and am happy to know that you are so well located in Washington. Please give Mrs. Sanders and Miss Hubbard my kindest regards and best wishes. I think of them often and of all the kindness they have shown to me in the past.

Let me hear from you from time to time as to how you are getting along.

With every good wish, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

41.

May 14, 1938.

Dr. Angie Debo,
1536 Sixteenth Street, N. W.,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Dr. Debo:

I was glad to have your kind letter and am happy to know that you had a visit with Lewis Meriam, who is one of the best friends I have in the world. It is kind of you to tell me all the good things he had to say about me, but I am afraid he lets his friendship run away with his good judgment.

I do not believe it would do any particular good to write to Dr. Ryan about you unless I knew more specifically the type of work to be done. However, it can do no possible harm and I will drop him a line and I sincerely hope you get the job if it is something you want. Let me hear from you any time I can be of service.

My wife joins me in kindest regards and best wishes.

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

42.

1536 – 16th St. N.W.
Washington, D.C.
May 20, 1938

Dr. E. E. Dale
Head of Dept. of History
University of Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I seem to be making a bad record as a troublesome letter-writer, but this is pretty important. I just got a letter from Dr. J. Fred Rippy saying there is a vacancy in the history department of the Texas State College for Women at Denton, and that he had recommended me for the position. Will you please write to them, too? The last news I have gives Dr. George Rawlings Poage as head of the history department. I should think you would have more influence with Dr. Poage than Dr. Hubbard, since Dr. Hubbard does not seem so well informed about historians as he might be (I got that impression when I talked to him once), but somebody in the history department has recently died and I am afraid it might be Dr. Poage. Unless you are sure Dr. Poage has not died within the past few days, it will be safest to write to Dr. Hubbard. This means a great deal to me. It is the only chance I have had at an adequate position since I lost my position at Canyon six years ago. I know you will do all you can.

I have been wanting to write to you anyhow, and will tell you how your nice boy, Gaston Litton is turning out. I just started this week to work in the archives building, and he has smoothed the way until I wonder how I could have got along without him. He is so helpful and obliging, and so familiar with the Indian material that I know he will make things easier for every student you send here to carry on research. It is easy to see that he is appreciated by his superiors and liked and respected by his young associates. It will be worth a great deal to Oklahomans to have somebody in the archives who knows what we are trying to do.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

43.

May 24, 1938.

Dr. Angie Debo,
1536 Sixteenth Street, N. W.,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Dr. Debo:

I was delighted to have your kind letter of recent date and in accordance with your request I am writing to Dr. L. H. Hubbard in your behalf. I do not know Dr. Hubbard, but I have some hope that my letter will do you some good and at least it will not do you any harm. I sincerely hope you get the job.

Thank you for telling me about Gaston Litton. Gaston is a great boy and I am terribly fond of him.

Let me know any time I can do something for you. I will not write much now as we are terribly swamped, but I will get your letter to Dr. Hubbard today.

With every good wish, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

44.

Sept 15, 1940.

Dear Dr. Debo:

According to my promise I am sending you John Oskison's letter to me as enclosures of this letter. Oskison can certainly write and it seems to me that he might be the solution of your difficulty. I have sought diligently to think of some use of my well trained young people who might be released from their recent work to take this place with you but to date I have not thought of one I can whole heartedly commend to you. There are plenty of people who would love to have the job but in most cases they are not the ones you would want. I will under no circumstances send you names unless I feel sure they would do you a good job and all my best people are tied up with another job from which it would be difficult to get them released. I will do a lot more thinking, however, and if I get an idea I will pass it on to you at once.

With best wishes, I am,

Very sincerely yours

E. E. Dale
Professor of History

Dr. Angie Debo,
Oklahoma Writer's Project,
State Capitol Station,
Box 3112,
Oklahoma City.

45.

September 19, 1940.

Dr. Angie Debo,
Oklahoma Writer's Project,
State Capitol Station,
Box 3112,
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Dear Dr. Debo:

I presume you have probably found someone for the job you talked to me about the other day. I have been checking over with great care all possibilities and frankly there seems to be almost no one available among my former students who would exactly fill the bill. Robert F. Wyly I think might be all right, but he is back in school working on a doctor's degree and has made all of his plans to do another year's work so I doubt if he would be interested particularly since he is a man of some means. You may know him since his wife is Lillian Hastings. Theodocia Cralle, Springfield, Missouri, took a master's degree here last summer and is a nice girl with an excellent record. She is the granddaughter of Stratton D. Brooks. She wants a job very much, but I am frankly afraid she would not fit your particular needs. I would gladly recommend her for almost any teaching position, but she is a little inexperienced and lacking in initiative for the job you want done.

This is about as far as I have been able to get in my thinking. There are plenty of people who would be delighted to have a job, but they are not the ones I would be willing to recommend to you. A woman from Oklahoma City called me up urging me to recommend to you Joy Grant who she says needs a job awfully bad. I can find nothing in Miss Grant's record here, however, to indicate she has any special qualifications for this job. She has only an A.B. degree and her grades are only average at best. Apparently the chief basis upon which this Oklahoma City woman was urging her employment was her need and obviously you cannot employ a person on need alone. What you want is to have the job done. It may be you have been able to work out something with John Oskison. I have no way of knowing how good he might be in administrative duties, but if it is merely writing to be done, it seems to me that he would be a safe bet.

Let me know if there is anything I can do. You know my heart is always with you.

With best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

EED/Mc

Dr. Angie Debo

-2-

September 19, 1940.

P. S. Lyda May King who lives in Edmond and holds a master's degree from this department came to see me about a job the other day. She taught at one time over at the Connor School in the field of history and has an excellent academic record, but her personality is against her.

E. E. D.

46.

September 23, 1940.

Dr. Angie Debo,
Oklahoma Writer's Project,
State Capitol Station,
Box 3112,
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Dear Dr. Debo:

Thank you for your little note accompanying the letters returned to me. You did not tell me whether or not you have decided on a person for the job in question. Orville Avery of Altus and Harold Spain, who is now in Norman, have indicated to me that they are both applying to you for this position. They are both good men, each with a master's degree in history from the University. Avery has the better personality and is possibly a slightly better student, though they are just about even on that score. Spain held a scholarship here year before last.

I know you will let me know if you feel I can render you any service in this connection.

With best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

47.

FEDERAL WORKS AGENCY
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
520 WEST MAIN
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

RON STEPHENS
ADMINISTRATOR

September 26, 1940.

Dr. E. E. Dale,
Head of the Department of History,
University of Oklahoma,
Norman, Oklahoma.

My dear Dr. Dale:

Thank you very much for your recommendations of the two young men in your Department. I referred the matter to Miss Fullerton, and I am sure that she is taking every thing into consideration which will be for the good of the project.

You were good enough to say last summer in answer to a request from Miss Fullerton, that you would write a signed introduction to our Guide Book, interpreting the "Oklahoma Spirit." I know what this means to a person as busy as you are, but I know how much it will add to the value of the Guide. What I had in mind was, something on the character of your fine article on "The Spirit of Sooner Land," and the things you have said to your Oklahoma History classes.

I remember that you said at the time, that it would be impossible for you to comply with this request before the last of September, or the first of October; but now that that time is approaching, I am writing to assure you again how grateful we shall be for this contribution. Kenneth C. Kaufman has written us a chapter on literary development, which we value very highly; but nobody can express the distinctive character of Oklahoma as you can.

September 26, 1940.
Dr. E. E. Dale,
-2-

It has been a terribly long time since I have seen you, but I am so busy that there does not seem to be much chance to do anything about it.

Very truly yours,

RON STEPHENS, ADMINISTRATOR

Eula E. Fullerton, Director Division
Professional and Service Projects.

Angie Debo

By: Angie E. Debo, State Supervisor,
Writer's Project.

48.

September 28, 1940.

Miss Angie Debo,
State Writers' Project,
Box 3112, State Capitol Station,
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Dear Miss Debo:

I want to thank you for your good letter. I have been terribly busy and have not had a chance to do much on the introduction to your Guide Book, but will try to get to work on it next week. I am afraid about [all] I can do will be to borrow pretty heavily from my article, "The Spirit of Soonerland" and some of the things I use in classes.

I did not mean to urge the appointment of either Harold Spain or Orville Avery to the job that you had up there, but I understood they both had made application for the position and I thought you would like to know what I think about them. You and Miss Fullerton will know your needs far better than anyone else could know them and I am not sure that either Mr. Spain or Mr. Avery would exactly fit your needs. However, they are both good men for high school teachers, but as I understand it, your job there is one of a rather peculiarly technical nature.

Come to see us any time you are down this way.

With best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

49.

November 19, 1940.

Dr. Angie Debo,
Works Progress Administration,
Writers Project,
520 West Main Street,
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Dear Dr. Debo:

I have your good letter and will try to get you the article on the Spirit of Oklahoma in the very near future. Unfortunately Dr. Peterson is in the hospital with an appendicitis operation and we have had to double up on his work which, together with other things, has left me pretty well swamped for the past week or two. We dismiss next Wednesday, the 27th, for the Thanksgiving holidays, however, and I hope to have the article ready for you by the time this holiday is over, or around December 1.

With kindest personal regards, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

50.

January 15, 1941.

Dr. Angie Debo,
Oklahoma Writers Project,
State Capitol Station,
Box 3112,
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Dear Dr. Debo:

We have been so rushed that there has been a little delay in getting the manuscript to you. However, here it is, "a poor thing but mine own." It runs a little over the fifteen hundred words, about two thousand I think. You have my permission to cut or delete as you think necessary. If you think my quotation from Longfellow makes it sound too flowery, by all means cut it out adjusting the part referring to it so that it fits and reads o. k.

Drop me a line telling me if you think I have written anything nearly what you want. If I have not, feel free to chuck the whole thing in the waste basket for you will not hurt my feelings at all by so doing.

With best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc
Encl.

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

51.

FEDERAL WORKS AGENCY
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

520 WEST MAIN
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

January 17, 1941.

RON STEPHENS
ADMINISTRATOR

Dr. Edward E. Dale,
Professor of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma.

My dear Dr. Dale:

We are so grateful to you for writing the essay for the Guidebook. It is not only a brilliant characterization of the Oklahoma spirit, but it will be appreciated by the readers of the book because of the renown of the writer.

We have felt guilty in placing this additional responsibility upon you, but we are so pleased with the manuscript that we can not be ashamed of ourselves for doing that.

It is possible that we might find it necessary, because of space requirements, to follow your suggestion in cutting it. If we do, we will consult you to be sure it meets with your approval.

Sincerely yours,

RON STEPHENS, ADMINISTRATOR

Eula E. Fullerton, Director Division
Professional and Service Projects

Angie E. Debo.

Angie E. Debo, State Supervisor
Writers' Project

AED:ms

January 20, 1941.

Dr. Angie Debo,
Writers' Project,
Box 3112 State Capitol Station,
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Dear Dr. Debo:

I very gladly and very gratefully accept the editorial revisions in my introduction on "The Spirit of Oklahoma." In fact, you have improved it so much that I wonder why I couldn't have thought of these things in the first place. My only alibi is that it is very difficult to write an introduction to a book which you have never seen and the tone and content of which you can only guess.

I am returning the manuscript, herewith, with a couple of very minor suggestions in the use of words which I would be glad if you would straighten out. On page 5, line 4 from the top, please do something about the expression "chose choice tracts." I noted that "chose choice" when writing it and meant to substitute another word but forgot it. If you do not like "selected" which I am suggesting, you can no doubt figure some other word which will fit better. The second suggestion is as to the concluding sentence of the article and the expression "in it lies its hope of the future." Of course I want my introduction to have "it" in the slang use of the term, but so many ins and its in in such close sequence are a bit jarring. I have suggested that we substitute either "our" or "Oklahoma's" for the second its making the sentence read, "This is the spirit of the State, and in it lies our (or Oklahoma's) hope for the future.

With best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

53.

Marshall, Oklahoma
March 24, 1941

Dr. E. E. Dale
Head of Dept. of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I suppose you know that I have ended my connection with the Writers' Project. I had told Miss Fullerton I wanted to be relieved as soon as the State Guide should be finished. It has not yet been fully approved by the Washington office, but at Dr. Wardell's request we submitted it to the publisher March 15. I think it will be a useful and interesting book, though I am sure it contains some errors which I was not able to eliminate. I am very optimistic about the future of the project, for Dr. Stanley Clark has been appointed to take my place.

I want you to know why I resigned, for I do not want you to think I am irresponsible or indifferent to my financial interests. I am full in sympathy with the policy of furnishing jobs to the unemployed, but my experience with the Writers' Project has convinced me that it is built upon an economic fallacy. Strictly speaking, there are few, if any, unemployed writers in Oklahoma. I had forty people assigned to my project, most of them intelligent and conscientious, and capable of performing acceptable research under supervision; but although I was constantly on the watch, I found only one during the whole period who was able to write, and she left me for private employment. Obviously I could not write, with the responsibility of planning, correcting, and supervising the research of forty people, and Mr. Oskison could not keep ahead of the whole forty. The piling up of research which could not be used was completely repugnant to my standards of thrift in the use of public funds. Badly as I needed my salary, I did not think it important enough to tempt me to continue at work that I considered socially indefensible. I should have been happy to continue in the work if it had been a straight research project directed at constructive ends, with no obligation to produce books. I am sure there are WPA projects of that type.

When you go to the Mississippi Valley meeting, won't you please keep a look-out for a teaching position for me? You enjoy your classroom work and your association with students so much that you can understand how seriously and definitely I chose teaching as a profession and how satisfying it was to me. I was so completely happy at Canyon – expecting to stay there the rest of my life – that I specialized unwisely in Southwestern history, and came for my graduate work to Oklahoma where I could obtain the best courses in that field. Then when I lost my position, the very specialization that would have made me more useful if I had remained there, proved to be my greatest handicap. I had made a brilliant record at Chicago in the field of international relations, and they have given me a great

deal of recognition there, but I could not resume my studies with them when I already had an Oklahoma Ph.D. The successful books I have written have typed and labeled me still further. The only good vacancies I have discovered – one at C. I. A. and one at Western Reserve – were out of my reach because of my attainments in Southwestern history. I have really done better work in other history fields than many of the people who have specialized in them, but because my books about Indians have been so outstanding, people assume that I am ignorant of all other subjects.

I hope I have not taken too much of your time by this long letter. I am writing so fully because I hope you can help me. I know that people who can hold the attention of a college class and inspire students to enter into research and writing are not too plentiful even in the overcrowded history field, and it seems to me there should be a place where my talents could be used. I am not desperate or discouraged, for I can always find things to do, but I am not satisfied to waste the best of my gifts.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

54.

March 26, 1941.

Dr. Angie Debo,
Marshall, Oklahoma.

Dear Dr. Debo:

I was glad to get your good letter and I think I fully understand why you left the Writers' Project and your reaction to this work. I fully agree with you that there are very few unemployed writers in Oklahoma and I can understand the difficulties anyone must have who has to deal with a large force of WPA workers.

I will be glad to look out for a teaching position for you when I go to Milwaukee next month. I know you are an excellent teacher and enjoy teaching and it seems it should be a place for you. At the same time I fully realize that the universities have been turning out a huge crop of Ph.D.'s during the past few years and that the competition for any position in university teaching that may happen to open is very keen. It seems, however, that with your reputation as a writer you should be able to find something you would be willing to accept. Perhaps you would not get as much salary as you would like to have but none of us do that.

I will let you know if I learn of anything, but in the meantime I wish you would write around a bit and make any inquiries you can. If you learn of anything, do not fail to let me know and you may be sure I shall be most happy to do anything I can to help you.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

55.

Marshall, Oklahoma
March 26, 1941

Dr. E. E. Dale
Head of Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I understand that Mrs. Sibyl Lupton has applied for the Historical Society position left vacant by the death of Mr. Thoburn. I should consider it as a great favor if you would give your personal attention to her application.

Mrs. Lupton worked nearly a year under my supervision on the Writers' Project, and I am entirely familiar with her qualifications. She has a pleasing personality, and meets the public well. I understand, too, that she would be expected to carry on a certain amount of research, and I am sure she could do this in a highly efficient manner. She was my very best research worker. I used her as a sort of trouble shooter to be sent out on special assignment when I needed information on some obscure point, and she never failed me. I could depend absolutely upon her accuracy and intellectual integrity. She was well educated and mentally alert when she came to the project, and the year's work has given her unusual training; even a doctoral candidate in a graduate school never receives a solid year of research experience under constant, daily supervision.

Mrs. Lupton has never spoken to me of her personal difficulties, but I know from others that she is supporting an invalid husband and two children on the \$79.10 monthly salary that she receives as a WPA worker. A position with the Historical Society would be a real boon to her, and she would be satisfied to remain there permanently.

I have suggested to Mrs. Lupton that she should talk with you personally. I should appreciate it very much if you would take time to see her. I do not think you would be sorry, for I feel sure she is the kind of applicant you would like to meet.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

56.

March 29, 1941.

Dr. Angie Debo,
Marshall, Oklahoma.

Dear Dr. Debo:

I was glad to have your good letter about Mrs. Lupton who called to see me only yesterday. Mrs. Lupton is the type of person we need in the Oklahoma Historical Society in my opinion. I was very much impressed with her, but as I told her, I cannot make any commitments until I have seen what other applications have been received. I do know she is the type of person we need. We have had too much of putting in superannuated pensioners and while I would not want to see any of them let out, I do think as the places fall vacant they should be filled with younger and more competent persons.

With best wishes and kind regards, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

57.

Marshall, Oklahoma
November 25, 1941

Dr. E. E. Dale
Head of Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am greatly in need of some information from Senate Doc. 512, 23 Cong., 1 sess, part IV. I wonder if your boy – or girl – who is in charge of the Phillips Collection would find out for me whether you have it. Or if it is not in the collection it might possibly be in the main library in the Government documents.

I hope this will not be too much trouble. I should have written directly to Mr. LeRoy Stewart except that I understood he was not planning to be in school this winter. If the document is there, and if it contains the material I think it does, I might be able to get this young man to give me a little long distance assistance.

I understand that the document deals with removal of the Creeks, and that pp. 270-74 gives a census of Lutcaboga Town. I am extremely anxious to know the date when that town emigrated, the population, the names of the town officials, and any other information regarding it.

My Creek history would have been out before this time if the binding had not been delayed by priorities requirements. But Savoie thinks it will surely be out before the month is over. I hope you will like it.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

Luchipoga

census
pp. 539 - 594

58.

December 2, 1941.

Dr. Angie Debo,
Marshall, Oklahoma.

Dear Angie:

Yes, we have Senate Document 512, 23 Congress, 1 session, part IV, and I think it is the only copy in the state with the exception of Grant Foreman's personal copy. There may be one in the Oklahoma Historical Society but I doubt it. As you indicate, pages 270-274 give a census of the town in question though they spell it Luchipoga. I am sure, however, it is the same as your Lutcaboga. The census shows population, number of slaves, etc. It would take a little research to discover whether or not the document as a whole would give you the date when the town migrated or the name of town officials, or other information.

If you will note down exactly what you want to know, I will put somebody on to it and if it is there, I am sure we can find it. Do not fail to call on me any time I can be of service.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

59.

Marshall, Oklahoma
December 4, 1941

Dear Dr. Dale:

Blessed be Frank Phillips for his gift! (And even more blessed be Dr. Dale for giving it substance.) I am so glad to know where that document is. No, they do not have one at the Oklahoma Historical Society. They do have a binding incorrectly titled as Senate Doc. 512, etc. but between the covers is something entirely different.

It was so good of you to write so fully, and to offer to help me further. I will try to be in Norman Monday, when Mr. Leake wants me for his broadcast promoting the OKLAHOMA GUIDE. If I succeed in making the trip, I will examine the document then; if not, I will write more fully about it later.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

P. S. I am so pleased with your informal address that I am thinking of framing the letter. You used to call me by my given name – I have been in your classes since I was a freshman taking Government I out in Park Row. I hope you will continue the good habit.

Dr. E. E. Dale
Professor of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

60.

December 5, 1941.

Dr. Angie Debo,
Marshall, Oklahoma.

Dear Angie:

I suppose my form of address does seem a bit informal to you but after all, why should I not call you Angie. You see I always think of you as Angie and besides, am I not your academic godfather since your freshman days. You even returned to me after testing the intellectual flesh pots of the great University of Chicago and I have always taken to myself some crumbs of credit for your rise to fame as a writer and historical scholar.

It is nice to know that you will be in Norman very soon and will have a chance to examine Senate Document 512 etc. If for any reason you cannot make the trip, let me know just what you want and we will try to run it down for you.

With every good wish, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

61.

Marshall, Oklahoma
January 11, 1942

Dear Dr. Dale:

I hope I am not making a mountain out of a mole hill. This is the third letter I have started to write to you. I threw the other two away, but I think I am going to send this one. I have so much regard for your opinion that I cannot bear to be placed in a false light where you are concerned.

I hope you have not read the "History" chapter in the OKLAHOMA GUIDE, and I hope you will never read it; but if you do, I want you to know that I never saw it until a few days ago. I believe you would be distressed to think one of your students would turn out that kind of work.

Of course I did not write much of the book, but I did ride herd on everybody who was writing, and I wrote the "History" chapter myself. There was nobody else on the project who could write it; Stanley Clark was not on the project then. It was satisfactory to Mrs. Hanau, the woman from Washington. The book, in fact, was all finished when I left except for some revision Mr. Oskison wanted to do to some of the cities. I stayed with the project until I thought the writing was done.

After I left I suppose someone in the Washington office thought I had not written enough about social unrest. Anyhow my article was discarded and another substituted. I noticed as soon as I got a copy of the book, that the "History" article was new, but I did not mind. I have no particular yen to see my words in print. But a day or so ago I happened to read it, and I was distressed beyond measure to think such an illiterate article should go out over my signature. I am sure Stanley Clark would feel about it as I do, but he never had an opportunity to do anything about it. The WPA has so many ways of tying people's hands. And I doubt that Savoie's reader saw it either; he probably saw the original manuscript before the substitution was made. And of course Savoie has not time to read all the books he publishes.

I know changes have been made in other parts of the book, but after my experience with the "History" chapter I am afraid to read them. The book probably had enough errors because of my own limited knowledge, but it seems a shame that they have been sown through the pages gratuitously after I did my best with them. I am inclined to think, however, that that one chapter has suffered the most damage.

The book has received a number of favorable reviews, and I think it is going to be very useful. The errors which distress me so much will not be noticed by the general reader. I think they will not even detract much from the book's usefulness. But I do regret that I allowed my signature to be used. I am violating my code when I reveal the inner workings of an organization for which I worked, but I feel that I have a right to explain that the book was changed without my knowledge.

Sincerely,
Angie Debo.

Dr. E. E. Dale
Head of the Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

62.

January 13, 1942.

Dr. Angie Debo,
Marshall, Oklahoma.

Dear Angie:

I was glad to get your good letter of recent date and I am inclined to think that you are taking the matter of the history chapter in the Oklahoma Guide book a bit too seriously. Probably most people will not notice the difference and since those of us who would be most likely to note these errors understand the situation, I do not think you need to worry too much. I never know how such things happen, but I know in the midst of governmental red tape and cooperative work things do get printed that are very different from what we would like to have them.

I sincerely hope that you get your grant for your proposed book on The Real American Imperialism. I tried to write you a good letter on that and no doubt you should be hearing from your application within the next few months. Be sure to come to see me any time you are down this way.

With best wishes and kindest regards, I am

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

EED/Mc

63.

Marshall, Oklahoma
January 30, 1942

Dear Dr. Dale:

The evidence is conclusive. Even one who has received such careful grounding as I have from the freshman year on in historical methods must accept it as definitive. . But then I already knew that you wouldn't forget – for you never do. Charges of professorial absent-mindedness are a slander so far as you are concerned – at least when it comes to helping your students.

I am grateful for the recommendation. I suppose I shall not hear from them before April. I should feel fairly sure of getting the grant unless this war changes things. I will let you know how it turns out.

Sincerely,
Angie Debo.

Dr. Edward Everett Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Interviews with Angie Debo, #7.

Interview Date: May 4, 1983.

(Valencia-Weber and Matthews Collection, Box 2/ folder 8)

Now I have a – I do sometime want to say something about this – you see I worked on two white-collar WPA projects. I worked on Grant Foreman's "Indian Pioneer History Project." I think maybe I ought to mention that to you. I guess we won't talk about it today because I think you want to talk about the Writers' Project.

You can talk about the Grant Foreman and about the Writers' Project. I know that I sent you a lot of questions on it, some of which, as you say, aren't answerable. So why don't you just tell me what you want to say about the Writers' Project and then talk about Grant Foreman.

Here's the questions, I think. You can have this.

That's okay. I have a copy. What would you say, Angie, is the most important part of your experience with the Writers' Project?

I think the most important part of my experience was my contact with the WPA workers who were certified to work on it. I found them capable and intelligent. Any feeling that some fortunate people had about WPA workers being rather incompetent was not true. I had two or three people on the project who were unemployable. They would have been unemployable in any situation because of emotional irresponsibility or something of that sort. I say two or three; there might have been three or four of them. But with that exception, they were intelligent and capable people who deserved a good job and were qualified for it. But the [Great] Depression just didn't offer any good jobs, so the quality of the people who worked on the Writers' Project was probably the thing that impressed me the most.

How many people were working on the project?

I really don't know. I won't be able to answer very many of your questions because I don't remember.

How many did you personally have contact with – just an estimate?

But I had contact with the ones in Oklahoma City when I came to the project. The project had been in existence for quite a while before I had been appointed as director. I have here my notice to work on the project which asked me to report on April 22, 1940. It had been in existence several years before that. One will have to find the history in, well the general history, not just the history of the Oklahoma project, but the overall history of the project, in government documents. I do not know anything about it.

We can look that up.

There were other people who worked on it before I did. They collected the information, and what was done after I came in was to organize the tours.

I have looked in the book and it has the tours by region and by area. Did people actually travel those routes set up to write those tours?

No.

How did that come about?

My predecessors apparently had people scattered through the state who reported to the central office at Oklahoma City – I suppose they did. But they also wrote to Chambers of Commerce and mayors and people like that in all the towns over the state and asked information, and those people usually cooperated. Some of them were so hostile to the whole New Deal program that they didn't cooperate, but most of them cooperated. All that material was collected and was in the files – unorganized – at the time I came in charge of the project. The pattern was established from the central office in Washington. And I thought they had an excellent format – and one that didn't deviate from this format. All of the states followed it. The Oklahoma guide was the last one on all the series. The projects had languished. And when I came in – I'm not saying that I was necessarily responsible for this – but we did go to work and write the guide according to the pattern that was sent to us from Washington. After I retired from the project, my successor finished it – that was J. Stanley Clark. It came out as the last of the series. The pattern, I think, was excellent. I do not think it could have been improved upon.

But I think the whole Writers' Project rested on a false assumption. This assumption was that any intelligent, educated person who knew the facts could write. I am confident that that is not true, any more than I would be able, by conscientious effort and study, to be a grand opera singer. I think it requires something beyond just intelligence and sincerity. The people who worked on the project were not writers. I think that may have been true throughout the United States. There were plenty of conscientious people collecting material, but there weren't very many writers. Now I had one writer and she had to do all the writing – except that Dr. Anna Lewis came in the summer. She came from the Oklahoma College for Women where she had a distinguished career as teacher of history. By the way, she wasn't much of a writer either, although she was a very outstanding scholar and teacher. Anyhow, she did come and help with the writing. But this young WPA worker who could write – her name is not in the book; we couldn't use the names of the workers – and it was Dorothy Halcolm. I have so often wished that Dorothy's name could have been in the book. Dorothy had a very interesting career after the [Great] Depression ended and she went out into the world and used her talents as she had a right to do and a chance to do. We were without writers. That is the reason why that before I became director there were people collecting material, but there wasn't anybody to use them. The people who had been chosen directors – I don't remember their names – but they weren't writers either. Now I was supposed to direct the organization, but instead of that I wrote. That is, I supervised

the writing, Dorothy wrote, and Dr. Anna Lewis helped her. I did supervise the writing. When Dr. Stanley Clark came, he did the supervising. John S. Oskison – who became my assistant – was a writer, but came just before I left, and did most of his work after I left. I had to do the part I should not have done. I had to supervise the writing part rather than the mechanical part of taking care of the writers and so forth. That, I think, must have been a difficulty in all the states. I do think the guide turned out to be very useful, and the pattern that was created by the central office was a very useful one – a very effective – one.

How did you get the post of director?

Well, I always thought I should have been offered that job a long time before I was. But the University of Oklahoma was the sponsor. You know a WPA project had to have a sponsor. The man who was assigned to represent the University of Oklahoma – there is no use of my giving his name [Morris Wardell] – but he was a very incapable person, I felt, and a very irresponsible person. Certainly I always felt that they should have thought about me before they did. The way I got the job was that it was lagging so badly under the directors they had chosen – whose names I don't even remember – that they were in despair – and they finally, this man finally did think about me. Here I had written and published Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic. He was in the History Department, and it wasn't Dr. Dale – I won't tell you who it was. Anyhow, maybe they were in despair. They wrote to me and asked me if I wanted the job. I wanted the job very badly. I had written and published – it was published by the University Press – The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic. And I had written And Still the Waters Run on my own with a grant from the Social Science Research Council. I had borrowed from my life insurance policies and I needed a job pretty badly. They offered me the job and I took it. I stayed with the Writers' Project until – I have an approximate date here – it was in April 1941 that I left. Probably about the middle of April 1941.

What prompted your leaving?

Well, I approved of the integrity of the organization in Oklahoma, and no doubt in Washington. I approved of that, and its freedom from political spoils, it kept very free from that. But like most – or many – government projects it was quite enmeshed in red tape, and it was rather tiresome to untangle after I had worked awhile. Oh, and by the way, my book, And Still the Waters Run had been accepted and was being prepared for publication by the Princeton University Press. So I was in a position, I thought, to quit this tape-ridden organization, and I knew that Stanly Clark would continue his good work. And to write another book – that's the reason why I quit. And I did. I wrote my history of the Creeks.

Did you want to comment on the other part you mentioned with the Writers' Project, that you had had . . . ?

Just a minute, I think we ought to use some of your suggestions maybe. Maybe I – you took it off, didn't you? I didn't have anything to do with the processors. And I told how it ended. And I gave an evaluation of the project. Well, maybe I could go on a little from there. These guides, I am sure, were very useful. There was one from every state and a few extra ones maybe for a city

or something like that. In time they needed to be revised to bring them up to date. Most of them were printed by commercial publishers. In the second edition – the new edition some of them – they just simply copied the first printing and they called it the second edition. They even used the 1920 census instead of bringing the census up to date. The University of Oklahoma – so far as I know – was the only publisher that actually rewrote the book and brought it up to date. They got Kent Ruth to do it. Nobody could have done that better than Kent Ruth. So Kent Ruth edited; he took the first edition and changed it. His sister did the driving – you know he’s a cripple – he went over the state roads, and he changed it. He put in new and up-to-date essays at the beginning of the book on general subjects so that it is a complete revision – a complete and honest revision – and very useful. The WPA had nothing to do with this second edition. It might be rather interesting for me to tell you one thing. I was along with Kent and Helen – they’re good friends of mine – when they were trying to trace Washington Irving’s trail, and we went to Keystone. Keystone was very soon to be flooded by the Keystone dam. When we went to Keystone, we saw a town in the boom of a new construction era.

All right, you might put it on. I forgot the important thing I was going to tell you. Maybe I’ll think of it. They were even paving one of the streets. They were building new porches on the houses. They were just doing all kinds of things. We found out that the engineer – it was Army engineers that were building the dam – and the engineer in Tulsa that was in charge of it advised them to do all this improvement so that when they asked to be compensated for having their property flooded they could inflate the valuation. I think we probably know that the Engineering Corps doesn’t think about anything, only building dams. Now I probably think they do efficient work in building dams. But the whole dam business – and I’m not using profanity – the whole dam business is just so much pork. That’s all they’re interested in. I never saw anybody so mad as Kent Ruth was at that situation. I was glad he wasn’t driving, that Helen was driving, she was calmer. We were trying to find the place that Washington Irving had described after he left that bear’s glen that he described so fully.

In the original guide maybe I should tell you this: I wrote the chapter on Oklahoma – you know there are a group of essays – well, that chapter was discarded. I don’t know why it was discarded. I don’t know who wrote it. Stanley Clark didn’t write it, I’m sure. They put some errors in there that have embarrassed me ever since because my name was on that guide book. For instance, they said we had the recall in Oklahoma. They said we had the initiative and referendum recall. My hair just stood on end when I read that about recall. I think I know who wrote it, but I don’t know for sure. But it was a very useful book, and the whole American guide series was extremely useful books. They were creative products of the [Great] Depression. But I do not think that they were as effective in helping people as some of the other white collar projects because it assumed there were unemployed writers all over the country. Actually, there aren’t any unemployed writers. Everybody that can write writes. It might be the depression period when they can’t get anything published, but anyhow he writes, and when he wants a job he has to take a job at something else besides writing. The University press published it, and they owned it, and it was – the WPA had stopped, there wasn’t any WPA – they just got Kent Ruth to make a second edition. I helped him a little – not much – but I helped him a little. What help I gave him didn’t have really – I’m not being modest, that’s the truth – it didn’t really have any effect, or much effect, except it indicated how interested I was in it.

What did Grant Foreman have to do with this project?

Not anything.

You mentioned that you later worked with him on something.

I have a great admiration for Grant and Carolyn Thomas Foreman. I admire them for their diligent research in the periods of Oklahoma history that were complete blanks until they entered them. They traveled over the world and found archives in various parts of the world that yielded documents about the very earliest settlements and developments in Oklahoma. I don't know how that – I think it was Mrs. Foreman perhaps – that had become acquainted with so many of the old time settlers in the Indian Territory. She thought how interesting it would be if we could have their reminiscences. I think perhaps she was the originator of the idea of this Indian-Pioneer history project. I am not altogether sure of the sponsorship. I think it was sponsored – co-sponsored perhaps – by the University of Oklahoma and the Oklahoma Historical Society. I didn't know the Foremans very well, I just admired them for their research. Later, of course, I became very devoted to them – I loved them both. They were very wonderful people, and wonderful friends of mine. I had met them because of their friendliness and their helpfulness when I was working on the research for my Choctaw history. A good bit of the Choctaw material at that time was in the superintendency of the Five Civilized Tribes at Muskogee. I worked there for weeks in those documents, and I met Grant Foreman when he would be coming there for various historical searches and so forth. So I knew about the Foremans, and I had read in the newspapers about this project. That was before I had worked on the Writers' Project. This came sooner. So I was badly in need of work back in those [Great] Depression days. I had written – I had published the Choctaw Republic and I had written And Still the Waters Run, but I was afraid to have the University of Oklahoma Press publish it for fear the grafters I had exposed would destroy the press. They had the power to do it. So I had it withdrawn from the press. They were trying to find a publisher and hadn't succeeded. So here I was in a very bad situation, and I wrote to Grant Foreman, and asked him if he had any position in his organization and told him I needed work. I wasn't a WPA worker – and I don't say that with any sense of superiority – you know what capable people I found in the WPA people. He wrote back and told me, yes, he had need of an editor. I was asked to come to Muskogee, and was notified to go to work on the 23rd day of January, 1937.

So I entered that work. It had a central office in Muskogee. There were workers out over the field that were collecting reminiscences of old-time people. It was called an Indian-Pioneer Project. That was before the days when you heard so much about oral history. The WPA workers who had been assigned to that project were conscientious, hard-working, capable people. I don't know one of them that didn't deserve a good job if there had been any jobs in outside employment. They collected, they interviewed these old-timers, and collected their reminiscences. They were typed at the central office in Muskogee, in the Federal Building, where the Indian agency and the Post Office were. I was supposed to edit them, but I didn't change them. I thought that if the old-timer who was telling his story made a mistake, the mistake should go in. I thought that was a part of it. I, of course, organized them if they needed organization, and I outlined them. I don't know even yet whether they are using those same outlines or whether they made some new outlines. But, anyhow, I outlined them.

It was very pleasant working for Mr. Foreman. The material that came in was very impressive – I was impressed, especially. It was while I was working there that I got a grant from the Social Science Research Council to write my book about the Creeks. After I retired from this project, I used the Creek material in my Creek history. I was impressed by the long-time memories of the Creeks. They could remember events for 100 years, just about a century. After a century, they just had a confused tradition of miraculous events that didn't occur. But for a century they had the incidents of the removal that fitted exactly into the scholarly book that Grant Foreman had written about Indian removal – and they were not familiar with his book! They would tell him what their grandmother or grandfather had told them. They were old people when they told it. I found the same thing true of the white pioneers and of the Negroes who had been slaves before the Civil War. The reason why these reminiscences were so accurate was that the interviewers knew the history. They didn't prompt the person interviewed, but they knew the history. They knew how to relate his story to the events that had occurred. I do not believe – and I feel strongly – that oral history is worth anything unless you have the historical background first. You build the scaffolding, and then you understand the colorful details. For example, I built a scaffolding to Prairie City from newspapers, and then I talked to the old-timers around here and around Hennessey and around other places. I remember one year when the wheat failed entirely. Now it took Mr. George Bebee, who had taken a claim in the Cherokee Strip in 1893, to tell me after I had this background of this bad wheat year. It took him to tell me how that the farmers took the canvas off, the canvas that carried the cut wheat into the place where it was made into a bundle and tied. They took the canvas off so that the wheat didn't fall on the canvas. Once in a while there would be a head of wheat that would grow up and mature. The binder would cut off this head of wheat, and it would fall on the platform, and they would pick it up with their hands. That is how they got their seed wheat for the next year. Now that's the sort of thing you can get in history that comes from peoples' memories. But if you don't have the background, you don't understand it.

I have been appalled at the bad memories of the Apache Indians who belonged to the tribes that were associated with Geronimo. The reason why their memories – I have read some of the oral history that has been collected from those people – some of the people that I myself had interviewed – and I have been appalled at the lack of coherence and lack of understanding that appears in those interviews. The interviews are absolutely worthless. Now I am not blaming the interviewer for not having the background because the background had not been written. Nobody had written it yet – I was writing it – but nobody had written it yet. It's of no value unless you have the correct background to hang it on.

I think that Alice Marriott's Ten Grandmothers is one of the most beautiful books that has ever been written by an Oklahoman. But she – perhaps this is legitimate that she did it this way because I'm sure she did know the history – but she took down the memories of the old-time Kiowas and their story of that dramatic confrontation between General Sherman and the Kiowa chiefs, Satank, Satanta, and Big Tree, at Fort Sill that occurred after they had demolished – or overwhelmed – a wagon train and killed the drivers and so on on its way to a Texas fort. That story as it was told by the Kiowas is just completely mixed up with something that must have been some other incident in their memories. It doesn't fit the facts at all. Now I'm not saying that it detracts from Alice Marriott's book because she was writing her book for a different purpose.

She was writing her book to show the relationship of the Kiowas to each other, and to their land, and to their way of life; and it shows that well. But their memories are not like the memory of the Creeks, for example, because it was told the way they remembered it, and they mixed it up.

I would like to ask you just sort of a technical question. You mentioned the excellent work that these people that were working with Grant Foreman in oral history did. Did they tape record or did they write down what you then later edited. How was it first taken from the Creek Indians?

I just used the Creek part, but of course I read it all, and it was from old-timers. A good many stories of Tulsa when it was a cow town came from those interviews. It told the stories of old-timers throughout the state of Oklahoma. I suppose it represented the whole state of Oklahoma. I don't seem to remember any except around Muskogee and Tulsa and western Oklahoma. I don't seem to remember any other, but it probably had the southeast. I don't remember. The Kiowas' part and so forth, I don't remember that. Now your question was?

I'd like to know when Grant Foreman's workers went and interviewed those old-timers did they tape record the interview?

They didn't tape it – tapes were not available. They listened, and then they wrote it down from memory. They might have taken notes during the interviews. They wrote it down from memory with a pen. And then it came and was typed, and I saw the typed copies. I do not know where their interviews are – whether they have been preserved or not. But the typed copies have been preserved in three places. They have been preserved at the University of Oklahoma, and at the Oklahoma Historical Society, and Grant Foreman had a copy of his own, which I believe he was entitled to do. It finally went to Gilcrease. The last time I was at Gilcrease, which was some years ago, they didn't know they had it. So they may not know yet that they have it. Anyhow, the two copies are available, and have not been used as extensively as they should be used. I'm sure that's true. They helped me a great deal in my history of the Creeks, The Road to Disappearance, and in my history of Tulsa. They helped me a great deal.

That was rather interesting because the whole idea of oral history is still being debated as to its value. You addressed it very correctly in terms of people who collect information without the historical framework, without other means of checking it. I know that Glenna and I understand a lot more about what you've said because of the fact we went to the OU archives and we read the books before we talked to you. But if we didn't have that framework I don't think we could understand much of how you say it, of being as significant as it is.

I am sure that is true. Of course, the interviewer has to be careful not to make suggestions. He can be careful not to make suggestions, but at the same time he can relate it to the facts as they occurred. I know one person in New Mexico who is a good friend of mine who collects very interesting and important information about the Kiowas who were among the tribes that were associated with Geronimo. Her theory is the white people told their side of the story and the Indians told their side of the story. The Indian's story is just as good as the white person's story. She overlooks the fact that the white person's story is supported by events that happened at that time. The Indian's story is supported by failing memories and that's all.

I am interested that you said the Creeks were so accurate in the chronology, or at least the sequence in which events occurred and that fit what was verifiable as historical events. Why do you think they had this capacity and you didn't find it among the Apaches or the Kiowas and others?

I don't know. I attributed it to the interviewer, but maybe I'm wrong. I attribute it to the point of view that Alice Marriott took when some old-time Apache got a raid on a family mixed up with this raid on the wagon train. She put the raid on the family – and it wasn't. It went through the courts, and the raiders received sentences – in fact, death sentences – only they were commuted to life imprisonment. But they received death sentences, and it went through the courts at the time. It was teamsters that they killed on this wagon train. It wasn't a family in which the mother got away, and they took two little girls and adopted them, and killed the father, and burned the buildings. That wasn't what happened at all because that whole story was brought out in the courts. It was contemporary. Well, the old man or woman who told it simply got the two events mixed up. Now I don't know exactly how; she wasn't trying to collect oral history. If she had been trying to collect oral history, I don't know how she could have straightened them out without making suggestions. Maybe she could have somehow – if she had been collecting oral history.

That seems to indicate that the way the interviewer structures the interview is very important in how the information is obtained. Not necessarily giving hints, or prompting, to the person being interviewed, but the way they plan and structure the questions and the interview.

That could be.

You started with Grant Foreman in 1937. How long did you work for him on the project, and why did you finish or leave?

I hardly know how long. It wasn't very long. It might have been about a year. The reason I left is because I got a grant-in-aid from the Social Science Research Council that enabled me to write my history of the Creeks. And so I left for that reason: to write my history of the Creeks. By the way, J. Stanley Clark had just a very brilliant young man who had received his Ph.D. Like most

other capable young people at that time, he didn't have a job. I guess that, maybe, that's where he got his first job. He followed me as the editor to work with Grant Foreman. Later, of course, he became the director of the Federal Writers' Project. . . .

Dale-Debo Correspondence

(Continuing correspondence from the Edward Everett Dale Collection, Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Libraries. used with their permission. From Folder #2 of the OSU Library's copy of the correspondence, Collection #94-023.)

64.

Marshall, Oklahoma
February 6, 1942

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am sure you do not remember a history of Marshall I wrote once as a term theme in your Oklahoma history class; but it has an "A" and a "Good" in your handwriting, an estimate which I value very much. It seemed to me then, and it seems to me now that while one little Oklahoma community of itself is not important, its development spans in time and space most of the life of the American people. There are the early settlement, the conquest of the land, the founding of stable institutions, townsite promotion and the fever that goes with it, the coming of a railroad, oil and the consequent industrial development, the collapse of the whole financial structure with the failure of the one bank, the reaction to great events outside – Pearl Harbor, for example – and many other things that cover most of American history. And I know many people who have taken part in all of it; I can remember much of it myself.

I am planning a history of such a community – not necessarily Marshall, for I might not be able to write objectively here. I want to use reminiscences of old-timers for color and detail, and check them by careful research – such dry but necessary information, for example, as to how many mortgaged their farms as soon as they proved up, or what price was paid for butter in the summer time before the railroad came through.

Do you think I could do it? And if you think I could, won't you please write a letter for me to Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 501 Madison Avenue, New York. I am applying to them for an historical fellowship to enable me to write it. I hope to make it more popular than my former books, but I aim to be as thorough in scholarship as I have always been. They want "one professional recommendation" from a "recognized historian. The professional recommendation should offer some comment on the applicant's literary ability and scholarship. It may, however, refer either to the applicant's work in general or to the specific project submitted for an award."

I shall be so grateful for your help. And I will let you know how it turns out. I have not heard yet from the Social Science Research Council.

Sincerely,
Angie Debo.

Dr. E. E. Dale
Professor of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

65.

February 10, 1942.

Dr. Angie Debo,
Marshall, Oklahoma.

Dear Angie:

I am sure that the project you outline is quite feasible and I am equally sure you could do it. I am accordingly writing to Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., in your behalf. Have you sent in part of the work? If I am not mistaken, they require that 10,000 words of the proposed study be sent along with the application.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

66.

Marshall, Oklahoma
February 14, 1942

Dear Dr. Dale:

Thank you so much for your help with Mr. Knopf, and for your encouraging letter to me. I hope I get a chance to write it, and that it will turn out good.

You are right about the 10,000 words. I sent him a sample of that length. I would send you a copy so you could look over it except that I am not a good enough typist to make legible carbons. Nobody can read the copy I keep but myself.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

Dr. E. E. Dale
Professor of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

67.

Marshall, Oklahoma
March 29, 1942

Dear Dr. Dale:

I know that you will be glad to learn that I received a grant from the Social Science Research Council for my study of Indian policy. It is a smaller sum than I requested – only \$500 – but perhaps I can stretch it to make do.

I am sure I could not have got it without your help. (This is true also of the previous grants that enabled me to write my last two books.) I am very grateful.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

Dr. E. E. Dale
Professor of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

P. S. I shall be seeing you soon. I expect to start working in the Phillips Collection as soon as I can finish some necessary scratching in the flower garden.

68.

March 31, 1942.

Dr. Angie Debo,
Marshall, Oklahoma.

Dear Angie:

Congratulations on your Social Science Research Council grant. I am sorry that it was not more, but after all, \$500 is a good deal of money and I am sure it will be of great help to you in doing this work.

It is nice of you to say that I helped you in securing this grant and that you are grateful for this. I do not know just how much help I was, but I did my best.

We shall be glad to welcome you to the campus just as soon as the flower garden is in shape that you can leave it and do some scratching in the Phillips Collection.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

69.

Cables:
KNOPF NEW YORK
Telephones:
PLAZA 3-4761

Alfred A Knopf *Incorporated*

501 *Madison Avenue* NEW YORK

April 24, 1942

Dear Mr. Dale,

We are very much taken by Dr. Debo's project and while I am not in a position yet to say that it is our intention to award her the Fellowship and must consequently ask you to keep this letter in confidence, I still think it extremely likely that we will want to make her the award provided we can have the sort of conventional assurance from an established professional historian like yourself that her scheme if executed could properly fall into the classification of History. You will understand that our tendency as publishers would naturally be to give the most liberal possible interpretation to the term, but on the other hand one of our purposes in establishing a History Fellowship has been to secure increasingly the interest of professional historians who are teaching in our universities and colleges. Consequently it would be unwise from our point of view to make the award for a work which would cause such gentlemen to raise their eyebrows on its publication.

Something of the same question arose two years ago in connection with Henry Ladd Smith's AIRWAYS, and I wrote to John Hicks at Wisconsin in just about the same terms I am now addressing you. He immediately gave me the kind of assurance that made us feel entirely comfortable in giving the award to a history of commercial aviation.

I should greatly appreciate a quite frank statement of your views in connection with this project of Miss Debo's.

With kind regards, I am

Yours sincerely,

Alfred A. Knopf

PS:

As you know, Miss Debo attempts the history of an Oklahoma town from its beginnings to the present. But to avoid unpleasantness and the dangers of libel she has chosen to treat the subject compositely. Like "Middletown" "Prairie City" is a fictitious name and she makes no claim that real persons are represented. *Hence our uncertainty.*

A.A.K.

Professor E.E. Dale,

University of Oklahoma

Norman, Oklahoma

70.

April 29, 1942.

Mr. Alfred A. Knopf,
501 Madison Avenue,
New York, New York.

Dear Mr. Knopf:

I deeply appreciate the confidence in my judgment implied in your recent letter in regard to Dr. Angie Debo. As you may know, Dr. Debo took her doctor's degree with me and her first book, The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic, was adapted from her doctor's dissertation. I think every other book she has written has been about something suggested by me and I have always followed her work with intense interest. I have no doubt but that her new project definitely falls into the classification of history. What she proposes to do is to take a small town as a type of thousands of other small towns throughout the Great Plains region and in giving a history of it, of its development and its people, to give in effect a history of an entire great region. Such a procedure and such a study undoubtedly constitutes sound history and is so recognized by virtually all historians. What the people of one small community may have done and what they may think and how they may live is not important in itself as the history of a small community, but when this is typical of a vast number of other communities almost exactly like it, such a study assumes enormous importance.

I believe Dr. Debo would do a good job and that her book would be enthusiastically received by a very large number of people.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

EED/Mc

71.

Cables:
KNOPF NEW YORK
Telephones:
PLAZA 3-4761

Alfred A Knopf *Incorporated*

501 *Madison Avenue* NEW YORK

May 5, 1942

Dear Mr. Dale,

Your letter of April 29 gives me just what I want and I am happy to tell you that we are going to award our current Fellowship in History to Dr. Debo. I must ask you at the moment however to keep this information strictly confidential, and not even tell it to Dr. Debo. I shall be writing her within the next day or two and asking her to keep the information to herself. We have to get certain data from her and the other Fellowship winners in order to make an adequate public announcement which all the press can carry at the same time. I am sure you will understand the advisability of handling the matter in this way.

With thanks for your interest, and kind personal regards, I am,

Yours sincerely,

Alfred A. Knopf

E.E. Dale, Esq.
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

72.

Alfred A Knopf *Incorporated*

May 18th, 1942

501 *Madison Avenue*
NEW YORK

Dear Mr. Dale,

Many thanks for your kind letter of May 14th. We are releasing news of the Fellowships this coming Friday. There is nothing more for me to say now except that we have very high hopes indeed for Dr. Debo's work.

With kind regards, I am

Yours sincerely,

Alfred A. Knopf

73.

May 22, 1942.

Dr. Angie Debo,
Marshall, Oklahoma.

Dear Angie:

At last I can congratulate you on your receiving the Alfred A. Knopf Fellowship in History. I knew about this sometime ago, but Mr. Knopf asked me to regard it as confidential and not to tell you or anyone else until they were ready to release the news.

I think this is not only a very high honor, but it is also something which gives you independence for a year and puts you in a position to do some really worth while work.

You might be interested in the correspondence that I have had with Mr. Knopf so I am enclosing his letters to me, but if it is convenient, you might return them to me for my files, though it does not matter a lot if you forget. You will see by these letters that I have tried to do my best for you, so in addition to your responsibility to Mr. Knopf to do a fine piece of work, I claim a little share of such responsibility to myself. I have no fears as to the results and am prophesying you will turn out a book that will attract wide attention.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

74.

Marshall, Oklahoma
May 22, 1942

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am sure you knew it before I did, but it has been hard for me not to tell you that I had been notified of the Knopf history fellowship. I got the word about a week and a half ago, but Mr. Knopf asked me not to mention it until today – when he would be ready to release his publicity. I came home at once and started in collecting experiences from the Old Timers; documents will wait until I can consult them, but these old people are falling off pretty fast.

I am very grateful for the help you gave me; I am sure your letter had a great deal of influence. And I think you know how important this award is to me. I have had a pretty hard time holding on since I lost my position at Canyon. (I know it was the best thing that ever happened to me, but it took several years for me to see that.) I know that I have done some good writing, but I have not realized any financial returns; writing of this kind should be done by a history professor, who considers it a part of his service to his college, or by a person like Grant Foreman with an independent fortune. This award of one hundred dollars a month for twelve months is not wealth – though it looks a little like it to me – but it means that all the resources of an important publisher will be devoted to making my work popular. You may have had me somewhat on your mind since I was the only one of your Ph.D.'s not satisfactorily placed, but I think you can take me off your worrying list from now on. At least if I don't "succeed" it will be my own fault – my own failure to write a book that Knopf can popularize. And I will burst a blood vessel rather than to let that happen.

Thank you for everything.

Sincerely,
Angie Debo.

Dr. E. E. Dale
Professor of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

75.

Marshall, Oklahoma
May 27, 1942

Dr. E. E. Dale
Professor of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

“Bustin” is the only word that expresses it. It was hard to hold in such important news, and I think it is the most important news that ever happened to me. Now if I can only live up to the opportunity –

I am spending a good bit of time talking with “old-timers” around Marshall. They are so friendly and helpful. They too are bustin’ to tell the story of their own great adventure. I thought I had better see them first, and leave documents till later; the documents will always be there, and the old people are dropping off pretty fast. (I shall never be happy until you and old Billy Fox get to meet each other.)

It was good of you to send me Mr. Knopf’s letters. They are extremely revealing and interesting. I confess that the same doubt had occurred to me. I was not at all sure that the project could qualify as history; it sounded as though it might be a carefully conceived piece of historical fiction. And yet it seems like the only possible compromise between the libel racket and the smug theory that all history should wait a century to be written. I am glad you resolved the doubt in my favor; in allaying Mr. Knopf’s scruples you have set my own at rest. And I am going to be just as careful not to put down anything not historically true as though I were writing about a literal town.

I hope you will have a happy summer.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

76.

June 5, 1942.

Dr. Angie Debo,
Marshall, Oklahoma.

Dear Angie:

I was delighted to have your good letter and am so happy about your good fortune. I know you are going to do a good job and \$100 a month for twelve months while not wealth does mean independence for a year at least.

I am leaving in the next day or two for Duke and am swamped with work so will write just a little today. Drop me a line at Duke University, History Department, if you can find time.

With best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

EED/Mc

E. E. Dale,
Professor of History.

Interviews with Angie Debo, #1.
Interview Date: October 23, 1981.
(Valencia-Weber and Matthews Collection, Box 2/ folder 2)

I wonder if I couldn't just say that everything that I put in Prairie City happened in some –

Let's talk about that –

Let me –

Talk about that. Because you know, some people who reviewed Prairie City, as you pointed out, assumed it was all about Marshall, and in the preface you make a point of not saying that.

Suppose you bring me a copy of Prairie City which you could find on top of that book case, I mean on top of that study – well anyhow – filing cabinet.

What made you want to write Prairie City the way you did?

Well, I thought that the actual characters didn't matter so much, and I had so much trouble with And Still the Waters Run that I thought if I would have fictitious characters do the actual things that people did, that it would be just as accurate historically.

This was an Alfred Knopf Fellowship, and Mr. Knopf asked Dr. Dale if that was really history, and Dr. Dale said he thought it was – just as much as though I had used real characters and used a real place. All of the things happened, except one or two things that I mentioned in my preface that happened in Kansas, but most of the things happened in this part of Oklahoma, and it didn't especially matter that the – well the story of the dog that jumped into the molasses barrel for instance. That was a real dog, and that was a real barrel of molasses; but it happened over at Hennessey, and the name of the settler was Meek – but there was no use of putting Mr. Meek's name in there. And the story about the German couple that didn't understand American pioneering, and the wife thought that her husband had stolen the spareribs – which was really an old-time frontier custom, to give somebody the spareribs when you butcher. That is, some of the spareribs – that's the reason they were called spareribs, I suppose. Well now, that happened near Bison, and Mr. C. T. Shades told me that story – but it really happened. I read the *Kingfisher Free Press* and it gave a good bit of information about events between Marshall and Hennessey, and so forth; and I read the Hennessey newspaper, and it gave a great deal of information. So all the things happened, and the conversations were real, or remembered conversations; and one could get the historical events from various sources. But it took the memory of the old-timers to give the techniques.

Now old-timers' memories are, of course, not always reliable when it comes to such things as chronologies – that's when they're especially bad, they tend to run things together and so forth, but the techniques are accurate. Now, in the terrible drought that followed the opening of the Cherokee Strip when the "Strippers" as they were called had such a terrible time living – probably

they would have abandoned the [Cherokee] Strip if they hadn't seen that the people down here, who had a few years to get started, had really prospered – and so, that made them hold on. But anyhow, the year when there were just a few heads of wheat and that was all, why, it was an old-timer – it was Mr. George Bebee that told me how they – you know how the binders were, I think – they had a platform that had a sickle in front, and the sickle cut the wheat, and the wheat fell on a moving canvas, and the canvas carried the cut wheat up to the place where it was bundled. Well, there wasn't enough cut wheat, and so Mr. Bebee told me how he stood on this platform and raked the few heads in and picked them up. Now, techniques like that were things that I could get from old-timers.

Also, I had Mr. Bebee's diary. He put everything in the diary, and it was in his diary that he told one day about – it's in Prairie City, I may not have the date exactly right – but one day he told about hauling wheat to Hennessey. That was that bountiful crop in 1897 when the "Strippers" for the first time had a crop, and got a good price. And he told in his diary one day, he had just one short entry, that he hauled so much wheat to Hennessey. And the next day he told about going to Enid to the circus. [Laughter] Now those things are – they're typical.

One of the things that fascinated me when I read Prairie City, one of the things that fascinated me was when you talked about the diet. The poor diet that they had in the very earliest days. What was it that they ate? Kaffir corn?

Yes, you see that's a grain sorghum – the first of the many grain sorghums that we use now, that had been brought to the Oklahoma pioneers, and that was available for them. I don't believe they could have stood it if it hadn't been for the kaffir. It was the first of the grain sorghums.

How often was that used to fill their diet?

Well, some of them just about lived on boiled kaffir, but maybe they could catch some rabbits, or some quail, or something like that. They probably didn't have any money to buy ammunition, but maybe they could set traps. I don't think they were really harmed by the inadequate diet. I don't know why they weren't harmed by it – perhaps they did manage to eat enough wild food.

Did they eat much beans?

Well I don't know, it could be that they raised some things in their gardens.

Because if they ate the beans and the corn that would produce more of a protein balance, so that they maybe weren't harmed as much. [Pause] So it was mostly the kaffir corn that you say they ate.

Now, I've got a story about the beginning of the crossroads store that was the beginning of Marshall. I got that from the widow of Sylvan Rice who was the founder of Marshall, and his descendants still live here and they're leading citizens of the community.

Is the store still here?

Well, no, the store has not been here for many years. It was moved when the town started. It was moved from the corner of his claim – he wouldn't allow his claim to be used as the town site – he loved his land too much. Now his granddaughter, Bernice, still owns the farm. It's just right across the road here.

What about your schooling? I know that you mention this in Prairie City and I talk about it in the paper. But I found – it seemed to me that in Prairie City when you talked about the way some school children felt about the possibility of learning even under those rude circumstances, I felt that that expressed the way you must have felt as a young girl, to be in school and not have many books but still have that excitement of learning kindled in you. I know you've talked before about how books were very precious to you.

Now, I think when you do this, you'll want to distinguish – you put the last part first in your paper, and you should've put the country school first. It was a rural school.

When I came to Oklahoma, when I was nine years old, in the Cherokee Strip which is just along – at the north edge of Marshall you go into the Cherokee Strip. By the way, while I'm talking about the Cherokee Strip, I probably should say this: That is an incorrect designation. Grant Foreman and a good friend of mine that is a fine historian are very unhappy to hear anybody call the area the "Cherokee Strip." The correct name of it is "Cherokee Outlet." The Cherokee Strip was really a little strip of land that when they made the border of Kansas, it happened to be on the Kansas side just a little strip of land and they paid the Cherokees for it. And this area out here that we all call the Cherokee Strip was really the Cherokee Outlet – but I can't keep from calling it the Cherokee Strip because everybody that settled it did. The people that settled it were called "Strippers" and they had signs on their covered wagons that said, "In God We Trusted, in Kansas We Busted, Now let us rip for the Cherokee Strip." It was just called "Cherokee Strip" all the time; and the celebrations are still called the Cherokee Strip celebrations. I couldn't use any expression except Cherokee Strip – although it is incorrect. Now, what did I start to say?

About when you came here when you were nine and you went to school . . .

Oh! – And the Cherokee Strip, you see, had been opened in 1893. It had been opened only six years before, and they had had that excellent wheat crop at a good price only two years before I came here at the age of nine. They were having three months of school, and some of the people were still living in sod houses. Now, when you crossed the border into this area which was opened in 1889 and had had four good years of getting established, they were having six months of school. But it was true what you said about the undereducated teachers and only six months and so forth, and the fact that – I could mention several people – I wasn't the only one – I could mention several people that really used that as the beginning of a career of intelligent citizenship, and aware of books and culture, and all kinds of things like that. Those children did have that; some of them did have that eagerness for learning; and they did love their books. In Prairie City,

it was after the high school started and actually that was in Marshall. That was a Marshall experience – how hard the Marshall people worked, the Marshall students worked. And we had only eight months of school instead of nine and our teachers were not undereducated; they tried to do everything for us that they had ever done in college. Most of them just had two years of college, but then they had walked among us in grandeur; they just brought to us all the things that we didn't have here.

Where did the teachers live?

The rural teachers always boarded with families unless they happened to live close enough so they could drive from home with their buggy. I think maybe Mrs. Noble, the first teacher I had when I came here when I was nine, drove with her buggy and her two little girls. I think she was a widow and probably lived on a farm somewhere close.

How many books were there in the classroom?

Were there enough books for each student?

We had to buy our own books. For most of the years – or a good many of the years – after statehood we bought our own books. So I had all the books that I used. I had an arithmetic, and a reader, and a history, and a speller, and a grammar, and a geography, and oh – I don't know, there might have been some others. I don't know, I had all the books I needed. My parents bought them.

In Prairie City, you talk about the struggle to build the high school, and that there was a need to finance it, and that more than one community had to be part of building and paying for the high school, and there were some people who weren't sure they wanted their money to pay for the high school. Can you tell me why they weren't sure?

Well, I don't know that that was quite it. I don't know that it was exactly the high school they objected to. The Marshall district was just the same area as any rural district, and the first community. The first rural district that joined the Marshall district was across in the Cherokee Strip, and this Mr. George Bebee, whose diary I read, was one of the active people in bringing it in – and he's the one who had such a big family. I think some of the people in that district that joined Marshall – I think they objected to joining Marshall – I think that was it, and I don't know whether they actually objected so much to the high school as they objected to the whole business of joining Marshall. But then in later years mostly, I guess in the 1920s, other rural districts also consolidated with Marshall.

Now that was a Marshall experience. And that kid wagon – did I tell you about that? Well they picked up the children in this rural district and they had a special vehicle built. It was kind of a long – like a truck – only it was roofed over, and it had seats along the sides, and that was where the children rode; and everybody called it the “kid wagon.” Of course, it was drawn by horses or mules.

From how far away would the kid wagon travel?

Here in what we called in those days, “Old Oklahoma,” where I lived because I lived south of Marshall; I lived in the part that was opened in 1889, the district was two miles east and west and three miles north and south. I believe that was the size of it. Now, I don’t know for sure just what the size of the district was across the line in the Cherokee Strip, because there was a kind of a fraction, as you know, along the line of the Cherokee Strip, and that first line of districts might not have had exactly the same number of square miles that they did throughout Garfield County. The boundary of Garfield County is the boundary of the Cherokee Strip.

The last time, I asked about making quilts and you said that making quilts was just like washing dishes – it was something a housewife had to know how to do. Could you say a little about your reminiscences of your mother’s workday?

Well, my mother was a very industrious little girl – I’m sure she was. She loved to piece quilts, and she pieced so many quilts when she was a girl that she still had quilts pieced that were not – that is she had the blocks. They were not made up into quilts. Not many years ago, I gave some of her blocks to my church for them to set up and quilt and give to people that needed quilts. She just had a lot of quilt blocks ready. Whenever she needed a quilt during her married life, she had those blocks already placed and when I got old enough, why of course I helped in quilting them. But when I was five years old – on my fifth birthday, they gave me a little thimble which was a little too big to fit my finger – although it was a tiny thimble. They put a little piece of cloth in there so it would fit my finger, and I started out on a quilt. But I wasn’t like my mother, so I never did finish that quilt. [Laughs] So one time after I grew up, we needed it, and I went to work and finished it and we pieced it and made a quilt out of it.

Do you remember your mother’s workday being particularly long in the real early days when you were five? What kind of workday did she have?

Well, she even helped in the field. She helped a great deal in the field; and women did – farm women did. I think most of them probably did. And of course she raised a garden and took care of the garden. She raised chickens and turkeys and then she also worked in the field. Now I remember when I was four years old we lived in Kansas at that time, but I remember that she did work in the field. They used to take the buggy out to the field so that we children would have a shade and we’d play around the buggy while she worked. After we came to Oklahoma she didn’t work in the field – but she did in Kansas, and a good many farm women did here.

At harvest time were there crews that came in that she had to cook for? Did she have to do special cooking at certain times of the year?

Well, I suppose in the very early days perhaps they would have in the wheat country – but we lived in Kansas in those days, so it wasn’t an Oklahoma experience, and it wasn’t a wheat

country; it was a corn country. When we came to Oklahoma, by that time they had what was called a cook shack that went around with the threshing machine, and a woman was employed to cook for the threshing crew; and so the farm women didn't cook for the threshing crew – not in my time – not here in this wheat country.

Of course this wasn't altogether a wheat country when I came here when I was a little girl. Wheat stands drought better than most crops do. Corn is the first crop that goes out of a country when you come to a drought cycle. Well, we had a drought cycle that started in 1910. My father always raised corn here in Oklahoma – here in this part of Oklahoma. But he raised some wheat, and that's when the threshing machine would come – sometime during the summer. You see, the wheat was cut and shocked. He cut it himself, and shocked it, and I don't know – maybe he had somebody hired to help him shock it. But, anyhow, it would be in shocks so that it would stand out against the rain until the threshing machine came around. And when the threshing machine came around, the cook shack came also, and they threshed the wheat and put it in the granary and my father, of course, hauled it to Hennessey. We didn't have a railroad at Marshall at that time. Well, he raised a lot of corn which he fed to his cattle and horses. We had a drought cycle that started about 1910. Hot winds hit the corn just when it was in tassel; and of course the pollen is on the tassel [and] you don't get any corn if your pollen is destroyed, so there wasn't any corn raised. And there were two or three years in there that we didn't have any corn; and this community never raised corn anymore. That was the end of corn. It became just almost entirely wheat although we still used this kaffir which was, as I said, a grain sorghum. And they brought in a number of other grain sorghums, and they used that for feed for their livestock.

So the railroad went through Hennessey? That was the closest railroad outlet for your father's crops?

Yes, Hennessey was the closest railroad outlet until the railroad came to Marshall in 19[02]. Well, the date in Prairie City is the correct date; I put the Marshall story for the Prairie City railroad. The name of it was Denver, Enid, and Gulf, but the advertising didn't stop with Denver – it went as far as the West Coast. Actually, they managed to get it between Enid and Guthrie after a while. The date that I put in there for the first wheat that was sold at the elevator in Prairie City is the correct date for Marshall.

We always had railroad transportation, such as it was, from that time on. Finally the Santa Fe bought it. Well, after a few years the Santa Fe bought it and they built it on through to Kiowa, Kansas, and it connected the two, and still does connect the two main lines of the Santa Fe: the north-south line that goes to Texas through Guthrie and Oklahoma City, and the western line that goes to California. It was a very important passenger road for a while. Of course, it has no passenger traffic now, but it's a good railroad. The Santa Fe have kept it up all the time. It's not like the Rock Island.

Dale-Debo Correspondence

1943-1984

(Continuing correspondence from the Edward Everett Dale Collection, Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Libraries. used with their permission. From Folder #4 of the OSU Library's copy of the correspondence, Collection #94-023.)

1. DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

LARAMIE, WYOMING

January 5, 1943

Professor Edward Everett Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Professor Dale:

A special award of \$2,500 is to be made in 1943 by the American Association of University Women as a recognition of distinguished achievement by a woman scholar. Applications will not be received for it; the award will be made by the Committee on Fellowship Awards with the advice of leading scholars in the various fields. I should very much like to have your suggestions of one or two outstanding women historians whom you would consider worthy of such an award.

I will present the names at the meeting of the Fellowship Committee on January 25 next.

Sincerely yours,

Laura A. White

LAW:bj

2.

January 11, 1943

Dr. Laura A. White
University of Wyoming
Department of History
Laramie, Wyoming

Dear Dr. White:

I was much pleased to have your kind letter, and should like to call your attention to an Oklahoma woman that I think has done and is doing very fine work in the field of History. This is Dr. Angie Debo, of Marshall, Oklahoma. Miss Debo took a doctor's degree here with me a few years ago and a book, The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic, based on her doctor's dissertation, was awarded the Dunning Prize by the American Historical Association. Since that time she has written a volume published by the Princeton University Press dealing with the Five Civilized Tribes under the title, And Still the Waters Run. Her third volume, The Road to Disappearance, was published last year by the University of Oklahoma Press.

She has received some grants from the Social Science Research Council, and this year holds the Knopf Scholarship in History and is engaged in the preparation of a volume on the History and Development of a typically western town. About two years ago the Writers and Newspaper Women of Oklahoma voted her an award as the woman who had done the most outstanding literary work in the state during the past year. I am calling attention to Miss Debo because she is a very outstanding person in the field of History, but is without any particular academic connections and so might otherwise remain unnoticed.

How is everything at Wyoming these days? Perhaps you have received an announcement of my son's marriage during the Christmas holidays. Rosalie and I are both much pleased. Kindly give our very best wishes to Dr. and Mrs. Larson, the Nussbaums, and all the other good friends we met while there.

With every good wish, in which my wife heartily joins me, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale
Graduate Professor of History

EED/jo

3.

Marshall, Oklahoma
May 18, 1943

Dear Dr. Dale:

Do you remember the photograph of a Creek fullblood home you needed for your Grayson book, but would not use because I had already planned to use it? There were, in fact, two pictures in the Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs or of the Dawes Commission, but I had one for AND STILL THE WATERS RUN and the other for the Creek history. I always thought it was extra good of you not to use them – too good, in fact, for I did not rightly have a corner on them.

Well, it happens that I did not use but one of them, for the Princeton Press decided not to use illustrations. I have always intended to tell you about it, but somehow have neglected to do so. Do you still think you could use the picture? I have the print already made. Would you like to have it? I will send it to you, if you would. But perhaps you already have a print.

I have been greatly interested in the Grayson book. I hope the Oklahoma Press will get to the place of publishing it soon.

Sincerely,
Angie Debo.

Dr. E. E. Dale
Professor of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

4.

May 25, 1943

Miss Angie Deboe
Marshall
Oklahoma

Dear Miss Deboe:

Yes, indeed I should be very happy to have the print if you care to send it to me. I do not think I have a good picture of a Creek fullblood home and when and if the Grayson book is published I really should have one.

How is your work coming with Knopf? I tried to buy a copy of your History of Tulsa but found the whole edition had sold out the first day and that the next one will not be ready for a few weeks yet.

Come to see me any time you are down this way.

With every good wish, I am

Sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale
Graduate Professor of History

5.

Marshall, Oklahoma
October 12, 1943

Dear Dr. Dale:

The last word of the preface is written. It remains only to read the whole manuscript and then box it up and send it to Mr. Knopf. How I hope he will like it!

You remember the original plan I am sure – since you never forget anything that your students are doing or trying to do. It is the story of PRAIRIE CITY, a composite Oklahoma town, which is a history of the United States in microcosm. I thought of you while I was writing it. It is the one book I have written that I felt belonged to you in its content. I hope it belongs to you in the treatment, but I am not sure of that; I am just now in the stage of weariness when it sounds like drivel.

But assuming it is not so bad as it seems to me at this minute – I always feel that way about a book at this stage – may I dedicate it to you? I should consider it an honor.

Sincerely,
Angie Debo.

Dr. E. E. Dale
Professor of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

6.

October 14, 1943

Dr. Angie Debo
Marshall, Oklahoma

Dear Angie,

I am indeed glad to know that the last word of the book has been written and that it is to be shipped off to Mr. Knopf immediately. I am sure he will like it.

I am deeply touched and very much flattered that you wish to dedicate the book to me. You, of course, have my permission to do so, and I shall regard it as a very high honor; in fact, it is one of those things that come to a man only about once in his life. I shall be very much interested in seeing the volume once it is published, and I am always interested in what you are doing and what you plan to do next.

Drop me a line when you can find time. With every good wish, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale
Graduate Professor of History

EED:ta

7.

St. Mary's Hospital
Enid, Okla. May 11, 1944

Dear Dr. Dale:

I have an advance copy of Prairie City for you which I will get to you when I can. I had it packed in my brief case ready to take it down to you, for I was going to do a few days' work in the Phillips Collection. Then my father became suddenly and seriously ill. We have him in the Enid hospital, and we have no way of knowing how it will turn out. He is eighty-one years old. But I wanted you to know I have the book ready for you, and will send or take it when I can.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo

8.

May 15, 1944

Dr. Angie Debo
St. Mary's Hospital
Enid, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Debo:

I received a copy of your book and have read it with a great deal of pleasure. I skimmed through pretty hastily, however, and want to give it a more careful reading soon. I am much flattered that you should dedicate the book to me. Thank you so much.

I am awfully sorry to learn of your father's illness. I do hope that he is better by this time. I realize that a man of his age is not able to meet illness as well as a younger person, and I have every hope that he has improved by this time.

I do want your autograph in Prairie City when I get the chance to get it. Again, thanking you and with every good wish for you and yours, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

EED:ta

E. E. Dale
Research Professor of History

9.

July 27, 1944

Dr. Angie Debo
Marshall, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Debo:

Before Dr. Dale left for California, he brought three glass plates and two pictures from the Phillips Collection from which I was to have glossy prints made for you. The photographer said he could make the glossy prints from the plates for fifty cents each, but that he would have to order a particular kind of film to make prints from the pictures and each print would cost about two and a half. Needless to say I brought the pictures back. I thought perhaps you would like to borrow the pictures and then return them after you had finished with them. Dr. Dale said he was perfectly willing to lend you anything from the Collection. If you will just let me know what you want done about the two pictures, I shall attend to it at once.

As you know Dr. Dale is working at the Huntington Library at San Marino, California, this summer. I believe he is enjoying the work, although he writes that he was pretty lonely at first. Mrs. Dale stayed here in Norman, and he is accustomed to having her and his friends around a good part of the time. Mrs. Dale tells me that he doesn't care for the artificiality of California. How is your work going? Do you get much done on these terribly hot days?

Very sincerely yours,

10.

June 14, 1945

Dr. Angie Debo
Oklahoma A. and M. College
Department of History
Stillwater, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Debo:

This is just a little note to tell you that I reached home safely and to say once more how much I enjoyed my visit to the A. and M. College and the privilege of seeing you again and of speaking to your class.

I always come away from the A. and M. campus feeling very much lifted up because of the great hospitality that is always shown me there and the very flattering way in which I am always received.

Remember me most kindly to all of the good friends there and do come see us the first chance you get. I profited a great deal by talking with you about the Five Civilized Tribes. With every good wish in which Rosalie most heartily joins me, I am

Sincerely your friend,

E. E. Dale
Research Professor of History

EED:jn

Interviews with Angie Debo, #4.

Interview Date: December 16, 1981.

(Valencia-Weber and Matthews Collection, Box 2/ folder 5)

Coming back to Oklahoma, and then going out to another pioneer region the Texas Panhandle, and finding that I didn't have time for the kind of research that I had hoped to continue after my year at the University of Chicago, changed my field of interest. And that's the reason why from that time on, my interest was local history. I never did anything more with this International Relations; although I did take that as my minor in Chicago, and also in the University of Oklahoma. But I didn't do any writing in that field. And whatever writing that I did when I was at the West Texas State Teachers College, was all in the pioneer field; and I did publish a few things in the newspapers and so on. And I told you about my surprising good fortune with the so-called short story, and that was on a pioneer subject.

And that's the reason why that when I decided to get help – when I found out that I didn't quite have the technique that it required to go into professional writing – that's the reason why I went to the University of Oklahoma; because I had changed my field of interest. Now I didn't expect to drop my teaching, I just expected that I would write a little on the side. Only that I would learn how to do it at the University of Oklahoma, and as I told you I didn't learn because they didn't have any way of teaching anybody there. And I already knew how to do historical writing; and so what writing I did at the University of Oklahoma was all in the historical field. But it had to do with local history.

So when Dr. Dale suggested the subject of the Choctaws, that dovetailed very well with some decisions you'd already been making about where your priorities would lie in your research?

Well now I'm glad you mentioned that because I did want to say that in my own experience I knew about the development of a pioneer community, and a pioneer state. I knew about the homesteaders' experiences. And at Canyon, I learned about the development from the cow country experience. So I had the homesteader and the cow country, and when I went to the University of Oklahoma, and Dr. Dale suggested that I write a history of the Choctaws, and I didn't know anything in particular about the Indians, and didn't know anything about the Choctaws, that fills three subjects in which I have written the rest of my life – that took three. So I'm glad you mentioned that.

I could make a very pretty story about how I was interested in Indians was the reason I started writing about them – because my grandfather had joined the gold rush to California, and I grew up on “When I Crossed the Plains to California.” He left Independence, Missouri, and followed that northern trail. It was a time of peace on the plains, and so Indians were present, and he was extremely interested in them. And he told me and my brother many stories about his contacts with Indians. He never said “an Indian” though. He always said, “a Shoshoni,” or “a Sioux,” or “a Delaware” came to camp.

He distinguished between the Indians and knew them apart. He did run into an Indian war in northern Nevada. After he was at Great Salt Lake and cut across northern Nevada, he ran into an Indian war which didn't affect the company which he had joined in Independence, Missouri, but did affect another company they had contact with very much. But, except for that, his contact with the Indians was friendly; and of course I was very interested in it.

And when I was nine years old and came to Oklahoma, I hoped I'd see some Indians, and was very disappointed because I didn't. Because all I saw was homesteaders and maybe a few cowboys who had become homesteaders. So when Dr. Dale suggested that I write about the Choctaws, the only reason I took up that subject was just because there was some material there for a dissertation.

Now I think I had better go on with what I had started about my reasons for writing books:

I told you when you were here last week, I told you that I always chose a subject that I didn't know anything about. And I told you I was entirely unaware that when I quit my work at Canyon and started to write a book, I was entirely unaware of what I'd write about, and didn't decide until I went to Norman and sort of talked to the University [of Oklahoma] Press people and so on. And that was true all the way through. After I wrote And Still the Waters Run, and before it was published during those four years that the University [of Oklahoma] Press was trying to find a publisher, I got another grant-in-aid from the Social Science Research Council, and wrote a history of the Creeks. Now, my only reason for writing a history of the Creeks was because I didn't know anything about the Creeks – and nobody else did either! The Creek history was a complete blank from the time that they settled in Oklahoma until the end of the tribal period. Their history was just almost a complete blank. And if anybody tried to write about them, he was so unaware of the situation in the Creek Nation that what he wrote was not accurate at all. It was just as though a person would try to write a biography of George Washington that had never heard about the [American] Revolution, and didn't know anything at all about the United States – had never heard of the United States! If you worked hard to try to find out the events in George Washington's life, you wouldn't give a very good interpretation of those with a lack of background. Whatever was written about the Creeks lacked that background, and that's the reason why – the only reason why – I chose to write about the Creeks. And I remember thinking that because the Choctaws were peaceable and – using the white man's word, "progressive" – very anxious to acquire everything the white man had that might help them. The Creeks were warlike and conservative. Well, I found out later that the Creeks were not as warlike as I thought they were. They were just very earnest at defending themselves. Anyhow, I did think that that would be a tribe that would be different from the Choctaws, so I worked on that history of the Creeks. And I finished it, I believe, in 1939. But that was my reason for choosing it. That's The Road to Disappearance. And my reason for giving it that kind of a title was because no one was interested in Indian history at that time. If I had called it The History of the Creeks, nobody would have been interested in it at all. Now there is an interest in Indian history, and if I had just named it The History of the Creek Nation it would be a good title. But that would not have been a good title then. Well anyhow, that's the reason why I chose that subject of the Creeks. I did so much work and I had so many notes that I had to condense the things I learned. I had to condense them so extensively to get them into one book. Even so, the book is a little too large to be conveniently handled or to have been economically sold. It was just a little too large. But I could have written

10 or 12 volumes and filled it with the history of the Creeks from the Civil War on. I had that much overflow in my notes, and I still have those notes.

And that's the reason I wrote about Tulsa. I could have taken any section of the Creek country and could have written a book about it; but I didn't feel that there was any section of the Creek country that had any particular interest outside that community except Tulsa. So that's why I wrote Tulsa. I just took the overflow. I went through my notes and I pulled out all that had to do with the Tulsa area, and used those notes for my history of Tulsa.

And then I wrote Prairie City. And I don't know how I learned that Alfred Knopf, who, of course, was interested in making money as any publisher is, had a strong intellectual interest and wanted to do whatever he could, along with making money, in presenting intellectual conditions or facts of the history of the United States. And I don't know how I learned it, but it might be that Grant Foreman told me. Anyhow, I learned of this fellowship that he gave once a year to somebody who would write on a subject of U.S. history. And I remembered the difficulty in getting And Still the Waters Run published because of the names of ordinary grafters and the names of people in high positions who also were implicated in this unholy business. I thought that I could write the history of a small town. And the reason why, perhaps, that I became interested in a small town was that one of the courses I took at the University of Oklahoma required a biography of one's hometown. And I did learn something about Marshall in that term theme. So I thought it would be nice to write a history of a small town like Marshall. But instead of using the real people that I knew so well in Marshall, that I would have fictitious characters. They would all be real people from outside like Dennis Flynn and Roy Cashion and so forth. They would all be real people. But the people in my town would not be real people. They would be fictitious characters, and the events would happen in Marshall. Well, I made my application for the fellowship, and Mr. Knopf wrote to Dr. Dale and asked him if that would really be a history. And Dr. Dale, of course, said it would because that was the kind of writing that Dr. Dale liked best. Dr. Dale didn't like to tell nasty things about living people anyway and make himself unpopular; and so he said, yes, that would be a real history. And so that year I won the history fellowship from Knopf, and that was the reason why I wrote Prairie City. Now Mr. Knopf never objected to but one little item in my book that he felt I couldn't prove, and I did leave that out willingly. Otherwise, it went just the way that I had written it and I stated in my preface. But people don't read the preface. I stated in my preface that it was not the history of my own town – that I put in the location, and the dates, and such statistics as population. I used my own town because it was more convenient. But aside from that the events occurred in this part of Oklahoma except for one or two things that occurred outside, and I mentioned the things that occurred outside. For instance, about the pony that wouldn't eat corn or oats because he got sick of eating corn or oats. He just wanted to be tied out and eat good old prairie grass! Now my mother told that story about western Kansas, but I stated that in my preface. So that's the reason why that I wrote Prairie City. Does that make it clear?

Diaries:
March 4, 1940 – May 20, 1942
(Angie Debo Collection, Box 5/folder 3)

March 4, 1940

I have been reading the diary of an eight-year-old. It deals with trivial things, but because those things loomed large in the experience of a child it has a certain elemental integrity. The child was named Angie Debo, but she is as far gone from the living world as the brother who lies in the cemetery. I can easily understand why she stopped her writing, for I know how lazy was that little girl of long ago. The nightly composition – even the uncensored sketchy writing that made up each day's entry – became a chore. The deterioration in penmanship is eloquent of an enthusiasm that faded. But when I read it again after all these years I do so wish she had kept it up. I wonder if it would be possible for me to keep faith with that little girl of long ago and write a sequel.

March 5, 1940

Yesterday I decided to copy the little diary, and today I finished it. Nobody but me would ever care to read it, but I have worked so much with historical documents that I have a mania for preserving every word written on yellowed paper. Following the pattern set by the little Angie Debo of long ago I hasten to record that it was a lovely spring day, that the town's children were swarming, and that we were visited by Sadie Goodnight, Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Payne, and a most persistent soap salesman. I myself called on Mrs. Griffin and Mrs. Rogers and I am ready to commit myself to the effect that Mrs. Rogers is the sort of person I should like for a friend. Perhaps I may in time mark this page with red letters.

March 11, 1940

I took a trip to the City [Oklahoma City] to see Miss Eula Fullerton in regard to some work they are about to offer me on the WPA writers' project. I hope they do not find out how desperately I need the work. I borrowed money for railroad fare, spent fifty cents for a bed in the Y. W. C. A. dormitory, and used various expedients to keep anyone from seeing me eat sandwiches from my bag. I spent a pleasant evening with lovely young Bertha Lee Darling, who is rejoicing over her first job, and with my practical-minded square-shooting friend, Marie Garland. (The last visit cost ten cents of my precious capital for street car fare, but I could hardly refuse to go out there when she knew I was in town.)

March 13, 1940

I spent most of the day filling out the intricate application required by the WPA regulations. I did not sleep much last night; I am so distressed about the fate of Finland. There is nothing I can do, but there were so many things that could have been done by those who will now join in the funeral orations.

March 23, 1940

I got a letter from my literary agent saying he had read THE ROAD TO DISAPPEARANCE and is enthusiastic about it. I have been floating on air ever since. My father – bless him! – made a special trip from down town to bring the blue envelope when he found it in the mail.

March 25, 1940

Mother and I washed this morning, and this afternoon I finished all the sewing I could find to do. I am as ready as I shall ever be to undertake that work in Oklahoma City, but I have never heard a word since I took that fruitless trip down there, not even an acknowledgement of my application.

March 27, 1940

I finally got my letter from the WPA office at Oklahoma City this morning. They are waiting on word from Washington. Perhaps they are as tired of waiting as I am. . . .

April 5, 1940

Another day wasted in waiting. Two book MSS on which nobody is trying to decide and that WPA job of which the papers are collecting dust on somebody's desk in Washington.

April 13, 1940

I have been under an increasing strain, waiting on my two manuscripts and the promised job at Oklahoma City. There has been nothing but strain for more than a year (and nothing but drudgery and worry for eight years before that), and it had become unbearable. But I faced the thing and thought it through this morning, and perhaps I can accept it and go on. I feel a release of the tension at least. . . .

April 19, 1940

I got a letter from my literary agent saying the MacMillan people have rejected my Creek history. I have been suffering seriously from crushed wormery. . . .

April 20, 1940

. . . I got a letter from the WPA office in Oklahoma City calling me down there for a conference Monday. I think something is really going to develop there. I was beginning to think nothing would ever happen.

April 21, 1940

. . . I came down here [Oklahoma City] on the train. . . . I came to the YWCA because I can get a comfortable bed in a room with three other women for fifty cents. (I am going on borrowed money anyhow.)

April 22, 1940

I went to the WPA office which I found in a bad case of too much busyness. They managed to take time off from running around in circles to tell me I am starting to work today though they were too rushed to tell me what the work is. I am at the head of the Federal Writers' Project for Oklahoma, and I have a vague indication that I am supposed to prepare a guide book. There is a good bit of material that was stirred up by former workers and apparently failed to jell. It is in a garret covered with dust and I spent the day harmlessly examining it. I can put in my time there to good advantage till they can take time to get my project set up. It was, of course, a surprise to me to learn that my work starts today, but I can use the money. I will go home Saturday after my clothes. . . .

April 23, 1940

I got me a room today. It is with a Mrs. Newlin at 428 NE 14th. Mrs. Newlin is an elderly widow, intelligent and alert and friendly. I know I shall like her, and my room is everything a room should be.

I talked today with Mr. Lookabaugh, my immediate superior, and I like him very much. He is modest and sincere and with a certain sensitivity that should give him the low-down on a good many things.

April 24, 1940

I moved in my room today. I like it, and Mrs. Newlin better than ever.

April 25, 1940

I spent the day at Norman in a meeting of the heads of all the projects sponsored by the university. Dr. Wardell presided and a better job I never saw done. All the employment heads were there, and there was much mutual clarification of personnel problems. I have never seen an organization at work that impressed me as favorably as this one does. . . .

April 26, 1940

I went home this afternoon, AND THE CONTRACT WAS THERE FROM THE PRINCETON PRESS. I pinch myself but I do not seem to wake up. It has been four years since I almost killed myself trying to get that book done in a hurry so it could be published and perhaps do a little good.

April 27, 1940

It rained nearly all day today. I was a little troubled about how I would make it to the station, but it cleared off just in time. Everything is lovely, so clean and washed. It is the best rain we have had since the drought set in last fall.

I was so glad to be at home I thought I had a good excuse not to go to S. S., but thirteen-year-old Harold Congdon came to inquire whether we were going to have it. I almost said, "I hardly think anyone will be there," but my guardian angel punched me just in time, and I said, "Why I think you and I can have it. We can mark our attendance on the register and take our collection. You can be the superintendent and I can be the teacher and we will have our lesson." I saw his face begin to light up at the prospect of marking ourselves as THE SUNDAY SCHOOL. So we went over there, and he lighted the fire and rang the bell and changed the record on the board and got out the lesson leaves, feeling so important. He selected a song and I played it and we read the responses. When he was out of the room Mr. McCall came in, glanced around and prepared to leave since "nobody was there," but I told him I hated to disappoint the kid. He rose nobly to the occasion and entered into the service with as much zest as though his life depended upon it. So now the bulletin board shows an attendance of 3 and a collection of 15 cents, and young Harold goes around an inch taller than he was. He stopped in on the way home and carried on intensive research as to what makes a typewriter go and how one mounts a coyote skin. Boys are such friendly animals.

April 30, 1940

I attended a meeting in the Black Hotel where a big-wig from Washington came out to tell us about training our workers. His name is Black and he is a moron who has been to college. I could win a bet that he majored in education and that his alma mater was Peabody or Teachers College, Columbia. He could use more big words with no meaning than anybody I have heard since the dear days of attending teachers' meetings. After being tortured a good share of the day I am more tired than I should be if I had worked. (I wonder what Mr. Lookabaugh thinks of him.)

May 1, 1940

Nothing in particular happened today. Oh, yes, I met Mrs. Zoe Tilghman. I had often heard of her, but had never met her before. She strikes me as a rather futile person with a faint literary aura in no way related to serious writing.

May 2, 1940

I learned that it is verboten to write any letter from my office except to Mr. Lottinville about technical details of publishing the guide book, and to my own workers. I cannot correspond with the Washington office of the Federal Writers' Project and I cannot ask Bob Goodman, for instance, about oil field slang. I know that I cannot work effectively with the director of my project at Washington if everything has to go through this endless relaying system, and I know I cannot get people in the state to contribute the information I need for the Guide if it comes from Ron Stephens in a form so stiff it creaks. Such is red tape!

I attended another meeting of heads of projects who met to discuss employment problems with Mr. Spivey. Again I was impressed with the high quality of those who are directing these projects. If they do not accomplish effective work it is not their fault. I hope they do not become smothered in red tape.

May 3, 1940

I am still going in circles trying to discover and keep up with the technical requirements of my job. I am thoroughly disgusted. All these people are industrious and they all seem pleasant and courteous, but it seems to me all their time and strength is frittered away in satisfying formalities. As much work as I have done in Indian Office records (and some War Department material) I never actually realized until I got on the inside what the word bureaucracy meant. Probably it was something like this that made the British fail so miserably in Norway. These poor things seem to think if they are everlastingly scratching around to get forms filled out and sent to Washington they have been creatively employed. I have been here almost two weeks, and everybody has been willing to help me, but not once has anybody sat down and given me an intelligent description of what I am supposed to do. I am beginning to wonder if I shall be allowed to work at the thing I was hired for. I am a writer and a scholar, but if I am going to spend my time chasing forms they can have my job; a moron – or a bureaucrat – could do it just as well. I finally decided to be patient until I get my secretary. It may be possible she can relive me of this detail; if she cannot, I do not need money badly enough to spend my life in this way.

May 4, 1940

Today I got my secretary, and if I had hand-picked her myself she could not have suited me better. She is a Mrs. Schwalbe, a widow with a grown daughter, and she is putting herself through high school. She is intelligent and industrious and refined. She has a voice as sweet as Ruth Lowes and the most willing and beautiful spirit. Best of all she is familiar with this all-important red tape and will be able to take that off my shoulders. She is the best thing that ever happened to me.

Another worker presented herself, though she is not due till Monday. She is a Miss Allen. She is very feeble and has worlds of trouble and a vast desire to waste people's time. I told her shortly that the fewer things of that sort we discussed the better, and that if she would come Monday I would give her the necessary instructions to carry out her job. After she left I realized I had hardly been fair to her in not explaining how very bad are the personality traits she is so eager to drag forth. She will never get a job in private employment if she keeps on like this, and if there is even one chance in a million that she can be taught it is my duty to teach her. I resolved to take her off by herself when she comes Monday and remove all her skin in small pieces and hang it all up on the fence to dry.

May 5, 1940

Mrs. Newlin asked me down to breakfast this morning and then I went to church with her. (It is the Campbellite Church, and I have foresworn Campbellites because they are so intolerant.) I visited a very wonderful Sunday School class and listened to an excellent sermon. I think probably I shall attend here while I am in the City if they will stay off their favorite tirades against

other more religious bodies. I think perhaps in a large church like this they will. At least their pastor and his wife both show every sign of having been to college.

May 6-10, 1940

Nothing much happened except getting started with my workers. We had a welcome rain, on Wednesday I think it was.

May 11, 1940

I went home today. I know I can not enjoy myself so much again for at least a year. Mother came down town to meet me, looking so lovely and sweet. She took me around to the flower garden, and there just weren't any words. Great heavy white and pink peonies, prim little pinks, rich glowing snapdragons, and roses everywhere, and all the mocking birds and orioles singing at once. We talked a little while and then I worked in the garden till night. The soil was just right, warm and moist and rich. I set out a petunia, a rich purple blooming one, and the cannas and the dahlias, which we had set out in boxes to let them get a good start this cold spring. Fortunately some tamaracks we had ordered to replace some that failed to grow happened to come in today and so we planted them. It was all so pleasant. I never saw my father look so happy and sturdy and my mother so sweet and lovely. I am sorry there are so many wars in the world, but I cannot help them, and when I work in the garden they seem unreal.

May 12, 1940

I enjoyed Sunday School so much today. Della Clark – bless her! – is going to teach my class, and she did it so well. I feel that I shall not be missed at all. The girls were nice enough to give me a handkerchief shower, too. I am not going to use any till I learn each one so I can remember who gave it to me.

Edith Zoellner Hardaway and her husband were nice enough to bring me back to the City. It was a very pleasant drive, it kept me from having to leave so early in the evening, and incidentally it saved me some money. I hope I shall soon be at the point where the last will not loom so important as it does now.

May 13, 1940

I still am not sure whether I can make this job work or not. I should enjoy it so much if only I could get to it, but there are so many meetings and so much red tape that I have so little time for the work I was hired to do. And there is no justification for the project at all, if I cannot prepare a guide book.

Today I spent the morning in a meeting – Mrs. Spofford came up from the regional office in New Orleans – and this afternoon we were supposed to go visit two other projects – the nursery school and a sewing project. I stood around and champed and frothed until I wore myself out. There was so much at my office I wanted to do. I hope I may work tomorrow unmolested.

October 7, 1940

I quit this for good cause – had to do some last minute revision on AND STILL THE WATERS RUN, and just about worked my head off. Then after a little breathing spell it was proofs, and last – and worst – the index. But the index went off by air mail yesterday and tonight for the first time in many weary weeks I can relax.

Mrs. Stella Hanau from Washington came today to advise me on the guide book. I think her visit is going to be very helpful.

October 8, 1940

I spent the morning with Mrs. Hanau at the office, and the afternoon at a conference in Miss Fullerton's room. The conference revealed to me how many former instructions I had received – some of them in writing – were wrong. The trouble with this organization is that nobody on earth is smart enough to make it work, and if he happens to want to do something else – like writing a Guide Book – it is still more hopeless. . . .

October 9, 1940

Mr. John Oskison came today to be my assistant. It is his job to do the remainder of the writing while I take care of the employees and the red tape. I hope it works out. He is a great writer, but his writing has been of a little different type. But since the powers above have ruled it so, I am going to take a lot of relaxation in not having to do the drudgery of writing.

October 10, 1940

I have been doing my best to benefit from Mrs. Hanau, but today she wore me down. I am so disgusted I am not in condition to do anything but count the minutes until she gets back to Washington so I can settle down to work.

She is one of these tense, unquiet people, not stupid and not vicious, but living in a strain and putting everybody else in a strain. She probably thinks when she gets people into that condition she has them working. She talks loud and hammers every word into one's ear drums, she puts her face right up against her victim's, and she pounds the air with both hands so close to one's face one wants to dodge. When she has a cigarette in her hand it is worse. Today, after listening in that tense and unnatural manner all the forenoon, I suddenly wilted. I pushed my chair back and put the corner of a desk between us, and just tried to get away. The worst of it is that I have no possible relaxation at lunch time for she hammers every minute with hands and voice when we try to eat. I thought today I would try to pick out a large table so I might be protected a little, but only a small one was left. I actually erected a barrier with my arm, but she hammered around it. And she says she is going to stay another week.

I guess there just isn't any such thing as a Government project that can operate efficiently. It just naturally puts the wrong kind of people in power.

October 11, 1940

I woke up about three o'clock in the night, and that woman's hands and voice were still hammering into my head. But after a while I went to sleep and by morning the hammering had gone. But it is going on again now. I wish I could be her boss for a few minutes. She poked me with her fingers today as she hammered. She hadn't actually laid hands on me before. All the time under the other things I am doing I am feeling her poke me. . . .

October 19, 1940

Mrs. Hanau has gone back to Washington. I am so glad to be rid of her, but strangely enough I was beginning to like her before she left. She is really a lovable person. BUT I SINCERELY HOPE I MAY NEVER SEE HER AGAIN.

I actually went down town and bought me a pair of dress shoes and a pretty winter dress, the first of either I have bought for three years. It will be nice wearing something new, though I managed to keep my old clothes patched up until I wasn't seriously shabby when I had to go out among people with incomes. I also got a gift for Laurine Thomas, who is soon to be a bride. I really got it for her mother, whom I love. I scarcely know Laurine.

October 29, 1940

I bought a new typewriter yesterday, and I am using it for the first time this evening. It runs so smoothly, and the lines are so nice and straight. I wrote two books on my old one. Somehow I feel a strong attachment for a typewriter on which I have written books. There is no machine with which one enters into such apparent companionship. It is almost like the horse one rides, and of course every rider loves his pony. If I could afford to be sentimental and if I had the place to store it, I should never trade in an old typewriter. But I let Pegasus go after I had finished the CHOCTAW REPUBLIC, and now after AND STILL THE WATERS RUN and THE ROAD TO DISAPPEARANCE I have parted with the faithful Blitzen. I hope my association with my new friend, Ananias, will be as fruitful.

I went to Norman today to see Mr. Lottinville and straighten out one of the tangles into which any WPA project is always knotting itself. I keep thinking all the time I can do something real, but always I am balked. I do not suppose I ever thought state socialism or any other kind of socialism would work, but the more I see a Government organization trying to function the more I think as many things as possible should stay in private hands. It is inevitable in this age that the Government multiply its functions, but until it can develop a better technique it had better go as easy as possible.

October 30, 1940

I am reading Cherokee Cavaliers, which I bought at Norman yesterday. What a joy it is to buy a book when I need it! It takes a good bit of resourcefulness to be happy without any money at all.

I worked harder and left more on my desk when I left than I have for a long time – the penalty of my few hours at Norman yesterday.

January 1, 1940

. . . People who get their souls warped when they are little never seem to straighten them out – just as my golf used to grow worse by practice because I did everything wrong and practice confirmed it.

January 2, 1941

Mrs. Tilghman has been intriguing to get a supervisory position on the project. Her last scheme is getting up a petition and getting all the disgruntled and the usual cheerful petition-signers to join her in asking the employment office to do something to me. I ignored it for a time, and then today I went down and talked with Mrs. Phelps and Mrs. Brown at the district office. I am glad I did it. Mrs. Phelps advised me to tell Mr. Lookabaugh and Miss Fullerton, and Mrs. Brown advised me to issue her a formal warning. She and any other American citizen have a perfect right to petition anyone anytime anywhere, but she is wasting a lot of time that she might use working. It really disturbs the steady people on the project. When they come to me about it, I just thank them and tell them not to worry, but I can tell that they do.

January 3, 1941

Poor Mrs. Schumate, who needs to be worked on by a psychiatrist, showed me some of her poems and stories today. She really has something that it takes to write, but it is not evenly done. I wish she had some way of taking a course with Stanley Vestal.

She refuses to take correction and it seems impossible for her to work in a group. She was so angry at me she just sat and seethed for days. Then when she finally drove me to the place where I had to ask for her discharge, she was so relieved that she became happy and sunny spirited. She is spending the few days until the discharge becomes effective in happily discussing her writings with me and asking my advice. And when she really finds she is out of work, she will be desperately trailing from one project to another.

I went to Norman to confer with Dr. Wardell and Mr. Lottinville about the GUIDE BOOK. I enjoyed myself thoroughly, for besides the business I saw Helen Burton, Dr. Dale, the Emorys, and several less important people. Sleepy again. (Last night I was so sleepy I was afraid to read the day's page in VICTORIOUS LIVING.)

Mr. Lottinville wants my ROAD TO DISAPPERANCE so badly I promised to wire for it tonight, but I am so tired I guess I'll wait till tomorrow.

January 5, 1941

I went home this week-end. I had a lovely time as always, but I was very lazy and got nothing done. My dear mother is so generous and unselfish I am always imposing on her unless I watch myself. We made some candy and she made me bring back all that was left.

I rode up on the train with our preacher boy. He told me that Eula Mae Goodnight and Donna Ruth Clark had joined the church the Sunday before. I am so happy about it.

On the way back the train was crowded from Guthrie on, and I rode with a charming boy from Pawhuska who is a freshman at the University of Oklahoma. I like young people.

January 10, 1941

I gave Mrs. Tilghman a formal reprimand today. It is issued on a certain form, and it goes to the employment office and remains a part of her permanent record. I have been too patient with her. She once had a supervisory position on the project, but since I have been in charge she has only a relief status. I realized that her situation was rather difficult, especially since she is a writer who has really received a good bit of recognition in this state, and I did everything I could to treat her with respect and make her feel that we were working at the job together. But it is absolutely impossible to teach her to do research. She works like a house afire, turning off page after page with an error on every one. I cannot use what she turns in unless I check it myself or get somebody else to check it. I have turned back literally hundreds of pages asking her to correct them, but she resents it and tries to cover her tracks by more errors. She has always wanted a supervisory position on the project, and how happy I should be to give it to her if only she were the sort of person I could use! Lately she has been resorting to intrigue to gain her ends. For that very reason I hesitated to issue the reprimand, but after all it is not fair to the careful workers to let her escape her just punishment solely because she is trying to displace me. There is no way in which she can hurt me, hence I have no temptation to be vindictive, but I cannot lean so far backwards that I impede the work. She trembled and looked angry when I gave it to her, but she didn't say much. I am anxious to see whether it drives her to more intrigue or whether she really will try to improve her work.

January 16, 1941

I got a batch of reviews today from the Princeton [University] Press – extra copies that they sent on to me. Except for one or two unimportant ones, these were the first I have seen. And they were so favorable; and all of them said the book was “objective,” “cold and precise,” “without emotionalism,” etc. I am glad none of them felt I was a sob sister, sentimentalizing about the wrongs suffered by the noble red man. I started out to write a history of something that seemed worth investigating, and it was not my choice that it turned out as it did. My book will arouse plenty of hostility, and it would have been so easy for these potential enemies to say that I was a hysterical female that knew nothing about Indians or practical things like facts. But now that so many have emphasized the opposite trait, I feel that I am protected in the place where I might have appeared vulnerable.

January 26, 1941

Last week Marie Schwalbe and I took a trip in the interest of the Guide Book. We visited cities, drove around parks, and checked mileages of tours. We worked pretty fast – Marie works that way, anyhow – and we got a lot done. Along with other things we had a thoroughly good time. . . .

February 3, 1941

I sent my watch to the factory today. I don't know why I had to have the bad luck to get a Hamilton watch that won't run.

I got a review today by Stanley Vestal from the New York Herald Tribune. It was very favorable, but very dull and stupid. Stanley Vestal is such a brilliant writer that he must have gone to sleep reading it – which is a sin I must answer for.

February 13, 1941

I have just about decided to attend the Institute on the Future of the American Indian in New York March 4-7. I might contribute something to the discussion that would really help in formulating policies since I have made a study of one Indian situation so recently and so thoroughly. Also I should enjoy going. But the real reason is that I have the selfish idea that in some way it might help me. Such is human nature, or at least my nature!

I have also decided, or just about decided, to quit my job the first of April. It is the kind of job at which it is impossible to accomplish very much. I have too much red tape to get time to write. I should be happy in the thought that I might do something for the people on the project, but the labor relations people throw so many monkey wrenches into the machinery that I don't think I am doing much for the project employees. I could work so happily with them if I was just given the chance, and that would compensate for me not being allowed to write.

February 23, 1941

It snowed beautifully today. I went to church in the morning intending to go to Britton to see Aunt Nettie in the afternoon, but I stayed at home because of the snow.

I have notified Miss Fullerton that I intend to leave about April 1. I wish it had been the kind of job a conscientious person could hold. But it wasn't. I was wasting my life and Government money. I have many fine and deserving people on my project, but they are not writers. I shall see hard times financially, but I shall own my own soul.

February 24, 1941

I went to Norman on project business. While I was there I had the satisfaction of seeing the first page of my Creek book in print. It looks pretty nice.

February 25, 1941

Poor Mr. McCool, who can't keep from drinking, is all to the bad today. I shall have to get rid of him yet. There doesn't seem to be anything I can do.

March 20, 1941

I took the trip to New York. Left March 2 and returned March 9. Just about worked my head off getting the Guide ready for the publisher when I quit my job the evening of March 14. Mr. Oskison took it down to Savoie the morning of March 15. It is not entirely approved by Washington, but all but the Cities section is virtually done. I think there is nothing that will delay composition.

The book does not suit me as well as though I had written it myself, but I think it is not so bad. I am sure it has many grievous errors, but I could not be everywhere at once. I think in general it will be a useful book, and some of the work I did myself is really accurate.

The whole business of a writers' project is socially wrong. There are no unemployed writers. When uneducated women who should be in the sewing room or uneducated men who should be engaged in manual labor attain the dignity of white collar projects there is no amount of training that can make writers out of them. And some of the employees are really educated, capable of doing satisfactory graduate work at a university, but even that does not make them writers; the best I can hope for from them is that they will do accurate research under supervision. And the more and better the research, the more it piles up in useless bales while the writing waits.

I think some adjustment could have been made, some solution of this fundamental difficulty if Miss Fullerton or Dr. Wardell had realized its seriousness. But Miss Fullerton is busy and naturally is guided by Dr. Wardell. And Dr. Wardell is incapable of writing himself and unfamiliar with any kind of sincere effort. He is a four flusher who gets jobs by clever manipulation of wires and makes pontifical pronouncements that sound scholarly unless one knows better. He thinks if one is given forty people to help one should turn out books by wholesale. Since he himself cannot write he has no conception of what writing is. So he blithely decides that a book should be done by a certain time or else. Well, he will never get any writing done unless better conditions are created on the project.

I am not sorry I resigned. Badly as I need the money, I cannot reconcile my conscience to using Government money in a way that is not socially or culturally constructive.

March 24, 1941

Nothing in particular happened, but it was a nice day. I got an invitation to a Southern writers' autograph party in North Carolina in August. I wonder if it would pay me to go. Of course I should enjoy it, but I cannot afford it unless it will pay. I am going to be broke from now on perpetually.

March 26, 1941

I got a review today from the Social Studies. The magazine was sent me by Alban W. Hoopes, the writer of the review. It shows such painstaking labor that I wrote to thank him; he didn't review it without reading it, and some do. I don't think, however, that he read to much purpose for he drew some very untenable conclusions from it. I can just imagine him as a very dull, pedantic person laboring over his attempt to say something profound. I get plenty of favorable reviews, but few of them are intelligent; possibly if they were intelligent they would be less favorable, but I think I should like them better.

March 28, 1941

I ironed this morning. This afternoon I packed up some stories I wrote once and sent them to Mr. Buse. I don't know how to write stories; I have handled factual material too much. I don't even like the artificial briskness one must affect in producing a short story. Even if I knew how to do it, I shouldn't care for it. But he wanted to look at them, and so I sent them on. It will cost nothing but the postage. . . .

April 5, 1941

It was a perfect day. The children in their bright uniforms looked so lovely and strong and carefree. It wrings one's heart to see them swinging down the street and to think what pitiable little islands of the world still have space for youth and growth and laughter. And very likely this is the last time our own youngsters will ever march so free.

April 11, 1941

Went over to the church to be one of a group to clean it in preparation for the Easter service. Found everyone else had discovered urgent business elsewhere except Mrs. Lyons. But we two went to work like the women on the Dutch Cleanser can. We went clear to the backsides of everything, and the church shines. Mrs. Lyons is one of those people who work in good spirits; she didn't say one word about those who were absent, just went to scrubbing and scouring as though she had perfect good will for everything but dirt.

I was so touched and pleased at receiving a lovely clock as an Easter present from the Writers' Project.

Made myself a housedress. It was about time. I just had one with long sleeves, and it was splitting like a locust's skin.

Went this evening to the church to see the children induct their leaders into office by a candle lighting service. It was lovely. They are so young and sweet and earnest. I hope they have a civilized world in which to grow up.

April 13, 1941

The Easter service was perfect. So many of our people, who have been kept away by bad weather and sickness and have sort of lost the habit of attendance, were back in their places. Several children and babies were baptized, and a number of the older children came into the church.

It started raining just as church was dismissed, and rained more or less all day. Just the best kind of rain, lots of water falling, but none running away.

August 1, 1941

I finished an article for The Writer. I hope they take it. It purports to tell how to write local history.

This is a pretty warm day with showers collecting all around, but none coming to us.

The mocking bird sang all night last night. This is the day for him to quit, and I have not heard him once. I do not think, however, that he takes the calendar quite that seriously.

August 2, 1941

I went down town hoping I could see some of the old-timers who could give me the early history of Marshall. It was not a successful afternoon. I have never formed the habit of spending Saturday afternoon in town. When I was a child I wanted to because the other girls did, but my parents always worked. Loafing all afternoon seemed wicked to them, and I formed the habit of

going down strictly for business. It is surprisingly hard for me to go down and stand and talk. It seems to me I should be rushing about somewhere. I wonder if I can ever form the habit of loafing. It really seems to me, now that I have watched people do it, that it is a wholesome thing to do. And it is rather shocking to me to realize how I have dropped out of community things. Of course there are many people who feel just as our family do about it, but they were not the ones I saw on the street. . . .

August 3, 1941

After church I went out to the Lou Cromer's to spend the day. I enjoyed the visit and Mr. Cromer told me of the early days around Marshall. I am not sure I shall use this material, but I am collecting it. I have been away so much and am out in the country so seldom, that the whole countryside as I pass through is peopled with the ghosts of other days when I was a child and drove and rode horseback over it.

August 4, 1941

I transcribed the notes I took on the interview with Mr. Cromer. Then this afternoon we got a chance to get some fine peaches from a man that came by. They were too ripe, and he sold them at one dollar a bushel. We thought we could handle one bushel before they would spoil, and we did some blitz canning. Got them all done, but got terribly tired.

Mrs. Schrage came over and notified me that the Dramatic Art Club (a very inaccurate name for a study club) had elected me to membership. I was pleased, but am puzzled because the other local club has elected me twice and I refused both times on the pretext that I was too busy. The fact was I had no money to pay dues. Now I feel under obligation to them. I will see Winnie Branen and ask her about it, before I decide to go into the other. . . .

April 28, 1942

This evening finds me pleasantly situated in the Women's Graduate House at Norman ready to start my new book. I wandered over the campus, and saw a whole series of Angie Debos there. So much of my life has been lived around this place.

Of the many stupid things I have done, I just about perpetrated my masterpiece today – lost the check that was to finance this book. I started several things that should recover it or else produce a duplicate. But I am pretty badly disgusted with myself.

April 29, 1942

I am extremely fortunate in my chance to stay at the Graduate House. The meals are so good I marvel at Mrs. Knox's ability to finance them, the girls are capable and interesting, and there is every opportunity for study and quiet.

I worked on my book today; consequently I feel a little discouraged over the possibility of writing on such a complicated subject. I seem to remember that is my usual reaction in beginning a book.

The campus is unbelievably beautiful with the trees in their tenderest green. And a different Angie Debo meets me at every turn – the freshman so eager to enter college that she

trembled until she could hardly enroll (and what a dark rainy day it was!), the disillusioned and lonely girl who carried on her studies, the horror and protest against the World War, the eager girl with the final cap and gown, the happy girl who returned for Phi Beta Kappa initiation, the graduate student, the lonely woman out of a job and carrying on research against all sensible reasoning , and so on and on. And from a personal standpoint – disregarding the horror of the world outside – my present residence is probably the happiest I have ever spent here.

I started this evening reading a manuscript for the University [of Oklahoma] Press. I think it is well done; if it keeps on as well as it started, I shall recommend its publication. It is by one Robert R. Russel of Kalamazoo, Michigan. The subject is “Improvement of Communication with the Pacific Coast as an Issue in American Politics.”

May 3, 1942

I went to church this morning with a lovely girl in the house named Miss Irby. Went driving this afternoon with the Emorys. Finished the report of the manuscript I read for the University [of Oklahoma] Press; recommended its publication.

May 8, 1942

Ima James has a group of girls planning to camp in Lake Murray State Park. They had asked Walter Campbell [a.k.a. Stanley Vestal] to go along and tell them about Oklahoma history. But he has a deadline he has to make on a book, and so that left them stranded. Ima was trying to find me wherever in the state I might be – and here I was at Norman. When I found how badly she needed me, I agreed to go.

May 9, 1942

The most wonderful and exciting news – I HAVE BEEN AWARDED THE ALFRED A. KNOPF HISTORY SCHOLARSHIP. That changes all my plans. I would have gone home this very day if I had not promised to go with the girls. This afternoon I went down through the beautiful green country to the untouched beauty of the park. (I made the very worst speech I ever made in my life, but the girls were so happy in their camping experience that they enjoyed it. I am so glad they were not critical.) A group of young Indian girls from Carter who were camping in the park came and spent the evening with us.

May 11, 1942

Packed quickly and came home. But before I left I returned the check to the Social Sciences Research Council. This check has had a varied history. I rejoiced over it when I got it, started to thank the senders for it and by mistake slipped it in the letter, started to deposit it the next day and found it gone, and a few days later in answer to a frantic inquiry (sent air mail) I got a friendly letter from the SSRC enclosing it a second time. I had planned to deposit it as soon as I got to Marshall, and now I shall not use it at all.

May 12, 1942

Worked hard all morning getting some autobiographical material together for Knopf's to use in their publicity – a tiresome job, but not too tiresome in exchange for \$1200. This afternoon I went to club. The program was nice and it closed with a gift for Evelyn Johnson, who is going away.

May 13, 1942

Worked in the flower garden all morning, read Grant Foreman's HISTORY OF OKLAHOMA (except when I was asleep) in the afternoon. I wish I had not promised to review this book, for although it is a superb piece of work, I did find a number of mistakes in the part less familiar to Foreman – the part after the Civil War. Foreman is a great historian, but even his comprehensive mind cannot compass everything.

May 14, 1942

Washed this morning. AND ON THE MAIL CAME MY CONTRACT AND MY FIRST HUNDRED DOLLARS FROM KNOPF'S. I went down town in the afternoon and pledged ten dollars a month for twelve months for war bonds – bought my first ten in stamps. I was so happy that I was able to do it. It is hard to be a self-respecting person when one is entirely without funds.

May 15, 1942

People say it froze ice last night, and that the dew was a heavy frost in some places. I did not see it, either because we live on a high hill or because it had thawed out before I got up. But I heard it from so many sources that I think it was true.

I interviewed Mr. Castor and the Billy Foxes – enjoyed it very much.

May 17, 1942

Went to church this morning. Took dinner with the Billy Foxes and spent the afternoon with them. We all enjoyed it so much. It looked like rain and we were afraid Mother couldn't go, but it didn't quite make it.

May 18, 1942

I went to Red Cross from a base motive, or at least not a disinterested motive. I thought they would gossip there, and I would get in touch with all the things people are saying about War, Sugar Rations, Tire Shortages, etc. I had not gone before because I am too busy; if I thought their work were vital I would drop my own and go but it seems to me most of what they do is busy work. It was in the last war, too – just something to keep the women interested and keep up morale. But I thought it was a good chance to find what people are thinking; I shall need it in my book. I felt a little mean when people seemed so glad I came.

I heard no gossip. It was the busiest, most earnest, and most intelligent bunch of women I have seen working in my lifetime. It is heart-warming to be one of them. But I still suppose the work they do is not vital, and I am going to keep on attending from the same ulterior motives.

Mailed the review of Grant Forman's HISTORY OF OKLAHOMA.

May 19, 1942

Interviewed Aunt Fanny Shores and Mr. George Beeby. Enjoyed it but got tired.

May 20, 1942

Interviewed Mrs. Cramer. She is the youngest in spirit, the jolliest, and the most interesting of all the pioneers I know.

Interviews with Angie Debo, #5.
Interview Date: January 20, 1982.
(Valencia-Weber and Matthews Collection, Box 2/ folder 6)

I was talking previously about several of my books. I purposely left out Oklahoma: Foot-loose and Fancy-free because it's an interpretation of the Oklahoma spirit and you said that you were interested especially in what qualities Oklahomans had developed that might still have affected their attitude toward the unhappy experiences of the 1930s. Since this book is an interpretation of Oklahoma rather than a history of Oklahoma, I thought I should spend a little more time talking about what constitutes this Oklahoma spirit, and what I tried to express in that book.

Of course the experience of coming to an undeveloped land and settling it was a 200-year American experience from Jamestown on. Well, it didn't start in 1607 at Jamestown because the company had other plans for the first Jamestown expeditions; but by 1620 it had developed into a permanent settlement of people who had established their homes in an undeveloped land, and had brought their institutions there. And of course that was when the Pilgrims came to Massachusetts. They came with the intention of staying. They didn't come to develop some resource and send it back home to carry out the orders of the company who sent them, but they came intending to stay.

So from at least 1620 on it was an experience that was shared by one successive generation after another, as the country moved west. The difference in the Oklahoma experience is that it all happened at one time. One group of people as I have expressed it, and you have probably read it in Prairie City, in the preface I said – now this was written in the 1940s – I said: “Sturdy old-timers are still living on farms that they brought under the plow by their own hands, and churches and lodges have charter members among their active leaders. The whole epic sweep of American history is compressed into the lifetime of these pioneers. They know from their own experience the throes of settlement at Jamestown; the first harvest, the church, the Pilgrim Fathers; the constitution-making of the Founders of the Republic; the promotion and the railroad-building in the era of western settlement; oil, and the industrialism of the modern age; and the repercussions of world-shattering events.”

One generation had experienced all of that and so that compressed the whole experience of American history into the lives of this one group of people. Of course I think that it greatly intensified the American experience, so that Oklahoma became perhaps the most American of American pioneer settlements.

They had just the same as these early settlers in the 1600s; they had their “starving time.” It didn't matter whether the resources that they brought to this new and undeveloped land came across the ocean in ships – and took several months to get across – or whether it was some money that was carried in a covered wagon. But they came to a country that had to be put into production, and the resources that they brought with them gave out. And so they had a bad time at first, and then they took hold. I remember in New England – it surprised me as I saw some of the oldest houses that have been preserved historically – what good houses the early settlers in Massachusetts built so soon after they came. We all know the terrible first winter of the Pilgrims, for instance – and of course for the first few years they had troubles – but so soon after that they were building good houses and had become well-established. Well, the same thing happened in Oklahoma.

Oklahomans had their “starving time,” and they had their time when they had brought the new land into production. Now I remember, for example, in those days what we called “Old Oklahoma” – sometimes some of us still call it that – [was] the area that was opened for settlement in 1889 where we are sitting right now. It extends to the north edge of the Marshall town site. Beyond the Marshall town site is the Cherokee Outlet which was opened in 1893. But the part that was opened in 1889 is right here, and it was opened in April. Well, the homesteader had six months to settle on his land. He very seldom stayed. He staked his claim, and he filed on it at the land office. And he made a few tentative improvements so that it would look as though he had started to develop it – probably plowed a few furrows, or maybe he started to dig a well or something like that. And then he went back to his old home – wherever his old home was – and he spent the summer laying by supplies to get started – just as the early settlers did in England laying aside supplies to bring across the ocean in ships.

He was planting crops and perhaps corn that he could get during the winter to feed his horses and things like that, and trying to earn some money and getting a little confidence. And he didn’t actually have to settle on his claim until October. And not very many people did much that first year – 1889 – they were back home getting ready, getting their families ready. It took quite a bit to make a raw piece of land support a family.

Well, of course by the fall of 1889 all of the people that really intended to establish a family on the land were settled here and what they did during the first winter mainly was to perhaps make some kind of a shelter, maybe make a dugout in the creek bank or something, make some kind of shelter for their family. [They] probably did a little plowing – but not that much – and made some trips back to the old farm. Of course, when they came back they brought their family along if they had a family. There were a few unmarried young men that staked claims; and a very few unmarried young women that staked claims. I didn’t know any unmarried young women that staked claims here, [but] I did know some that staked claims in the Cherokee Outlet.

During the winter, the family would stay on the claim, and the man would go back to the old home and bring loads of corn, or whatever he had raised, to feed. I failed to say [that] when they came to really make their settlement, the man who had staked the claim brought his family – if he had one – and of course a covered wagon and whatever he could put in it and whatever farm machinery he was able to bring – just a few farm implements and a cow or two and possibly some chickens – [a] few things like that. Mainly during the winter what they did was to settle on their claim. Well, then in the spring – that would be the spring of 1890 – they really started plowing up the sod and planted corn and cane and kaffir corn. The first year was the year in which the grass grew tall and the rains came. It was a beautiful year; and when the men would come down here – when they would be riding across the valley land – you couldn’t see only the top of their hat. Now I wouldn’t believe that the bluestem grew so tall except that some of it was actually measured – and it did! They used to braid it to the tops of their horses to show how tall it was when it went up to seed. But this next year – 1890 – was not a good year; it didn’t rain very much. They plowed up; they had this grasshopper plow that was a special kind of plow – I told about that in Prairie City – and they plowed up a certain amount of land. The man did that and his wife planted corn with a hand planter – corn or kaffir or cane and always some turnips and potatoes. Well, the potatoes didn’t make anything – they were the size of marbles. And the corn, the hot winds killed the corn. But the kaffir grew tall like timber one of the women said. She said she thought the Lord

must have made kaffir to help people in the new country. And the turnips were so large that I wouldn't believe their stories except that two or three years ago we had turnips like that. They were almost as large as a plate and sweet – not hollow or tough – just sweet. Well, by that time their money was gone and their capital was spent. Their claim hadn't brought in anything at all and so that second winter of 1890-91, that was their "starving time." That was the "starving time" that the Jamestown settlers told about. That was the first winter of the Pilgrim Fathers; that was their bad time.

They just didn't have any money at all, and they lived on kaffir that maybe the women would grind in their coffee mills and make kind of a bread out of it. Or they would boil it and just eat boiled kaffir. They had plenty of game. If they couldn't afford ammunition they could use traps. So they did have game, and they lived throughout the winter like that.

I remember a woman telling me about visiting a Sunday school and the superintendent was barefooted and unashamed – his shoes wore out and he couldn't buy any others – but they lived like that that second winter – but they were looking forward to their wheat growing in the spring. And it just grew beautifully. And it furnished pasture for their cows and butter and milk for the people. And they managed to come through – but they did go on relief. The Congress appropriated a certain amount of money that had been appropriated for some sufferers – for some floods along the Mississippi that wasn't used – and they gave it to the Oklahoma people. And they went down to Guthrie and in this township here. There was a woman told me about it – not a poverty-stricken person at all – a woman who with her husband lived in an excellent house on an extremely well-improved farm and had daughters that studied music. And they sent them away to high school because there wasn't any high school here. But she told how that she and several people went to Guthrie. They would go in a wagon together, several people in the neighborhood and they would pick up this relief food which would be a fifty-pound sack of flour, and a fifty-pound sack of cornmeal, and some bacon, and some beans, and some salt. I think that was about what they got. And one time I went through that list of people who had gone down there to receive some relief and I came across the Trapp family in Kansas where we lived before we came to Oklahoma. We knew this young farm couple. Their name was Camel Trapp. Of course, it's spelled Campbell, but it was always pronounced Camel. And it has always interested me when people name their babies [that] they don't think about how the first name and the last name might make an amusing combination. So here their name was Trapp and they named their baby Campbell. So here was a Campbell Trapp. Anyhow, the Campbell Trapps lived in our community and they were farmers same as we were, and they had a brother. This brother took a claim in Logan County, I think not so very far from Guthrie. And he had a wife and some children. And he had a son named Martin, and here was another animal – a Martin Trapp. Well, anyhow, Martin was 12 years old in 1889, and they settled on their claim and Mrs. Trapp died, and so it was harder for them than it was for most settlers because it took a man and a woman both to survive. A man had a hard time alone. I happened to see their application, the Trapp family's application for food during that difficult winter of 1890-91. And there several of those applications in the Old City Hall at Guthrie that has been torn down to the everlasting regret now of the Guthrie people. This application was processed, and they got their food alright and it carried them through. But my parents, I think, didn't know Campbell Trapp's brother. But anyhow, he had visited in that community where we lived in Kansas. Some of the people in the community knew him quite well, and knew about their settling in Guthrie, and knew about the death of his wife and so on. Well,

the children grew up and he eventually became governor of the state. And it was that kind of people who in some cases just simply had to apply for relief because they didn't have any food during that first winter. Some of the people managed without relief, but some of the people did accept relief. Well, then when the first harvest came it was the first productive crop that came. That was in the spring of 1891 after that hard winter and the wheat – it was a bountiful yield and it brought a good price. And they had a hard time getting a binder to cut it, and a hard time maybe putting up some kind of granary to put it in, but anyhow they did prosper from then on.

The Cherokee Outlet – which was erroneously called the Cherokee Strip – and I called it that because everybody called it that. The Cherokee Outlet was opened in 1893 at the beginning of the worst depression that we ever had until the 1930s. It was as bad a depression as the 1930s. And one of the most terrible dry cycles that we ever had. And I'm sure that the [Cherokee] Strip would have been depopulated – I'm sure that all the people would have left it – if they hadn't seen that the people down here that had had four years and a half to get their foothold, their toehold, and were prospering. They saw that one could make a living in Oklahoma.

But that's a different part of the story. Well, the shared experiences of that kind created a certain community spirit and a certain type of Oklahoma character. Now some of these people – early settlers – were shiftless, but not very many of them were. Most of them just simply needed a start and that was the way they got started – [it] was to get a piece of land. In sharing these experiences they understood each other. It was a kind of free masonry of shared experiences, and the qualities that they developed then are still in the Oklahoma character. And the people that came in who had not lived through that period very soon accepted and understood the same traits of character – bad and good alike. There were bad traits of character along with the good traits of character, but they understood it.

I remember one time a couple who had been through the worst of it, and they had moved away and had come back to visit. And my parents and my brother and I and they were all visiting, and we got to talking with much laughter and interest about the time something happened to our food supply and we couldn't throw the food away because there wasn't any money to buy any more food. We had to eat it no matter what happened to it, or simply do without.

Now, my parents had not gone through this experience; they had come ten years later. But their experience of hardships was that of a young couple with two children striving to make enough money to buy a farm and to establish themselves on the land. It was the same experience, and they developed the same traits that the early – that the 89ers had developed – although we came ten years later. So we were talking about all that. I remember our story very well. My brother and I had been sent to Marshall from our farm with an old steady horse and our mother who would take care of us children – I mean the horse would – we didn't have to take care of the horse. Our mother told us to buy a sack of flour and a can of kerosene – we used kerosene for our lamps in those days – and she told us where to put it. But somehow – we had a cart – we rode in this cart, and somehow we put this flour down in the bottom of the cart under our feet and we put the kerosene on top of the flour. Well, it kind of spilled out, and when we got home there was a spot where the kerosene can had set on top of the flour. Well, my mother threw that away, but she couldn't throw the whole sack of flour away, and the odor of the kerosene permeated the whole sack. And as long as that sack of flour lasted, my mother's good bread tasted of kerosene. But we

had to eat it. We didn't have money to buy any more flour. We had to eat it! Well, we told stories like that, and we laughed about it.

After the visit was over, I said to my parents – I was a teenager at that time – I said, I believe that was my first experience of understanding the Oklahoma spirit. I said to my parents, “Did you notice how that none of us had to explain why we had to eat damaged food because there wasn't any money to buy more?” We all understood each other, and we laughed about it. Well, that was a universal experience that Oklahomans had.

When I came to write Prairie City, I just felt as though I had to put in some account of damaged food – precious food! I had to put some account in Prairie City. I didn't put in the kerosene and flour account. I put in an account that I got from some people in old Greer County. Once a year they used to go down to Vernon, Texas, with all the money they had – which wasn't much – and buy the groceries they'd need for a year. They brought those groceries up and they put them in a cellar they had – maybe it had been a dugout they lived in – they put them in a cellar and somehow a skunk got in. And it happened just the same as it did with the kerosene – it permeated everything, just everything in that cellar. Well, they tried to make biscuits out of the flour. They couldn't possibly eat it! What the skunk had done, had actually not touched the food, but the odor had permeated the food. They then tried eating it outdoors where the Oklahoma wind would always blow; they thought maybe they could eat it then, but they couldn't eat it then. So they carried it out and put it on a hill, and it stayed there all summer untouched by bird or beast. Nothing would touch it! They couldn't go back to Vernon and buy more groceries; they just had to live on what game they caught.

When I made my application to Alfred Knopf for that fellowship that enabled me to write Prairie City, I had to submit some of the chapters, and I put that story in there.

When I actually wrote Prairie City, I discarded that and I put in the story about the dog that jumped into the molasses. Now the fact that that happened over near Hennessey on a claim owned by a man named Meek, that wasn't important. It illustrated what I had seen as a teenager; that it was a universal experience, so I put that in. That's what I mean by saying that this sort of a shared experience has affected the thinking of Oklahomans – and still does for that matter!

About the people who come in, maybe some of you know about Darcy O'Brian. I believe that's his name, O'Brian, Darcy O'Brian, who wrote The Silver Spoon. I heard him on TV, and he came from California entirely uninformed about the Oklahoma people and the Oklahoma spirit. But his spiritual understanding about everything that makes Oklahoma different from the other 49 states – I remember that William Allen White said [that] it's strange how state lines make a difference in Americans. And that's true! I was amazed at the understanding that [O'Brian] achieved of the Oklahoma spirit and the very fine way in which he was able to express it when he had [that] TV interview. So it has affected Oklahoma thinking in all the years since. Now, I don't have time to tell about the bad things. I've written about them, and I think I've told you about them. And I've told you how amazed I have been that people have not resented anything I wrote. What they resent is an inaccurate portrayal. If you tell the truth – no matter how bad it is – they don't seem to mind.

Could you talk a little bit about the Thirties? I mean the spirit you're describing, and which comes through wonderfully in your books, must have been – very traumatic really isn't too strong a word – for people who have this wonderful communal spirit in the pioneer days, to have the economic deprivation in the Thirties. How did they –

That's an important thing, and if I don't get to talk to you about that – I want to talk to you about that later. Because that's really – I've spent all this time leading up to it and I think maybe my leading up to it has been a waste of time and I sure –

No, no, that's wonderful. But I was just hoping you would get to that.

The things in Oklahoma happened with such rapidity. The settlement and all of that happened with such rapidity that it offered a constant temptation to people outside [Oklahoma] to write startling things about it without very much evidence or very much understanding.

At the beginning the first Oklahomans – the first settlers – didn't worry about it very much; they just thought it was rather funny and they even helped out a little. Oh, I know plenty of instances when they helped out. But I remember especially when Frank Greer was owner and editor of the Oklahoma State Capital, one of the most influential newspapers in the territory at Guthrie. I remember how that he persuaded the National Editorial Association to hold its annual meeting in Oklahoma. I believe that was 1904. And he told them about all the wild things they'd see – and they came! He promised to take them to the 101 Ranch. Now of course the Cherokee Outlet was a land of settled farmers by 1904 – and prospering farmers, too, by 1904. But the Miller family had managed to rent some Ponca Indian land, and they had a ranch up near Ponca City that they really continued somewhat after the old manner when Oklahoma was a cow country before the settlement. Oh yes, and they got Geronimo, who was such an excellent drawing card to any kind of a meeting. People would go anywhere to see Geronimo. And Geronimo, who was very good at earning and saving money, would gladly appear and collect all the money he could and put it in the bank. He was a pretty level-headed old Indian. Well, Geronimo was going to be there, so they came from all over the United States.

They had their meeting at Guthrie, but they had special trains that went up there. And they had a buffalo hunt! They got the buffalo from Colonel Goodnight's ranch, the JA Ranch in Texas. By the way, Goodnight's brother always lived around Marshall, his son was a homesteader in the Cherokee Strip, his grandson lived in a house a block south of here, and he and his wife were very close friends of mine. So that's the way that all of these people just merged, you know. Anyhow, they had special trains up there, and Geronimo was supposed to kill a buffalo. The stories don't match as to how he killed the buffalo – I don't know whether he did or not. Anyhow, the buffalo got killed and got cooked and they ate buffalo. And they saw hair-raising stunts of riding and roping by the Miller cowboys who were the best cowhands in the business. Then they ate buffalo meat for their noon meal. And then in the evening, why, here were some obliging Poncas that came riding wildly over the hill and engulfed a wagon train. And so then they went back home,

[and] everywhere in the United States they wrote stories about “wild Oklahoma.” Well, Oklahomans liked that; they didn’t mind that at all. But what they did mind was a lack of understanding about the actual facts of the settlement and the formation of a community.

Self-criticism and a normal amount of public opinion: If it hadn’t been for two books which, of course, you know what those books are because of their immense circulation. And of course the first one of those was Edna Ferber’s Cimarron. Now Edna Ferber told the story herself in Peculiar Treasure. Her “peculiar treasure,” as she expressed it, was an ability to write about something of which she was ignorant. She didn’t use exactly those words, but that’s what she said. And she said she had never heard of Oklahoma, except that she knew there was a state of the Union by that name, until she came out to visit the William Allen Whites in 1928. What they told her – they lived in Emporia, of course – and what they told her intrigued her. And so she came here and spent all of thirteen days in research. Then she went back to New York and France, and wrote Cimarron. The immense circulation of the book and the popularity of the movie that followed it made so much impression that Oklahomans took it pretty hard. There were people at that time living on claims that they had staked in the runs and brought under cultivation with their own hands. And they, there were firms in Oklahoma City and smaller towns that carried the proud days of the land openings on their letterheads. And they just couldn’t stand it, to have those things described by somebody that didn’t know a thing about it. There was even a mule living in Oklahoma City that had brought his rider to the claim that a prominent family had staked on that memorable 22nd of April, 1889. I suppose he was the only 89er that didn’t join the protest about this book.

It wasn’t because of the uncomplimentary things she said about Oklahoma. If that had been it, they would have later jumped on me – and they never did! It was because she told it wrong, because she didn’t understand anything. As you remember, the book starts with this first land opening, and as you know, of course, it occurred on the 22nd of April, [1889]. Her waiting homesteaders, waiting for the signal, instead of camping around probably some 250 miles of border with plenty of room, comfortably camping. They formed a line, the way you do in front of a ticket window. And they suffered agonies from thirst. And here it had been raining, and the creeks were all full of clean water, and the grass was green, and the trees were soft green plumes. And one old man told me that the redbuds were blooming; and I have seen redbuds once that bloomed on the 22nd of April, so they do sometimes. And they were looking into a beautiful land. But as she described it, they were scorched by the sun, warm April sun in the bluest sky that most of them had ever seen, and they suffered from thirst. And when the race started from this long line that formed – like in front of a ticket window – the dust rose in a cloud from this grassland that had never felt the plow. Fires set in this green bluestem burst into walls of flame, and so it continued – this travesty on nature and history – continued throughout the book. You remember that Ferber had pieces of land that because of its special location that never suffered from the drought. When a drought cycle came to Oklahoma, and all the other crops died, her acreage produced. And for the same trick of topography it produced no oil. So, of course, you didn’t need geologists and geophysicists and people like that – all you had to do was to look at the topography and you’d know if there was any oil there or not. It’s that way throughout the book. But she said she was not so interested in things like that as she was in trying to capture the spirit of the state. And in that she failed just as miserably. Her – the tarnished hero of Cimarron – was a champion of the red man and he bewailed their lot, rotting on the reservations. He wanted to free them from

the reservations. And he could have been chosen governor of the territory except that he antagonized official Washington by an editorial that he wrote setting out these views. And that was a settled policy of the federal government, to break up the reservations. There wouldn't be any white settlement of Oklahoma if you didn't break up the reservations. There wasn't anybody in Oklahoma, there wasn't any white person in Oklahoma – I believe that could be literally true – there wasn't a single white person in Oklahoma that didn't approve of breaking up the reservations so that the white people could come in and settle after the reservations were broken up. After they would break up a reservation, then they would have a land opening and settlement by white people. She simply reversed the whole trend of Oklahoma history. It hit people pretty bad.

And when I wrote Oklahoma: Foot-loose and Fancy-free, Oklahomans were still suffering from the abnormal sensitivity to public opinion that had come about from the immense circulation of this book that told things about Oklahoma that were not true at all. I mentioned it several places, and I think Oklahomans still perhaps have that sensitivity to public opinion – although not quite to the extent that they had at the time I wrote my book in 1949. Oklahomans might have settled down to a more normal self-criticism if it hadn't been for Steinbeck's Grapes of Wrath which was published in 1939.

Now Steinbeck, in writing his sensitive novel about the unhappy experiences of California berry pickers, had to bring them from somewhere, and so he didn't spend thirteen days in trying to understand their background. He didn't spend thirteen minutes. He simply invented a setting. And this is the setting he invented, and not one single word of it is true: The ancestors of the Joads had killed off the Indians. Apparently he didn't know that Oklahoma had been an Indian Territory which was theoretically and to a certain extent truly protected against white encroachment for just about two generations. Apparently, he didn't know that. They came and killed off the Indians, and then they established their forty-acre farms. And then they had mortgaged them to soulless corporations. And these soulless corporations had foreclosed the mortgages, and so they had lived as sharecroppers on the land that their parents had so hardly won from the wilderness after they had killed off the Indians, and put it under cultivation and made these forty-acre farms. They lived that way until there came the Dust Bowl in the Great Depression. And then these soulless corporations had used caterpillar tractors that had gone across the boundary fences and the farmsteads tearing down the houses and the buildings and the fences and everything, and of course driving the people out that had been living there as sharecroppers – driving them out and putting the land under one great field of cotton managed by the hired superintendent. No, not one thing of that ever happened in Oklahoma, not one single thing! He simply invented his setting. But his compassion for the dispossessed is real. And his writing has gained deserved respect and his Grapes of Wrath probably had a great deal to do with his winning the Pulitzer Prize in literature.

And it has gone throughout the world with this absolutely untrue picture. Every word of it [is] untrue about the Oklahoma setting. Now some things of the Oklahoma setting were very bad. The way they cheated the Indians – which I told – is probably worse than if they'd killed the Indians the way Steinbeck told it. But that's the truth, and Oklahomans don't mind it if you tell the truth about them. Well, I remember I was reading one time in the New York Times Book Review – I was reading an article by one of the greatest English literary critics in which he was expressing

the importance of an actual true setting to fiction. I was reading it with so much approval. Just what I'd been saying! And then he gave his supreme example, and his supreme example was Grapes of Wrath. I read one place – I don't know whether this is true or not – that Hitler said to his lieutenants that they didn't need to fear the United States, and he cited Grapes of Wrath to show how the American people lived, what situation they were in. Well, the same disapproval aroused throughout Oklahoma. But of course it never had the circulation that Grapes of Wrath had, and this is what has troubled me. Maybe I should say this, too, about Grapes of Wrath: He said the Dust Bowl came. The Dust Bowl was a high plains phenomenon, and the only part of Oklahoma that is in the high plains is the Panhandle and a little adjoining section of Harper County. Now Oklahoma suffered terribly from the [Great] Depression, and it suffered terribly from the terrible drought cycle of the 1930s. But it was not in the Dust Bowl. And when you read articles – and I do – I read articles written about Oklahomans, articles describing the Dust Bowl, showing pictures of drifts over the fences and up against the houses. But if you examine those pictures carefully and trace their origin, you'll find that they all came from the Panhandle. Oklahoma was not in the Dust Bowl. The dust came here, and of course during the terrible drought the light soil of Oklahoma does go into the air. We don't have to have the 1930s. That's an experience that we often have in Oklahoma. But Oklahoma was not in the Dust Bowl. So, that's not even the Dust Bowl experience – it's not true!

Now I know all about this because I was in the Texas Panhandle during those terrible years. I could give plenty of experiences of a person who was riding a horse and couldn't see the horse's ears when one of those terrible dust clouds came up. And the time when I was at the college and attempted to drive home, and one of those terrible dust clouds came up and visibility was zero – and I mean zero! I could not have seen a car that was exactly touching mine ahead of me. I had my lights on, but I couldn't have seen a car if there had been one. And I tried to drive home, and I drove past two blocks in which there were no houses on the right hand side of the street. And in order to stay in the street, I touched the curbing just every minute or so along as I drove very slowly. No other car met me, but if it had met me it probably would have been in the other lane of traffic on the other side of the street. When I got past these two blocks with no houses, I passed one house which I didn't see and came to the house where I stayed. There in front of the house was a light, and that light showed dimly as I drove to it. I was able to get my car off the street and to get to the house, to feel my way to the house. Now that's the sort of thing that happened in the Dust Bowl, and I know all about it. But it did not happen in Oklahoma except in the Panhandle. If you read Dust Bowl stories and if you see photographs, if you'll examine those photographs you'll see that they all came from the Panhandle. Now in the western half of Oklahoma, along the north side of all the rivers, is a band of white sand that has blown up out of the rivers, and that did blow, and there might have been some drifts of that sand along that narrow band along the rivers in western Oklahoma. I think that's possibly true, but none of the things in Grapes of Wrath are true.

But it troubles me that now, after so many years, the people of Oklahoma who do not read – I said in Oklahoma Foot-loose and Fancy-free that Oklahomans were especially gifted in writing, but that they didn't read. That's still true, and they still don't read. But they have heard about Grapes of Wrath and Cimarron. And so they have come to accept them, and that bothers me very much because I think that these things have a tendency to affect the actual thinking of the people which misunderstand their own history.

- 1943** Publication of *Tulsa: From Creek Town to Oil Capital*.
- 1944** Publication of *Prairie City: The Story of an American Community*, Debo's only work of fiction, based on the history of Marshall and nearby towns. Death of her father, Edward P. Debo. Licensed as a local preacher for the United Methodist Church in Marshall.
- 1946** Taught summer school at Oklahoma A&M College.
- 1946-1947** Rockefeller Fellow, University of Oklahoma.
- 1947-1955** Served on the faculty of the Oklahoma A&M College Library as curator of maps.
- 1949** Publication of *Oklahoma: Foot-loose and Fancy-free*, funded in part by the Rockefeller Fellowship. Conducted survey of social and economic conditions in full blood settlements of the Five Civilized Tribes for the Indian Rights Association.
- 1950** Inducted into the Oklahoma Memorial Association's Oklahoma Hall of Fame.
- 1951** Publication of *The Five Civilized Tribes of Oklahoma: Report on Social and Economic Conditions*.
- 1952-1954** Wrote a column entitled "This Week in Oklahoma History" for the Oklahoma City Times.
- 1952** Inducted into Gamma Theta Upsilon, national professional geographic fraternity. Initiated into Delta Kappa Gamma, national honor society for women teachers.
- 1952-1961** Book reviewer for the *New York Times*.
- 1953** Publication of Oliver Nelson's *The Cowman's Southwest: Being the Reminiscences of Oliver Nelson, Freighter, Camp Cook, Cowboy, Frontiersman in Kansas, Indian Territory, Texas, and Oklahoma, 1878-1893*, edited by Debo. Member of Phi Kappa Phi honor society.
- 1954** Death of her mother, Lina Debo.
- 1956-1966** Member, Board of Directors, Association on American Indian Affairs.
- 1956** Conducted a survey of the Relocation Policy as it affected Oklahoma Indians for the Association on American Indian Affairs.
- 1957-1958** Taught Oklahoma history at Oklahoma State University.

Dale-Debo Correspondence

1943-1984

(Continuing correspondence from the Edward Everett Dale Collection, Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Libraries. used with their permission. From Folder #4 of the OSU Library's copy of the correspondence, Collection #94-023.)

11.

May 2, 1946

Dr. Angie Debo
Marshall, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Debo:

I have received the copies of your communication with the Committee on Fellowships and have passed them on to Mr. Lottinville who is Chairman of the Committee. Our committee is not meeting until next week since we are in the midst of final examinations but I am sure Mr. Lottinville will be writing you in the very near future.

Speaking not as a member of the committee but merely as an old friend, I might suggest that in my opinion, you are underestimating your present knowledge of Oklahoma and your capacity for work in thinking it will require seventeen months to do the study. My guess is that if you will think about it a little this summer while you are teaching at A. and M. and start actual work August 1 you will be able to deliver the completed manuscript within twelve months at most.

As I visualize the book, it is literary production and will be largely based upon your present knowledge plus what you can gather by a little travel, or possibly a good deal of travel. You might get it done in considerably less time than that. We will talk the matter over in the committee and Mr. Lottinville will doubtless write you sometime soon.

I hope to see you over at the A. and M. College in June if I make my annual pilgrimage to that institution. With every good wish, I am

Very cordially yours,

E. E. Dale
Research Professor of History

EED:jn

12.

Marshall, Oklahoma
May 4, 1946

Dr. E. E. Dale
Research Professor of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

Thank you for your letter of May 2. I am not at all impatient for the decision of the committee, since I am not yet ready to undertake the work. When I am ready to write a new book you know I always find it difficult to choose between several projects, but after I settle on one I become thoroughly absorbed in it. That is about the way I feel now, though I admit this project does appeal to me strongly.

I hope you are right about the time required – and you may be at that. But I always feel safer to allow myself a little latitude in time and money both. It is pleasanter to get a job done early than it is to fail to meet a deadline; and as for the money, it gave me great satisfaction to return some of my grant to the Social Science Research Council both times that I received assistance from them.

It certainly will be pleasant to see you at A. and M. this summer. I have been too long without seeing you these last busy years.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

13.

May 8, 1946

Dr. Angie Debo
Marshall, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Debo:

I was truly glad to get your good letter of recent date. I think our committee is meeting tomorrow and no doubt you will hear from Mr. Lottinville in the near future.

I agree with you that it is always well to be on the safe side both as to time and money but the amount you indicate is considerably more than we have ever yet allocated to anyone else and we are all so eager to push these studies along and have the finished manuscripts as soon as possible. Mr. Lottinville, however, will write you about all of this.

It will be good to see you at A. and M. this summer. With every good wish, I am

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale
Research Professor of History

EED:jn

14.

June 10, 1946

Dr. Angie Debo
Oklahoma A. and M. College
Department of History
Stillwater, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Debo:

This is just a little note to thank you for all of your kindness to us while we were in Stillwater and to tell you that I am sending you a copy of my article, "From Log Cabin to Sod House". I hope you may find some pleasure in reading this.

It was a great privilege to see you again and to speak to your students and we always have such a good time when we come to A. and M. that we regret leaving and look forward eagerly to coming again.

My wife joins me in kindest regards and best wishes.

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale
Research Professor of History

EED:jn

15.

Marshall, Oklahoma
March 28, 1947

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am sorely in need of some information about early ranching in Oklahoma. You may have given it in RANGE CATTLE INDUSTRY, but that is the one book of yours I have not been able to purchase.

There are now about three million cattle in Oklahoma (including calves). I wanted to say that that was more than in the romantic "cow country" days. But I do not know how many there were in those days. I should guess about a million and a half, but I may be off several million. Please tell me the number you would estimate at the time of greatest occupation by cattlemen. Yours would be an estimate based on accurate knowledge, while mine is a wild guess.

I hope you are making good progress with your writing. I am woefully behind the times on what Oklahomans are doing since Kenneth Kauffman died. I certainly miss his comments on Western books. I have just read your "Teaching on the Prairie Plains" with great enjoyment. I borrowed it from Dr. Reynolds. That reminds me that I shall not have the pleasure of seeing you and Mrs. Dale at Stillwater next summer, for I am so busy writing that I shall not be able to teach there. I have decided, however, to join the permanent faculty next fall. I like Dr. Reynolds very much, but I decided against the history department in favor of some work in the library that will interfere less with my writing.

Cordially yours,

Angie Debo.

Dr. Edward Everett Dale
Research Professor of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

16.

April 1, 1947

Miss Angie Debo
Marshall, Oklahoma

Dear Angie:

Your guess is as good as mine about the number of cattle in Oklahoma in the romantic "cow country" days. My guess is that your million and a half, say in 1885, may not be far off. You understand that it varied from year to year and from season to season. The Kansans drove their cattle down into the Outlet to avoid paying taxes on them in Kansas and then drove them back to avoid paying grazing tax to the Cherokees, also they drifted back and forth across the line a great deal. If I were going to guess the number of cattle in Oklahoma and Indian Territory at the time of greatest cattle occupation I would say around two million, or probably somewhat less.

I am glad you are going to join the staff at A & M College next fall. Dr. Reynolds is a very fine man and I think you will enjoy working with him. I am glad you liked my "Teaching on the Prairie Plains" and in the chance that you have not seen my "Old Navajoe," I am sending you a copy under separate cover. It should be of some interest to the author of Prairie City.

I am delighted to know that you are to do the book on Oklahoma for us and hope you will let me know if there is anything I can do to help. With every good wish, I am

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale
Research Professor of History

EED:jrm

17.

Marshall, Oklahoma
April 8, 1947

Dr. E. E. Dale
Department of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am certainly grateful for your letter about the number of cattle in the area that is now Oklahoma. I changed my sentence to read that the number now is “almost twice as many.” That seems to make it safe if there was “around two million, or probably somewhat less.”

I shall not be working with Dr. Reynolds any more at A. & M., but with Mr. Edmon Low, who is another admirer of yours. Dr. Reynolds did ask me to join his department, but I decided that the work in the library would interfere less with my writing. Dr. Reynolds was very nice about it; he said the main thing was that I would be on the campus.

I have already read and enjoyed “Old Navajoe.” I certainly appreciate your sending it. I have discovered something about my writing that should not surprise me, but I was never conscious of it before. You know I went into your class when I was a freshman, and have been under your influence ever since; and the things you have said and written have gone so deeply into my memory that I repeat them unconsciously. The other day I noticed in your “Conclusion” chapter of your History of Oklahoma (page 355 in my 1924 edition) the sentence beginning “He saw his rude sod house transformed. . . .” Of course I had read it many times before and forgotten it – or rather remembered it so deeply I thought it was my own idea. And I quoted it almost word for word on page 11 of Prairie City without once realizing I had “borrowed” it. And I named my first book, Choctaw “Republic” thinking it was my own idea – and it was yours, too. Well, there just isn’t anything I can do about it, for I do it unconsciously. I guess you taught too well, and I learned too deeply. Anyhow I am grateful for the continuing influence.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

18.

April 12, 1947

Dr. Angie Deboe
Marshall, Oklahoma

Dear Angie:

I was very glad to get your good letter of April 8. I am glad to know that you are going to Stillwater to work with Mr. Low who is a very good friend of mine. I think you are right in believing that library work will interfere less with your writing than work in the department of history.

I am glad you enjoyed the little monograph on "Old Navajoe." I feel flattered that you should find yourself unconsciously using my own words in your writing. I think all of us do that. I know most certainly that I have borrowed from Turner again and again and probably much more than I realize. I deeply appreciate your feeling that I have been able to contribute something to your work.

You must know, I am sure, that I am very proud of you and your accomplishments. I have always pointed to you as my outstanding student in the field of historical literature. It is a great satisfaction to see your former students doing things worthwhile because I full realize that the time is fast coming when you are the ones who must carry the torch and if I have contributed a little of a fire which has lighted it I shall be most happy.

Let me know how your work comes on and if I can help you in any way you know you have only to ask me. With every good wish, I am

Sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale
Research Professor of History

EED:jrm

19.

Marshall, Oklahoma
May 30, 1947

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am going to ask you a foolish question. First let me explain. There is a place in my book where I thought it would be more interesting to introduce the reader to some typical Oklahomans instead of trying to describe the species. And I wanted to use you as one of them, presenting you as the “spokesman” of the group – which I think you are, for you have done so much to interpret the Oklahoma spirit. I got most of the material I needed from a term paper I wrote about your life and work long ago. I think it is accurate, for I took the assignment very seriously.

But I wanted to add a little human detail, if it is true. An old-time Edmond student told me once that when you first started to college you camped in a chuck wagon out by the creek. (Perhaps it was just a covered wagon instead of a chuck wagon.) Now I think that is a good story; and completely typical of Oklahoma. It should have happened even if it didn't. (My own brother lived in a tent all winter when he went to college at Stillwater.) Please tell me if it is true, and if it is true whether you mind my telling it.

Also would you please tell me the names of the universities where you have taught as a visiting professor? I know William and Mary, University of Texas, University of Nebraska. Probably there are others.

I shall miss meeting you and Mrs. Dale at Stillwater this summer.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

Dr. E. E. Dale
Research Professor of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

20.

June 3, 1947

Dr. Angie Debo
Marshall, Oklahoma

Dear Angie:

No, it is not true that I ever camped in a chuck wagon by the creek when I first attended school at Edmond. I lived at Mother Barlow's Boarding House along with Jim Hatcher, Clyde Howell, and various others, with Mell Nash a frequent visitor. We paid ten dollars a month for bed and board and could hardly tell which was which.

I did camp at Cloud Chief while attending a summer normal or rather, I slept on the prairie part of the time and paid two dollars a week for my meals at a near-by home.

As a visiting professor, I have taught at Texas, William and Mary (twice), Nebraska (twice), Missouri, Ohio State, Duke, and Michigan. Also at Wyoming where I gave a short course during the summer. Of course, I do not mind your telling anything you know about me or my early day life. I could tell you a lot of good yarns about my experience as a pioneer teacher, but probably they are hardly worth telling.

With every good wish, I am

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale
Research Professor of History

EED:jb

21.

Marshall, Oklahoma
June 5, 1947

Dear Dr. Dale:

I am very grateful to you for your letter. Those little details sound trivial, but they are important, too. Now I have another question.

I read somewhere – I think in an article Dr. Rister wrote long ago – that when the cattle business blew up you were picking cotton and that a man rode by looking for a teacher. It was then that you qualified and started teaching. Now it seems as though that would have been the time you attended summer normal at Cloud Chief, and that you took your examination for a certificate at the close. Is that right?

I know that Cloud Chief was the county seat of what is now Washita County. Was that the name of the county then?

Your observation on the “bed and Board” is a very Dalesque remark.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

Dr. E. E. Dale
Research Professor of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

22.

June 9, 1947

Dr. Angie Debo
Marshall, Oklahoma

Dear Angie:

It is quite true that I was picking cotton when a man came to see me looking for a teacher, but this was some time after I attended Summer Normal at Cloud Chief. When I went to Cloud Chief, my father was still living and we were operating a little ranch with very few cattle.

I got a teachers certificate at the end of Normal, returned home, and secured a three months school at twenty-five dollars a month but before time for it to begin, my father, brother, and myself all took typhoid fever. My father died and I was in bed two or three months, so I had to give up the school. Then my brother and I, with all the enthusiasm of youth, proceeded to borrow money and embark in ranching on a somewhat bigger scale and a couple of years later, we were broke and I was picking cotton. My certificate, secured at Cloud Chief, had of course expired and the man who offered me a job knew that I had once had one and so presumed that I could get another one, which I did.

Rister's article in The Cattleman gives some discussion of the earlier days and I will try to find one for you if you do not have it. Yes, Cloud Chief was the county seat of Washita County but the county seat was removed to Cordell a year or so later. With every good wish, I am

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale
Research Professor of History

EED:jb

23.

Marshall, Oklahoma
June 12, 1947

Dear Dr. Dale:

Thank you for your letter. I have it all straight now. And you need not trouble to send the Rister article. I took notes on it years ago, and now that the one point is cleared up, I am all right. But I certainly thank you.

Now it would have been a much better story if you had gone to institute after the man came by the cotton field and hired you. That is where the fiction writer has the advantage over the historian. But it is a good story anyhow.

I hope you are making good progress on your writing. I seem to be a little slow. There are so many things I almost know, but not quite, that it takes me a great deal of time to unravel them. But it will be done some time.

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

Dr. E. E. Dale
Research Professor of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

P. S. When the MS is in final form, I am going to submit the sketch to you to be sure you approve. But that is months in the future; no doubt I'll see you by that time. Right now nobody could read it but me.

24.

June 10, 1948

Dr. Angie Debo
Marshall, Oklahoma

Dear Angie:

Rosalie and I appreciate more than we can tell you your kind note with respect to the death of her mother. While Mrs. Gilkey was quite old and her passing was not unexpected, it seems that one never is quite ready for a thing like this.

I presume you have the manuscript with my comments and criticisms before this time. I took it over to the Press so that Mr. Lottinville could look over my comments and the Press sent it on to you by express a few days ago. I am terribly sorry for the delay but you know the reason why. I trust you will not be offended by anything in my comments because you know that my only desire is to be of service if possible. I gave a great deal of time to reading the manuscript and preparing the comments and I only hope they may be of help to you. I earnestly urge that you take the time to do quite a good deal of revision of the manuscript, for I believe in the long run you will find it very much worthwhile.

I am leaving Sunday for a trip to the North but will be at Stillwater for about three days. Rosalie joins me in love and best wishes.

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale
Research Professor of History

EED:jb

25.

Memorandum on

OKLAHOMA: WHERE THE TALL SUPERLATIVES GROW

By

Angie Debo

Dear Angie:

In accordance with your request, I read, before going into your manuscript, not a few pages of George Sessions Perry's Texas but several chapters of it and sketched the remainder very carefully. I then compared with care both your organization and style of writing with those of Mr. Perry. In addition, I also sketched again John Gould Fletcher's Arkansas which I read and reviewed a few weeks ago for one of the historical journals. As previously indicated, I have never had any thought of asking you to imitate Mr. Perry's book or that of Mr. Fletcher either. It did seem to me, however, that a careful reading of these volumes – one dealing with the state south and west of Oklahoma and the other with the state immediately east of it – might be useful. Each of these men is a master craftsman, especially Mr. Perry, who has had far more experience in writing interpretative studies of cities and regions than has anyone in Oklahoma, while you, as a historian, have never before tackled a book of exactly this type.

As indicated in my letter, this memorandum is divided into two parts. The first gives general comments on the manuscript as a whole, while the second consists only of copies of my notes made with respect to each chapter as I read it. In most cases, they will illustrate, or amplify, the earlier general statements. The comments are purely my own and represent only my own reactions to your work. No person has offered me any suggestion nor has anyone seen these comments and suggestions but I will send this to Mr. Lottinville before forwarding it to you, since he is your publisher. Whether or not he will agree with my suggestions, however, I have no means of knowing. You must take them only for what you think they are worth for the book is yours. I can only hope that some of them may be helpful.

General Comments

Your book contains an amazing amount of information. I first saw Oklahoma long before you were born and have written, or edited, six books on the state but I learned much from every chapter and something from almost every page. Clearly, you have worked long and patiently to collect so much information and compress it into some 300 pages. It seems to me that in some places you have put in almost too much factual material as in the description of geologic formations. Also in describing the techniques of oil drilling which are exactly the same in Oklahoma as in most other states. In fact, I find several places where you deal with matters not exclusively Oklahoman. Yet, there is much that is peculiar to Oklahoma that must be left out if you give space to things that are common to other states since your number of pages is limited.

Again, without suggesting that you imitate Perry, I wish you could compare his organization and method of approach with your own. You will note that he deals with the people of Texas largely in groups or by regions, "Where Louisiana Leaves Off," (Chapter 3); "Cotton Folks," (Chapter 4); "Ranch Country," (Chapter 5); "City Slickers," (Chapter 6). He also has chapters on "Things Peculiarly Our Own," (Chapter 7); and on food, speech, water, etc. The best chapters in Fletcher's Arkansas are also those dealing with the life of people in certain regions as "The World of the Mountaineer," "The World of the Share Cropper," and "Rice Enriches the Prairie." Oklahoma has quite as many regions and definite groups of people, in my opinion, as has Texas or Arkansas. There is the life of the hill people of the Kiamitia Mountains, and of the wheat farmers of the northwestern prairies, the cotton farmers of the southwestern prairies, the world of the oil field workers and of the coal miners.

You deal far more with individual persons and places than does Perry. Except in the first chapter where he gives some attention to Dobie, the typical Texan, just as you do to me as an Oklahoma type, and Chapter 12 on free-for-all politics, he deals very little with living persons. Also, he discusses only major cities and hardly mentions minor towns. You, on the other hand, deal much with living persons and smaller towns. This adds much to the information but it has elements of danger. When you refer in uncomplimentary terms to individual political leaders, all their relatives and friends will "rise up and call you blessed." When you mention many artists and writers by name and omit others, those others and their friends and relatives even to the third and fourth generation will squawk to high Heaven. When you tell of Muskogee, Shawnee, Lawton, Kingfisher, Guthrie, et al, and leave out Bartlesville, Miami, Durant, Hugo, McAlester, etc., you will be excommunicated by the Chambers of Commerce of those thriving towns. How to solve this problem I do not know but it would help to deal with people more in groups and to give one or two typical towns in each area or region,

saving your face by pointing out very specifically that this is what you have done and that many other towns of great importance cannot be treated. The same technique might be wise for individual artists and authors, for you've omitted many who think themselves better than some of those you have named.

It seems clear to me that your writing quite naturally is influenced by your previous work, or rather by research done for your earlier books, particularly And Still the Waters Run and Tulsa. It is quite true that the Indian grafters have been notorious and that their shameful operations should be wholeheartedly condemned. It seems to me, however, that you have overstressed it by getting back to it again and again. Your research in this field has given you some of the attributes of the chairman of the discipline committee who sees only the malefactors of the student body and eventually comes to feel that nearly all students are bad, though the percentage of bad ones may be small. Also in justice to Oklahomans, it should be pointed out that a very large proportion of our Indian grafters were not native to the state but were shyster lawyers or other opportunists who flocked here from all over the country, lured by the hope of easy money. It seems also that you have written in your personal preferences occasionally. I sense that Tulsa is your favorite town and A. an M. your favorite college. If such is the case, there could be no possible objection to your saying so in so many words. This is a free country. (Or is it?) But it should be expressed as a personal preference and not necessarily as an established fact that this city or institution is superior to others. In fact, it always seems best to me to avoid comparisons – even implied comparisons – so far as possible.

The gravest criticism I have to offer is that you have at times shown yourself a true daughter of the state “where the tall superlatives grow.” Some chapters, or portions of chapters might have been written by the secretary of the most enthusiastic of booster clubs. Yet, paradoxical as it may seem, there are spots where you seem to have subconsciously felt that you have gone a bit too far in your booster attitude and have sought to restore a balance by severe and, it seems to me, unjustified criticism. Oklahoma has plenty of good things and plenty of bad ones but both are largely the result of its historical heritage. Even the evils might be dealt with sympathetically with a realization that in view of its historical background, Oklahoma and Oklahoma people could hardly be different from what they are. Some things, moreover, which you have criticized are no more common to Oklahoma than to a dozen other states; our attitude toward the Negro, for example. Criticism is deserved but should be tempered by a definite statement to the effect that Oklahoma is a Southern state and so takes the Southern attitude, though perhaps hardly as much so as does Mississippi, Georgia, or a dozen others. On the whole, however, I feel that you have been more extravagant in praise than in blame, though there are some places where both should be toned down and sharp criticism is more dangerous than florid praise, though both are bad.

In my opinion, there are times when you have not made it possible for your readers to distinguish between facts and truth. The account of whites

monopolizing seats in the section for colored on the bus and forcing the Negroes to stand is an example. I do not believe that such an attitude is universal or even common. The Negro question is nationwide and very hot. I'd steer clear of it so far as possible. You never change anyone's opinion on it. Other examples will appear in the chapter by chapter comments.

There are some things I would expect to find in your manuscript that are lacking. Oklahoma, if I am not mistaken, is one of the three prohibition states of the nation. The liquor problem is very real. It would require tact to deal with it but it seems to me that it should be done – probably an entire chapter could be devoted to it. For the moonshiner, the bootlegger, the rum runner, the people who “vote dry but drink wet” constitute an important element and cause some of our gravest problems. You deal a little with churches and religion but it seems to me more could be given to advantage as to which churches are strongest and the part which religion plays in the lives of the people, the revival meeting, the Indian churches, etc. Certainly a deep spiritual faith must have sustained the pioneer settlers during the hard years of life on a homestead and some statement on this seems desirable. Also treat religion sympathetically even that of the Holy Rollers!

Oklahoma is often called the Sooner State and 100,000 grads. and former students of O. U. stand when they hear the strains of Boomer-Sooner. Yet, though you have a chapter on Sooners or Okies, I do not find more than a mention of David L. Payne and the Boomers and no definition of “Sooners.” (Maybe I've overlooked it.) It seems to me that these terms deserve more explanation since half the people of Oklahoma do not know what the word “Sooners” means – or “Boomer” either, for that matter. Also, I had expected more on regional lifeways.

Getting back to Perry again, it seems to me that he has been somewhat more sympathetic toward the shortcomings of Texas than you have been toward those of Oklahoma, or at least he is more tactful in his use of words condemning them. His humor, too, though a bit bawdy at times, seems more spontaneous than yours, which in some instances seems a trifle forced. Perry is of course an artist in this type of writing and his book has more sparkle than that of almost any other author I know whose writing is of the interpretative type.

You are too good a historian ever to go far wrong in your historical statements, though you have made a few with which I would disagree. At least, I would disagree with what you have said, though probably not with what you mean if your statement were elaborated more and further explanation given.

I would warn you, however, against flat definite statements of appraisal of contemporary persons, and recent events, or arbitrary statements, especially of a critical nature. Great skill and some tact are necessary to say in a few words exactly what you mean without giving needless offense. In a book of this type you are certain to offend some people but don't go out of your way to do it. In some cases, it may be necessary to ask yourself: “Is this statement or criticism

necessary? Does it add anything to the reader's understanding of Oklahoma or does it make my book any better?" It is not that I want you to "pussy-foot" or lack courage to say what you think but be very sure that you mean exactly what you say, or that your words require no further explanation to make their meaning clear. Moreover, be objective in statements, avoiding giving personal views on controversial matters, unless you say they are personal views.

Your manuscript is remarkably free of mechanical errors. The few which I observed will doubtless be picked up by the publisher's editors, though they might overlook such misspelled proper names as Castañeda, on the first page or Seiling. Personally, I do not like your constant use of parentheses, but that may merely be a matter of my own individual preference.

After reading the foregoing, you may have the impression that I think your manuscript all bad. This is quite untrue. There are parts of it which are excellent and much that is good. It shows an amazing amount of work and you have there everything needed to make an outstanding book. Moreover, I have not the slightest doubt of your ability to make it so if you are willing to do more work on it and will accept the suggestions and criticisms offered by myself and others just as far as you can feel that they are justified. You may say that you have already given more time and effort to the manuscript than the amount of money you have received justifies. Any scholar who receives a grant always does so. I made three trips to the Pacific Coast and spent all my time there for six months and all my spare time for another year on a book for the Huntington Library. For all this I received a total of \$1,800, one fourth of which went for railroad fare and Pullman. I am not sorry but if I had worked at teaching, I could have earned over twice that much in the six months time spent at the Huntington, to say nothing of the part time for another entire year.

A number of your chapters are excellent and need only a slight change – in most cases of a few words or sentences. Others require some revision of a few pages or paragraphs. A few should, in my opinion, be wholly rewritten. These are not many and it is only a matter of writing for you have all necessary information. The research is done and such rewriting as is necessary is by no means an impossible or even too difficult a task. But it will take more hard work to make this the best book you can do. And don't be stubborn and insist on your own particular wording or pet phrases. Only a genius like G. B. S. [George Bernard Shaw] can afford to be disagreeable in his writing. You and I must write to please our readers as well as to inform them. Avoid overstatements both laudatory and critical and do not play up controversial matters as the race question that are nationwide in scope and upon which everyone has made up what he calls his mind. Concentrate on Oklahoma.

26.

REPORT ON DR. DALE'S MEMORANDUM

By

Angie Debo

Dear Savoie:

I will deal with specific criticisms first before taking up the general, giving the page of his memorandum.

First in an accompanying letter he suggested that the wording of my dedication was subject to an interpretation which I did not mean – a reference to J.A.B's unhappy experience as a university president. And yet I do want to show that too many Oklahomans find greater opportunities outside the state, for I think that is one of the most significant features of our social life. To convey this meaning and to steer clear of the presidential controversy I am changing it to

JOSEPH A. BRANDT

EX-OKLHOMAN

Is that O.K.?

I should like to express appreciation to Dr. Dale in this same preface, but have refrained for the present because if we keep his biographical sketch in the body of the book he might be embarrassed if I thank him for reading the manuscript.

p. 4 of memorandum –

How does one spell the name of the man who went with Coronado? I spelled it as Dr. Dale does, only to be very sharply reprimanded by one of the readers; and so I changed it to suit him. Frankly, I do not know. Will you please give it your attention? It is on p. 1 of the MS.

p. 6 of memorandum –

Chapter I

I left out three words on p. 3 and one on page 4, which might have indicated annoyance with Edna Ferber. As for the hatred Californians feel toward "Okies" if Dr. Dale has not encountered it, he has confined his associations to an enlightened and cultured minority. But I changed the strongly worded sentence on p. 7, expressing the fact in weakened language.

Dr. Dale wondered if this chapter might not be deleted entirely. I do not object. (I think I know where I can use it in other writing plans.) It seems to me, however, if you discard it you are losing some good writing and a necessary part of the interpretation of

the Oklahoma scene. If you do cut it out, I will leave out portions of pp. 62, 105-6, and 123 & 131. Again I think this is a vital part of the economic story, but I will willingly make the deletions if you say so.

Perhaps I should say that none of the previous readers – hostile as they were – made any objection to this chapter. Apparently it was the part of the book that suited them best.

p. 6 –

Chapter II

p. 11. I got this information from Dr. Ray Six of A. and M. I have been told he is the only man in the state who teaches a course in Oklahoma geology. But I will check with Dr. Dott to make doubly sure. *Later – Dott says this is O.K. but I changed my wording slightly.*

p. 12. I got this from a Geological Survey bulletin, but again I'll check with Dr. Dott. *After hearing from Dott I changed my figures.*

Chapter III

These objections are well taken. I have tried to improve the wording.

p. 7 –

Chapter IV

p. 38. I changed it.

p. 40. I changed it.

p. 41. In this case I am positive my statement is correct, but I am changing “most” to “many.” The exact percentage does not matter to me.

p. 45. Yes, I am omitting it purposely. I do not think this auction sale belongs with the land openings. If such sales are to be given, there were several more important than this one – for example, the sale of more than 3 ½ million acres of Choctaw-Chickasaw land left unallotted. It is a complicated story and not important for present purposes; so I am saying nothing about it. I have given these more important land auctions in full in AND STILL THE WATERS RUN. Here I mention them in one sentence on p. 46 of the present manuscript.

p. 45. I grew up thinking Oklahoma and Indian Territory were two separate entities, but this is the short and temporary view. The dominant fact in both areas was the change from Indian to white tenure. This is the long view. I cannot change my fundamental concept of Oklahoma history even for so great a historian as Dr. Dale. And I am not just now springing it on the University [of Oklahoma] Press. I stated the same thing in Prairie City, p. 121, and it underlies much of what I have written in The Road to Disappearance and Tulsa, both Press publications. It will have to stand as it is.

Chapter V

p. 54. I changed the wording.

p. 57. That statement does serve a necessary purpose. I want to show how early these predatory interests began to move in on the state government. I am not willing to change it.

p. 8 –

Chapter V, cont'd.

p. 57. If I am capable of any political judgment, the Oklahoma constitution is completely “unworkable.” I am sure any member of the OU Government will back me up in this statement. I am not changing it.

p. 57. I doubt that this needed clarification, but I reworded it. Personally, I think it was better as it stood.

p. 57. I changed this.

p. 58. This is a good criticism. I think I have clarified my statement now.

p. 8, cont'd –

p. 59. This is not satire, but serious writing. And such an inarticulate, pathetic, misguided protest does not seem to me the proper subject for “good natured ribbing.” Much has been written about it, but none of its attempted interpreters has been familiar with its background in Seminole County history. The county judge had distributed guardianships to members of his ring – two of whom were also members of the legislature – and the guardians had then “sold” the land of Indian and negro children and the estates of deceased allottees to themselves through this same judge’s court. At the same time they obtained the property of adults through systematic and widespread forgery of deeds. Page after page of the local newspapers was filled with the publication notices required by law in such sales. The land was then leased to white share-croppers, who lived in poverty unrelieved by the hope of the hard-run homesteader of the land rushes. And the land speculators were defiant and unashamed. Some of them were rising to high positions in the state. All this is a matter of record, which I can prove in detail.

p. 59. I cannot say these conditions were the cause of the “Green Corn Rebellion,” but the connection seems more than probable. And I am offering the University [of Oklahoma] Press a more thoughtful interpretation than has ever been presented before. There is of course no question of libel in such restrained and general statements as I have made in the manuscript; it is simply a matter of the balance between unpleasant truth and sweetness and light. If you choose the latter, just draw a pencil through these two sentences: “But their revolt . . . concluded everything was rotten”; and “(It is significant that only the Socialist . . . probate courts.)”

p. 59. There is no doubt in my mind that young, naïve, energetic Oklahoma took more direct action in dealing with “slackers” than other states. (I should not use the word “worse.”) This is clearly evident in a very scholarly study on a related subject by O. A. Hilton – “The Oklahoma Council of Defense and the First World War,” Chronicles of Oklahoma, XX, 18-42. Again, I am not springing anything new, for I said the same thing with greater detail in Prairie City.

p. 67. Dr. Dale has not mentioned this, but I wonder what you think of my paragraph beginning “Here I pause” – The object of course is to protect you from my frequent mention of the achievements and influence of the University Press. But have I done it naturally, or in a labored, affected manner? If you think of a way to do it better, or if you have any other wording that you prefer, I shall be glad to substitute it.

pp. 67-68. I certainly agree with Dr. Dale that this was “only an isolated incident that might have occurred anywhere” (except that I am puzzled by the senator’s being armed). The only reason I felt I had to tell it was that the story had gone out in lurid detail even to foreign countries; and I did not want readers to say, “She says Oklahoma politics

has calmed down, but what about that shooting last year?" Thus it seems to me better to explain than to ignore it. But cut out the paragraph if you think best. If you do leave it out, please change the first sentence of the next paragraph to make it cover the gap better. Say, "The 1947 legislature also passed a bill for submitting," etc.

Chapter VI

p. 81. Good suggestion. I rewrote the page, making some other changes, and left out that sentence entirely.

p. 8, cont'd –

p. 82. This use of parentheses seems to grow out of the nature of the book. At least the device seems to be employed in all of these interpretative studies of states and regions that just now are flooding the markets. The one best known to the University [of Oklahoma] Press, of course, is Haystead's IF THE PROSPECT PLEASES. I read that book as soon as it appeared and thought it very fine. The parentheses did not impress me unpleasantly; in fact I did not even notice them until an objection was made to my own book on that ground. Haystead uses fully as many as I do, and uses them in exactly the same way. I am sure you did not object, for you even sent me a copy of his book as an example of what you wanted in mine.

There is not very much I can do about it; for it is not a matter of punctuation, but of fundamental organization. If the marks were cut out, that would throw the parenthetical matter into the paragraph and break up its continuity of expression.

pp. 83-84. This is indeed an excellent suggestion about DeGolyer. But I do not know enough about him to follow it intelligently now. I will do some more work, and add to this page later.

p. 9 –

Chapter IX

p. 112. Some of these towns followed the Southern custom of turning everything over to the negroes on Saturday while the white people stayed off the streets. But I will change it to "towns filled with happy negroes." It does not matter too much.

p. 117. I want to avoid what Dr. Dale so cleverly calls "boisterous" writing. Therefore I am making some radical changes of pp. 117 and 117 A. I think this is a great improvement and that it entirely eliminates the quality he found unpleasant. But I do not think he – or you either – would want me to suppress a factual summary of Oklahoma farm club achievements such as I give on pp. 118-119; for these are matters of public record. The bare facts are truly amazing.

p. 121. I have changed it to "from Indian to white ownership." This innocuous statement is not so accurate as the former one, but my footnote reference will protect me from any charge of superficiality.

p. 9, cont'd –

Chapter X

p. 136. I changed it.

p. 136. It happens that I know. I live among these farm children who drive cars illegally. I have never known of a single accident in this group, while I have known of many among their licensed teen-age brothers. Also I usually study the reports of car accidents in the daily press; and among the hundreds of fatal accidents I have never found a single one involving one of these under-age farm drivers. But I am adding the phrase, “With the full consent of their parents.” That will make it even more clear that I am not referring to the irresponsible city boy who steals a car and smashes it.

p. 137. It is explained in the preceding sentence. Oil and flying go together; Tulsa is the oil city; therefore it takes the lead in aviation. And I need the word, “naturally,” to establish the transition from the preceding paragraph.

p. 127. This is a valid criticism, but I cannot meet it. I made a trip to Henryetta and spent several days there. I talked with Mr. Earl Wells, who is the most influential and social-minded (though not the most wealthy) coal operator in the state. He co-operated in every way; took me around to his mines and showed me the mining settlements and answered all my questions. But miners are very close mouthed. Nobody has ever made a worth-while study of the Oklahoma coal miner. I believe I could do it if I were to take the same amount of time and effort I took to write a history of the Choctaws or the Creeks. But for present purposes I have stated all I know – or all that anybody else knows – and freely confessed the gaps in my knowledge.

As to Dr. Dale’s feeling that this chapter is “boisterous” – I love that word! – I have read it carefully and cannot find any reason for this feeling. I have stated that Oklahoma is seriously retarded industrially – have even shown that this is the real cause of the California migration – and I have described the present concerted drive to develop the state’s unused resources. Then I have summed it all up in the last paragraph by saying: “Oklahoma’s industrial development represents a wish more than a fulfillment.” If this is booster language I cannot see it. And I am truly anxious to find and eliminate boosterism anywhere in the manuscript.

Perhaps Dr. Dale was still under the influence of the part of the preceding chapter which struck him unpleasantly. I changed that in accordance with his suggestions; perhaps if he were to read it now with those changes he would not object to the present chapter.

Chapter XI

Dr. Dale criticizes this chapter so sharply, not only on p. 9 but on p. 3 of his general comments that I went over it very thoughtfully. I rearranged the material so that its organization pleases me much better than it did before. (He objected to the organization.) Then I considered specific criticisms, which I will take up later in detail. But when it comes to writing an entirely different chapter based on other premises, I cannot do that; it grows out of many years of writing experience, and it represents the best work I can do.

Now to specific criticisms:

p. 139-42. (“The story with which the chapter begins taxes my credulity,” etc.) I assure you the story is true. I will say in answer to his objections,

p. 9, cont’d –

(a) It was Dr. Dale himself who first called my attention to how slowly the western edge of Oklahoma was settled. He rode across it once from the south up to the Kansas border and found scarcely a homesteader's house on the whole trip. And a young man on horseback has a much larger radius of neighborhood knowledge than a woman alone on a claim.

p. 10 –

(b) Even though the homesteader did not accompany the woman on the drive, he helped her in the way it mattered most. He was afraid of contagion for his own children. She could take the drive alone; but she had to have help in continued care of the sick and burial of the dead, so here he took the risk.

(c) Nobody could put a farm under cultivation with only one team. It simply can't be done. And my father at least brought two wagons of a sort to Oklahoma: one was a good wagon, the other had a rack for hauling hay.

I do not mind cutting out the whole story if you say so. I will fill the gap by a general paragraph saying that early Oklahoma settlers helped each other. I can use the story in other writing. (And how!) It is the very best story I have ever unearthed in my years of research. But it is no vital part of my interpretation, and I am perfectly willing to delete it.

p. 146. I cut it all out.

p. 149. I got this from statistical tables furnished me by the State Planning and Resources Board. In the light of present tendencies it is very unlikely that another doctor will move into Cimarron County; it is possible, however, that the one already there will die or move out. If you require up-to-the-minute statistics on this I will find out just as the book goes to press. To me, the important thing is the lack of medical care for the rural and small town population. And I assure you it is important. For years I have lived eight miles away on dirt roads from a feeble old man still bravely trying to carry on a general practice, thirty miles from the nearest active physician. And the Planning and Resources statistics show that many towns larger than Marshall are in the same circumstances.

p. 150. I changed it.

p. 151. People who claim to know these things say the custom of walking with arms wound around each other is an Oklahoma phenomenon not found on other college campuses. I am not speaking of morals – just the enthusiastic character of Oklahoma courtship. But if you prefer, make the sentence read, “Early marriages are the rule in Oklahoma.” As to what I have said about divorce, if you will read the paragraph you will agree that I have handled the subject sympathetically.

pp. 153-54. In all the years I have been under Dr. Dale's influence I have marveled at the comprehensiveness of his knowledge. This is the first time I have ever seen him slip. But he shows that he does not know anything about the Holy Rollers. He thinks I am talking about Nazarenes! If he were to study them as I have done – I have gone to their meetings in the course of my researches – he would agree that they present a psychic phenomenon that cannot be ignored if one is to tell the whole truth about Oklahoma.

In the reorganization of this chapter the Holy Roller paragraph is now moved to pp. 152-53. In order to keep anyone else from making Dr. Dale's mistake – though I think

that is improbable – I inserted two sentences about the Nazarenes at the top of p. 152. Then in the last line on 152 I weakened “hideous, howling crew” to “howling band.” If you wish to weaken it further, you can cut out that whole sentence. It begins “I have seen a baby of five or six” – Frankly I think it needs no weakening; it reminds me of William L. Shirer’s unforgettable description of Nazi emotional excesses in the party meeting at Nuremburg. And it is not a

p. 10 cont’d –

sporadic thing. It has been going on to my knowledge since 1917. It certainly does damage the children; I have known of their being driven to St. Vitus’ dance or a dullness approaching idiocy. I even knew of one adult who died of his emotional excesses, but he did have a weak heart. So far as I can observe, the adults seem pretty tough.

Now to “General Comments” p. 3 –

I have eliminated the incidents of discrimination against negroes, condensing the whole thing into one paragraph in the middle of p. 142. I am sure Dr. Dale would approve. This paragraph is the one beginning, “Only the negroes are held outside,” etc.

I finally yielded to the insistence that I write about prohibition. There are two paragraphs on 151 A. This is as far as I can go on a subject about which no objective study has ever been made. I did feel competent to write of prohibition in a little town in Prairie City. I must have done it well, for the Baptists put the book in a recommended list (speaking of religious groups, the Catholics did, too) and H. L. Mencken said it was one of the ten best books of the year. But I am not competent – and nobody else is at present – to write of its wider ramifications.

I expanded my former statement that “Oklahomans have the instinctive reverence, which is the basis of religion” into a whole paragraph. It is on p. 153, middle of the page. I hope that is satisfactory. He wanted me to say more about religion as an influence. And I put in a few more denominations on p. 152. But revival meetings seem to be out of fashion. And as for Indian churches I had already discussed that on pp. 187-88.

Dr. Dale saved me from a serious slip when he pointed out that I had failed to give the origin of “Sooner.” You will find it now on p. 38. As to David L. Payne and the Boomers, they were already treated adequately.

Chapter XII

I agree with the statement at the bottom of the page. I have said the same in different words on p. 177.

p. 11 –

p. 173. I changed it to “a few days.”

Chapter XIV

p. 187. I changed it.

p. 189. I changed it to “In 1933.”

p. 189. There are six now. The seven were reduced to three, but all but one was reinstated. Miami is the one that was not restored.

p. 189. This is right. I got it from the director himself. There has since been some talk of curtailing the work of this office, but it seems to be slated to go through Congress unchanged.

p. 191. Changed to “died from malnutrition.”

p. 192. I am leaving it as it is. It may grow into something very important; on the other hand it may die out. I believe this is all I want to say about it.

p. 11, cont’d –

Chapter XV

p. 187 (should be 197). I have the text of the law here. It was passed by the First Legislature and went into effect Dec. 25, 1890. The only exemption is food and fuel on hand, and that is limited to one year’s supply. It lists as taxable “all furniture;” watches; libraries; farm machinery; credits, including debts from solvent debtors whether living in or out of the territory; improvements on government land, etc. It was repealed by another law, which went into effect March 3, 1893. This added only one thing to the exemptions: breaking [before this, if a settler broke up an acre of sod it was taxed as an “improvement”], wells, and fertilizing.

p. 199. This rivalry is one of the factors of Oklahoma educational policy. It exists not only in the minds of “prejudiced faculty members” of both schools, but out in the hinterland, even in the minds of grade school children throughout the farms and towns of the state. If Dr. Dale is not conscious of it, it is because he is one of the few people I know who accept both institutions.

pp. 199-200. I am willing to abandon all attempts to evaluate the two schools. I have rewritten the paragraph. You will find the new one on p. 199 A. I am protecting myself by stating why I am dodging any characterization of the two schools; but I do not think that will offend anybody.

p. 12 –

Chapter XV, cont’d.

I read the whole chapter with my eye peeled for “boisterous” writing. I concluded it was necessary to state some facts about Oklahoma young people, but that it would be more becoming if as an Oklahoman I would present them with an implied apology rather than with expressed pride. I think that takes care of it. You will find the introductory paragraph on p. 202 – the one beginning, “Growing up in this atmosphere.”

I condensed the “on the job training” part from 4 to 2 ½ pages, retaining only the part with an Oklahoma application. And as an added Oklahoma touch I made a brief reference to A. and M.’s “Veterans Village,” which is peculiar to Oklahoma alone. I think as this stands now, it is a rather necessary part of the picture. When I first wrote it (in the longer form, of course) I referred it for criticism to a village school superintendent. He liked my over-all interpretation so well that he had copies made to hand his instructors of veterans. You will find the revised account on p. 207 (last two lines) to 210 (first half).

Chapter XVI

p. 216. Agreed. It serves no good purpose. I changed it to “vocational college.”

I did think about leaving out some of these individual athletes, but my sports-minded friends said that was heresy or something. They do serve one important purpose; they show athletics grow out of typical Oklahoma conditions – these boys’ “hometown addresses dot the state.” And I do believe the chapter deals mainly with underlying principles rather than individuals.

Chapter XVII

p. 229. The “ten miles long” lies along the river; the “twelve miles wide” is the width of the valley. O.K.?

p. 12, cont’d –

Chapter XVIII

p. 241. I pruned it. p. 247 (See back of page.)

Whole chapter. The basis of selection is stated in the first paragraph, also in the last sentence of the preceding chapter. I am dealing here with celebrations, chiefly historic celebrations. Then there is the additional motive, also stated in the first paragraph, of “loading the family in the car and driving to the city.” This justifies a little discussion of the influence of the largest cities – Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Muskogee, Enid, and Shawnee – as a place for the people to visit.

The most careful reader of a manuscript is handicapped by the inconvenience of the bulky typed page and the absence of an index. If Dr. Dale had been reading a published book he would have noticed that I treated all but one of the cities he listed. (The one exception is Antlers, a good, average small town like dozens of others I unmentioned.) I am convinced that my method of presenting them with the leading economic or social interest is better than crowding them all into my chapter on celebrations.

I will illustrate by Ada, the first on his list. I mentioned it as an oil town (p. 79), the center of Hereford Heaven (p. 108), a dairy center (p. 109), the place of an important quarter horse show (p. 110), the place having a rodeo drawing more people than Cheyenne, Wyoming (p. 111), the place where they get clay for Frankhoma pottery (p. 129), the site of a glass factory (p. 130), the site of a rock wool plant (p. 132), the site of a teachers’ college (p. 200), the home town of Harry Brecheen (214), of Ida Hoover, the most active citizen of Oklahoma in encouraging public school art (p. 276), the birthplace of Wellborn Hope (p. 291), and probably in other ways that I do not recall.

p. 13 –

Chapter XVIII, cont’d –

No doubt I could write about the small town and its growth cycle. I did in fact write PRAIRIE CITY about just that. But I have innumerable reviews and “fan” letters from readers all through the Middle West – from Ohio to the Rocky Mountains – saying “Prairie City” was typical of their towns. Nobody knows better than I that this development is not confined to Oklahoma. For this reason I decline to take it up in the present book.

I mentioned “ghost oil towns” on p. 70, where I state that some of the boom towns “dried up and died with the depletion of the field.”

Chapter XIX

p. 263. Changed.

p. 264. I changed this and some other places where I used “take.” But my dictionary does define “take” as “to make choice of.”

p. 265. I got this from a master’s thesis called to my attention by William Harold Smith. It is unquestionably true, and safe enough since it deals with chronology and not with merit. It is like saying “Fort Gibson was the first fort established in Oklahoma.” But I am changing the wording slightly.

p. 267. I changed it.

p. 273. Page the Louvre!

p. 274. I decided not. The chapter may grow too long.

p. 13, cont’d –

Chapter XIX, cont’d.

After taking up these specific criticisms I read the chapter through as a whole with the one object of discovering if possible any “Rotarianism.” I am unable to find it. Like the chapter on industry it treats largely of great natural resources still largely unused.

As to the danger of being scalped by somebody I have missed, I have tried as I always do to present a balanced account. And the reviewers have certainly been good to me during the fourteen years I have been writing.

Chapter XX

p. 281. Page Ladd Haystead!

p. 282. Changed. In fact I had already changed this on my carbon copy, and was waiting only for the original to incorporate the change there. The first statement came from the public press; and I checked later with Miss Wright herself, and made the correction.

p. 284. It seems to me I have made this clear enough by stating that the money “is paid as advance royalty to authors.” But of course I want to state this exactly as you want it stated. Anything you say is O. K.

p. 284. Here again about Tompkins’ grant, anything you say is O. K. But I hesitate to change it without referring it to you first, for I have a letter from you (dated August 30, 1947) stating that ALASKA was published under this same grant.

In a letter accompanying his criticism Dr. Dale says, “The grant made to the University by the Foundation was to promote the preparation of studies in the humanities but such grants are not limited to Southwestern projects and we have made several for studies that are national in scope.” Here again I hesitate to make the change without referring it to you first, for another letter from you (dated December 12, 1946) states “The grant of \$25,000 is for investigation and writing in humane fields relating to the Southwest.”

Perhaps Dr. Dale is right instead of you. If he is, I know you will not mind eating a few of your words after I have eaten so many of mine; and I will gladly make the correction.

p. 284. I am glad to include Alice Marriott’s book. In fact I marked it on my carbon copy as soon as the Press released it, and was only waiting for the manuscript to get back to me. Also treated it on p. 178.

p. 288. I deleted the reference to Mrs. Oliver on p. 288. I did have a reason for putting it there – I wanted to show that the anthologies published other than university poets – but I am glad to remove anything that might seem like loose organization.

p. 293. Re Jennie Harris Oliver’s education. THE HANDBOOK OF OKLA. WRITERS – a [University of Oklahoma] Press book, too! – quotes her on p. 26 as saying she never got beyond the sixth or seventh grade, taught school with hard study, apparently never mastered arithmetic and geography.

“Were Oklahoma school teachers of early days that bad?” And how!

p. 295. Surely if there is any possibility of misunderstanding, I will state the “unpleasant places,” etc. represent George Milburn’s opinion, not mine. I am inserting “to him.”

No doubt “every book” is not literally true. He certainly reads my books diligently, uses them for ammunition in his pop gun. I am changing to “His writing shows he is a diligent reader of Oklahoma books.”

p. 295. Yes, he knows his subject; he wouldn’t know how to hurt so badly if he didn’t. And he does “keep his knowledge to himself.” As I say, “He has not told the whole story.” He belongs with those I analyzed on p. 288 who “began writing

p. 14, cont’d –

to please Mencken rather than to please themselves” and who “have missed greatness by that narrow margin.” I disapprove of him as violently as Dr. Dale does, but Dr. Dale agrees “that he can write” and so I cannot ignore him.

p. 296. You and I know that my statement is true. Of course Dr. Dale finds “a great interest in Oklahoma” everywhere he goes; his personal charm is so great that I cannot imagine anybody not being interested in anything he talks about. And the home people do not read. The difference between them and Texans presents the sharpest contrast imaginable. I do not know Kansas and Missouri so well as Texas, but I am convinced the contrast is only a little less startling. As for Arkansas – poor Arkansas – I’m afraid it belongs with Oklahoma. So much for the “home people of nearby states.”

There might be reasons of policy why the [University of Oklahoma] Press prefers not to publish this evaluation. In that case, just say so and I’ll delete it. But if it is a matter of accurate reporting and not policy, I will not change it.

pp. 297-98. I am glad to include WNAD. The only reason I had left it out was that I had already said so much about the literary influence of the university. As for WKY it certainly does not broadcast anything about Oklahoma books. I admit it is “on the air” – I gave it full credit on p. 143, and perhaps in other places that I do not now recall – but it does not deal with state authorship.

About “boosting” and “jabs,” one cannot be an honest critic without some praise and blame. I have reviewed books for every scholarly magazine in the United States; they all seem to think my evaluation is objective.

Now for the general comments:

I hope these specific things I have done will remove the general objections; but if not, there is nothing I can do about it. I am indeed grateful to Dr. Dale for the hard work he did on this manuscript. I am even more grateful for the courage he showed in writing so sharply to one who, as he knows, is one of his most devoted admirers; not many friends are as brave as that. But this book is an expression of my own personality and not of Dr. Dale's. I could not, even if I would, rewrite it on radically different lines. I feel fairly confident, however, that you will be satisfied with the revision I have made.

I have expressed a willingness to give up Chapters I (pp. 1-8) and XII (pp. 156-171) and a story on pp. 139-42. If you decide to eliminate any of them I shall need to do a little revising to cover up the raw edges where they are cut out. Probably I should point out also that it will make my manuscript a little shorter than the original plan.

I have referred a number of questions to you. You can answer all but three by drawing a line through an indicated sentence in the manuscript or marking in a penciled word or two. The three exceptions have to do with the policy of the University [of Oklahoma] Press. They are on pp. 67, 284, and 296. If you desire revision there, perhaps it had better be referred to me so that I can make it fit into the manuscript. This is only a matter of continuity.

Somehow I have a feeling that our troubles are over,

Sincerely,

Angie Debo.

27.

August 19, 1948

Dr. Angie Debo
Marshall, Oklahoma

Dear Angie:

Soon after my recent return to Oklahoma, Mr. Lottinville sent me your revised manuscript together with your report on my memorandum to you, and I have now gone over both of these with considerable care. You have accepted far more of my criticisms and suggestions than I had any right to expect and naturally I think the manuscript is greatly improved. I am inclined to agree with you that your troubles with respect to this book are about over.

I cannot see that it would serve any good purpose for me to offer any further comment on those points where we seem to disagree. The ability to think for oneself is the very essence of scholarship and I offered no suggestion without the full realization that you might be right and I wrong. You are quite right in saying that it took a lot of time and effort and a great deal of courage for me to prepare this memorandum. As I have already indicated, I would not have "rushed in where angels fear to tread" had it not been that the situation was very bad and I felt a certain measure of responsibility because of having suggested both the study and you as the proper person to do it.

My comments and criticisms may have seemed sharp to you at times but I trust that they were never "nasty" or "catty." Certainly such was not my intention. "Having put my hand to the plow," however, intellectual honesty demanded that I give you a perfectly frank and honest appraisal of your book. Anything less than that could have been of no possible service either to you or to the University [of Oklahoma] Press.

I deeply appreciate the kindly and generous manner in which you received all of my comments and suggestions, even in those cases where you were obliged to reject them. Also, I was deeply touched and a little embarrassed by the evidences of your friendship and admiration which appear in every part of your report and by your almost childlike faith in my judgment and ability as a historian. I have never professed to be a "great historian" nor even an expert in the field of Oklahoma History. I am sure that there are a number of people in this state, including yourself, who know fully as much about Oklahoma History as I do, but I am deeply grateful for the evidences you have given of your continued friendship and good will. With every good wish, I am

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale
Research Professor of History

28.

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

NORMAN * OKLAHOMA

August 19, 1948

Mr. Savoie Lottinville
University of Oklahoma
Faculty Exchange

Dear Savoie:

I am returning herewith the Debo manuscript and the inclosures, all of which I have gone over with a good deal of care. I think the manuscript is very much improved and I think with a certain amount of editorial work, it can be made publishable but it will never be quite what you and I had hoped.

As Morgan has said, it will require a good deal of work by your editor but personally, I am not at all sure that your editor should go over the manuscript "some of it page by page with the author." Frankly, I think we have pushed Angie just about as far as we can and that she now shows greater humility and more desire to cooperate than I feared she ever would. My own feeling is that it would be better for your editorial staff arbitrarily to make such deletions and revisions as seem absolutely necessary without further consultation with Angie and then present it to her for approval if you think necessary. This, however, is of course your problem.

I cannot see that it would do any possible good for me to make any defense of my suggestions which Angie has rejected or to offer any rebuttal of her arguments. So from here on out, she is your baby, though I will, of course be glad to try to fulfill my responsibilities as a member of the committee and will try to give your editorial staff any possible help if they ask me to do so. I am, however, inclosing herewith a sheet purely for your information giving some comments on three or four points of the manuscript and Angie's report on my memorandum.

With every good wish, I am

Very sincerely yours,

Dale

E. E. Dale

Research Professor of History

EED:jb

Incls.

1. Chapter I. I fully agree with Morgan that the first chapter is unsatisfactory and adhere to my original opinion that it would be better to cut it out entirely and begin the book with Chapter II, "The Land We Know." Chapter I has only eight pages, nearly five of which are devoted to Edna Ferber and John Steinbeck, both of which I think should be ignored. Even though Angie naively says that "if you discard it, you are losing some good writing," I would still cut it out.

2. Holy Rollers. Angie indicates that I know nothing about Holy Rollers but, as a matter of fact, I was attending Holiness meetings before she was born. My dictionary defines Holy Rollers as "one of a minor religious sect in the United States and Canada whose meetings are often characterized by frenzied excitement; -- applied also colloquially to many similar groups -- Holy Rollerism." I did not think that Angie was talking about Nazarenes, but assumed that she was talking about Holy Rollerism and was applying the term as used colloquially. So used it could be applied to the various Holiness bodies, the Nazarenes, and even certain groups of Methodists, for I have seen all of these manifest the same religious hysteria that Angie describes. If I may be permitted to coin a tongue-twister, "a Holy Roller under any other name may roll as wholly as a Holy Roller." I have seen it!

The point is that religious freedom guaranteed us by the Constitution implies to me at least, the freedom of every religion from criticism by those who do not agree with it and its forms. Despite her defense, I still object to Angie's paragraph on the Holy Rollers.

3. The Twin Territories, page 45. Angie insists that Oklahoma and Indian Territory were very similar just before statehood and that "the separation of the two areas was more apparent than real." In her report on my memorandum, she says that the dominant fact in both areas was the change from Indian to white tenure and that: "this is the long view," whatever that may mean. This is a matter of opinion, of course, but I do not see how any student of Oklahoma History can have this particular concept.

Indian Territory was settled more than half a century before Oklahoma Territory and for nearly three quarters of a century, the area was dominated politically by the governments of the Five Civilized Tribes. It is true that before statehood there were nearly as many whites in Indian Territory as in Oklahoma Territory but in the first-named area the whites had no civil rights, could not own land, and did not participate in government. In Oklahoma Territory, on the other hand, over twenty thousand of its thirty-five thousand square miles were never under Indian tenure at all, since the Panhandle, Greer County, the Unassigned Lands, and the Cherokee Outlet were never occupied by Indians except as the United States as a whole was so occupied. It was true that the Cherokees held a nominal ownership of the Cherokee Outlet but they did not live there and Secretary of Interior Noble insisted that they did not even own the country. In the remaining fourteen or fifteen thousand square miles, the Indians were very few in number and did not utilize the land at all.

What really happened when Oklahoma Territory was opened to settlement, as I pointed out in a paper, "The Ranchman's Last Frontier," published many years ago,

was that the land was not taken from the Indians and turned over to the white settlers, but was taken from the ranchmen and turned over to crop growers. Moreover, Oklahoma Territory was a region of freeholders, had county and territorial governments, free schools, and at least six institutions of higher learning, while the whites of Indian Territory had none of these things except the schools established by the Dawes Commission just a few years before statehood.

Probably it is unimportant so far as the Debo manuscript is concerned, for I doubt if anybody will notice her statement, but apparently Angie and I totally disagree on the matter of similarities and differences between Oklahoma and Indian Territories.

4. Miscellaneous. Angie makes some very naïve and quite loose statements in her report on my memorandum and this is equally true of the manuscript. These in some cases involve historical inaccuracies. It is unimportant, of course, but I cannot see how any historian could be puzzled about the spelling of Castañeda since the Castañeda Narrative can be found in half a dozen places in any fairly good library.

“I am offering the University [of Oklahoma] Press a more thoughtful interpretation than has ever been printed before,” page 3 of report on memorandum.

On page 5 of her report, she says she has never known of a single accident among farm children who drive illegally but has known of many among their licensed, teenage brothers. This is like the statistician’s contention that it was more dangerous to cross the street at a corner than in the middle of the block since his statistics showed more people had been injured at the regular street crossings than at other places. Both failed to take into account how many more people are involved in one class than in the other.

On page 6, she says nobody could put a farm under cultivation with only one team. To this I would only say that few of the early settlers in western Oklahoma tried to put a farm under cultivation. They merely plowed and planted a small field and waited for a railroad. In the part of western Oklahoma where I grew up, not one settler in ten had two teams and wagons.

On page 11 of the report, Angie says “I have reviewed books for every scholarly magazine in the United States.” This is an example of the type of overstatement which needs to be watched for throughout the manuscript. Obviously, nobody in Oklahoma or outside of it has reviewed books “for every scholarly magazine in the United States.”

Page 152, “The Roman Catholics have always been numerically weak.” My last check indicated that there were about fifty thousand members of the Roman Catholic Church in Oklahoma, which is a larger membership than that of the Presbyterian Church and a great many others.

Page 291. Considerable space is devoted to Wellborn Hope as one of “only two who can honestly cite poet as their profession.” I wonder if Angie has ever seen the letters which Wellborn Hope used to write to Dr. Bizzell filled with profanity and profanely demanding to know if Dr. Bizzell does not recognize a poet when he sees one, or words to that effect. Personally, I doubt if Wellborn Hope is entitled to space or consideration, but this is only my opinion.

The above comments may not be of any value to you whatever but they do represent a few points that seem to me illustrative of other loose and naïve statements which appear in the manuscript.

*I do not think it could
do any good to send this
memo to Angie. It was dictated
solely for you and your staff.*

Dale

30.

525 South 14th Street
Muskogee, Oklahoma
June 26, 1949

Miss Mary Stith, Editor
University of Oklahoma Press
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Miss Stith:

I have just finished reading the galleys of Oklahoma. I found a good many typographical errors, so many in fact that I read them three times. Even then I am afraid some of the errors escaped me. But perhaps you will read them again, in which case I am sure you will spot them all.

I am grateful for the very careful editing you have done. I had not realized I was so poor a speller. I am going to object to a few of the changes you have made; but when I realize how minutely you have edited the manuscript, the wonder is that the objections are so few. In about ninety-nine cases out of a hundred I accept your judgment; and so I hope you will give me credit for complete honesty in my objections.

In a few cases you have changed a sentence – for the better, perhaps – but some word you have introduced causes an unpleasant repetition. On the first galley, for example, you changed my informal “US 77” to “U.S. Highway 77.” The change, of course, is all right. But it happens that I had used the word “highway” later in the sentence; and so the change makes me say that on U. S. Highway 77 are highway signs. I changed it, therefore, to “road signs.” I found a good many such instances, where I found it necessary to eliminate one of the repeated words. Where I did this I indicated my reason on the margin so you can see I did not do it arbitrarily. This is something I have to watch constantly in my writing, and I must be equally vigilant in the editorial changes.

I have used a number of parenthetical expressions in this manuscript. This must be due to the nature of the book, for I have noticed other writers doing the same thing with this type of material. I see, however, that you think I have overdone it, and you have tried to modify the practice in various ways. Sometimes you have even placed the parenthetical material in a footnote, which I think is a very clever way to handle it. In other cases you have simply removed the parentheses without serious damage to the continuity. But in a few cases – I counted them, and I think there are only nine in the whole book – the removal of the parentheses broke up the logical flow of thought. I have marked these places, and I want you (1) to restore the punctuation or (2) delete the parenthetical expression. I am serious about this. I know it is a characteristic of my style that each sentence grows out of the preceding one. I work hard for this effect, and I am unwilling to lose it.

These seem to be about the only problem growing out of the customary editing, but there is something deeper than that. This involves actual changes in the manuscript.

First you have inserted a number of qualifying expressions such as “in most cases,” “as a rule,” so far as is known,” and the like. I use many such expressions myself. All scholarly writers do. It is their protection against an instance that might pop up on the other side. And so I do not object to most of these changes. It is only when I am made to say “relatively few persons no doubt” that I object on literary grounds. There are a few other instances where I object most emphatically to a qualification that causes a misstatement of fact. A case in point is the change of “more than” to “as much as” in the case of Oklahoma’s old age assistance rolls. I could have said “infinitely more than” and it would have still been true. I have made a careful study of this, and I know. If I had stated it that way, you could have cut out the “infinitely” and the statement would still be acceptable; but when you change it to a 50-50- matter I refuse to subscribe to that.

In this same matter of toning down you have changed a number of adjectives. Again, in most cases I accept the changes. But I select these characterizing words carefully to express an exact shade of meaning, and I am not willing to have the meaning changed. I have indicated the few places where I want the original word restored.

Even more serious is the material added to the manuscript. I am willing to accept the results of my own research, but I will not accept the findings of some other person whose standards of accuracy may be entirely different from mine. Some of these interpolated statements in the oil chapter may be true. I would not know about that. I do know that there are at least two errors there. I know from first-hand research that the Atoka well was drilled in 1884 instead of 1886, and I know that there were no government regulations against leasing when the Johnstone well was brought in. I am entirely within my rights when I request the deletion of the part of my book that I did not write. This is a small amount of material in comparison with the whole, and its removal will not make much difference to the publisher. I made two exceptions myself: the clever remark about Bunyon’s frying pan, and some statements about the first University football coach, which seemed entirely acceptable.

In a few cases where my findings proved too strong medicine for the Press so much was deleted that only a skeleton paragraph remained, or so much was deleted on one side of a debatable question that the remaining part seems to support the other side. I tried to build up these portions with innocuous sentences, and in one case I rewrote a paragraph. I think these changes will be acceptable to you.

I am tempted to stop here. My objections are so relatively few, and I have stated them so clearly, that I feel sure the management of the Press will accept them. I am drawing on my pleasant relations over a long period of years to assure myself that the Press would not want to publish something over my signature that would cause me chagrin. But after all, this is a business matter, and I owe it to you to state my position

clearly so you will know where you stand. If you were to assume that I am not in earnest, and if you were to go on to the proof stage without my approval of the galleys, it would cause needless expense and trouble. For I am standing on my rights. I shall not allow anything to go out in my name that I cannot approve. It is better for us to have that understanding now. If the Press has any counter proposal to make, I am ready to listen; but the work as it stands now, is in a few places not acceptable to me, and I shall not accept it.

I hate to close on this note.

With all assurances of personal friendship,

Angie Debo.

31.

Marshall, Oklahoma
August 13, 1949

Dr. E. E. Dale
Research Professor of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

Dear Dr. Dale:

Here is where I eat crow in large mouthfuls. I am completely disgusted with myself. I cannot even think up an excuse; there is no excuse for such carelessness.

Do you remember my asking you for a photograph from the Phillips collection last winter? And when you went to look you found a notation that I had taken it. I felt reasonably sure the notation meant we had sent it to a photographer in Norman – even yet I haven't the slightest remembrance of taking it with me – but I did look carefully through my files, and it wasn't there. So you were nice enough to take my word that I did not have it, and that it must have been misplaced after it came back from the photographer's. Judge then of my chagrin when I was cleaning out my shelves this morning, and there it was in the original wrapping! I suppose I had placed it there because it was too large to go in my files.

I am sending it back on the next mail, with my most sincere apologies. The fact that you let me take the picture in the first place shows that you had great confidence in my carefulness – and now it seems that confidence was misplaced! Well, as Popeye says, I am disgustipated.

I have tried to think back over our correspondence of last winter. As I remember it, there was only one picture involved. I hope that is correct. In my present frame of mind I am willing to admit making off with half a dozen.

Sincerely,
Angie Debo.

P.S. I almost forgot to tell you about my summer. The Indian Rights Association asked me to make a survey of the present social and economic condition of the Five Tribes Indians. I started out as soon as school closed in the spring, and returned only recently. I had wonderful luck making contacts, and the whole summer was filled with most interesting experiences.

32.

August 22, 1949

Dr. Angie Debo
Marshall, Oklahoma

Dear Angie:

I received your good letter and the picture some days ago. I am so glad to know that other people forget things just as I do. I might have thought otherwise that it was my age. I think you are right in that there was only one picture involved.

I am glad to know that you had a good summer. We spent nearly eight weeks on a lecture tour going to the North and Northwest. I gave three lectures at the University of California at Berkeley and then drove leisurely down to Los Angeles only to learn there that my only brother was critically ill and not expected to live. In consequence, we drove back to Oklahoma immediately and my brother was still living when we arrived but died a week ago. Naturally, I have been trying to straighten up his affairs and also working on my own which have been very much neglected during my eight weeks absence.

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale
Research Professor of History

EED:jb

33.

117 North Knoblock
Stillwater, Oklahoma
September 5, 1949

Dear Dr. Dale:

I have delayed answering your good letter of August 22 because I let my correspondence slide in the busy days just before the annual move to Stillwater.

I was distressed to learn of the death of your brother. I remember meeting him in the basement of the law building. He reminded me very much of you. I know from things I have heard you say that you two were always very close. I am glad you got back to Norman before he passed away.

My mother and I spent a very pleasant day yesterday with the Leakes. We spoke of you as we always do when we are together. Did you know that Mrs. Leakes (Dr. Dorothy) has accepted a very fine position as head of the science department of the college at Durant? They made her so good an offer that she could not refuse. Or rather she did refuse at first, but they wore her down eventually. They built a new house there, and just now they are hoping for some quick success in selling out here before the Durant term starts.

I hope I may see you and Mrs. Dale occasionally this winter. I am always away when you are here for your summer lectures.

Sincerely,
Angie

Dr. E. E. Dale
Research Professor of History
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

34.

September 19, 1949

Dr. Angie Debo
117 North Knoblock
Stillwater, Oklahoma

Dear Angie:

I was very glad to get your good letter of some days ago. Thank you very much for your expression of sympathy with respect to my brother.

We saw Mrs. Leakes when we were at Durant last week. She seems fine and to be enjoying her work very much.

Do come to see us any time you are down this way, and if I am at Stillwater we shall expect to see you there. With all good wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale

35.

November 8, 1949

Dear Angie:

I appreciate the candor of your letter of November 5. The very nature of our work and responsibilities to the public, as well as to our authors, necessitates a higher order of editorial craftsmanship in the making of books than may be expected of general publishers. In my candid opinion, nothing that we did to your manuscript harmed it in the least; all that we did was intended to complement the work of the author, and I believe that we succeeded.

For any future work with which you may favor us, you may expect the same critical, scholarly canons to apply as did, in fact, apply to your OKLAHOMA. In our twenty-year history, we have never operated on the theory that we are merely a "passive vehicle." The higher ends of scholarship and of regional interpretation demand of us an active, dynamic role, and this we have tried to fill as capably as we can. We have published many eminent authors from New England to California, and from the Great Lakes to the Gulf, whose recognition of our standards has been heartening to us, and whose hearty co-operation with our admittedly exacting editorial requirements has made for what we believe to be sound scholarly progress.

Cordially yours,

Savoie Lottinville

SL/ab

Miss Angie Debo
117 North Knoblock
Stillwater, Oklahoma

36.

November 10, 1949

Dr. Angie Debo
Oklahoma A & M College
The Library
Stillwater, Oklahoma

Dear Angie:

It was a grand party and I sat there swelling with pride and of course taking to myself a little of the credit for your success. I am not quite sure that my speech was quite up to standard, but I did the best I could, and certainly it was a wonderful audience. I want to thank you again for the copy of the book with a lovely inscription which adds so much to its value.

It was a great pleasure to meet your mother, and I know how proud she must be of you. I am equally sure that you must be very proud of her, for though I claim in some sense to be your academic godfather, I know that you owe any success you ever attained far more to your mother than you do to anybody and everybody else. Please give her our love and do come to see us any time you are down this way.

Sincerely your friend,

E. E. Dale

37.

117 North Knoblock
Stillwater, Oklahoma
May 14, 1951

Dear Dr. Dale:

I thought you might like to see the report of the survey I made of the Five Tribes settlements two years ago, though it had been circulated in mimeographed form before that.

I picked up your trail in several places while I was out on the survey. Mrs. La Grande, the fine Sioux woman who works out from Idabel in the crafts work, was especially interesting when she told of your friendliness and your good cow country seriousness about closing gates.

And speaking of gates – At the Okla. Historical Society meeting at Tahlequah last week I got up and told (prodded by Mrs. Foreman, who was sitting beside me) how it would be possible to acquire the old Worcester cemetery and a drive leading to it all free except for a cattle guard. I told it again during the historical tour while Mr. Ballenger was explaining the locations at this spot. I did not learn until afterwards that most of the people there did not know what a cattle guard is. Can it be that Oklahomans are getting too civilized?

I hope you like the little booklet.

Sincerely,

Angie.

38.

May 15, 1951

Dr. Angie Debo
117 North Knoblock
Stillwater, Oklahoma

Dear Angie:

I was very glad to get your good letter and I thank you very much for the report of the survey you made of the Five Civilized Tribes. I know that must have been very interesting work. Mrs. La Grande is a very fine person and I am glad you had the opportunity to get acquainted with her.

No, I do not think it is a matter of civilization, but profound ignorance. Anybody who doesn't know what a cattle guard is must not be even civilized, let alone educated, as my old friend Colonel Pearson would remark.

I hope to be seeing you this summer, as it seems I am to spend a few days on your campus. Come to see us if you are ever down this way.

With every good wish, I am

Very cordially yours,

E. E. Dale

39.

June 24, 1952

Dr. Angie Debo
Marshall, Oklahoma

Dear Angie:

I can never thank you enough for the beautiful tribute paid me in your letter included among those of the volume presented to me by the good friends of A & M College. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with you at the University of Oklahoma and throughout the years following the completion of your doctorate. I have always pointed to you as my most outstanding Doctor and I treasure this friendship as something quite above price.

My recent visit to the A & M campus will always be one of the happiest memories of my life and I appreciate more than I can tell you, your making the long trip to Stillwater to add to the pleasure of our stay there. Thank you so much for everything and come to see us when you are down this way.

Rosalie joins me in every good wish.

Very sincerely yours,

E. E. Dale

EED:so

40.

Department of Social Science
Jan. 27, 1955.

Dear Friend Rippy:

Your good letter with the enclosures was forwarded to me here where I have been since early September as visiting professor at this university. Thank you so much both for your letter and for the reprints which I shall read with a great deal of interest. We are now in the midst of enrolling students for the second semester and your letter only reached me yesterday. We are enjoying Houston and the work here a great deal but will be glad to get back to our home in Norman, Oklahoma early next June. I've been a retired professor since June 1952 but don't seem able to quit! In fact we've lived in our own home very little for the past two years due to spending last year at the University of Melbourne and this one down here in the "land of cotton" but especially of oil millionaires, Cadillac cars, sky scrapers and other evidences of plutocracy.

Yes, I met your son in Western North Carolina in the summer of '52. It was good to see him and your young grand-son who is quite a boy. We had been down to the Universities of Texas, Florida, and some other places and I was doing my best to spread some of the light of the western stars to the people at those institutions and Peabody and Vanderbilt by means of my so-called lectures.

I am delighted to know that you admire the University of Oklahoma Press and that you are sending them a manuscript. Before I went to Australia I read an average of fifteen or twenty manuscripts a year for Savoie Lottinville the Director but have read none – or almost none – since we got back. Perhaps it will not occur to him to send your manuscript to me for reading since nearly everything I have read for him is in the field of West or about Indians and my knowledge of Latin America is most sketchy. I did offer it as one field for my doctorate at Harvard. And I took around three graduate courses in it with Roger B. Merriman and Julius Klein, but that was a long time ago. Also I taught it a little while until I could get somebody like Al Thomas to take over. I'll be able to tell Savoie I'd like to see the mss, though if you wish.

For Heaven's sake, however, do not call on Angie Debo to use her influence with Savoie! In the classic language of the cotton patch, "She ain't got none!" Savoie and I and the third member of the Committee on Rockefeller grant gave her a couple of thousand dollars to do her interpretative study of Oklahoma called Oklahoma: Foot-loose and Fancy-free. She is one of my PhDs and I'm quite fond of her but she nearly drove Savoie crazy in the matter of the publication of the volume. It seems that she had developed a complex that her words once let down were sacred and that any changes by the editorial staff were bound to be wrong! So Savoie swears that never again will he go through all that again! This is confidential of course but I've the impression that even mentioning Angie to Savoie is like waving a large red flag in front of a very bad-tempered bull! Pardon my mistakes I'm typing this myself which is all too evident! Also the old typewriter has been around the world and shows it. Under separate cover I'm sending you a couple of reprints. Thank you again for your letter and reprints.

Sincerely your friend

E. E. Dale

41.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

CHICAGO 37 * ILLINOIS

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

1126 EAST 59TH STREET

February 4, 1955

Dear Friend Dale:

You are of that tough pioneer breed that is hard to retire. I'm not sure that anybody will hire me after I'm 65. I've become sort of pessimistic regarding the future of my country; and not many people like to listen to a pessimist or cynic, you see. I happen to feel that our nation may sink itself by attempting too much. If I were in control at Washington I would balance the budget in spite of hell and high water. I'd let the lazy and the poor shift for themselves for a year or two. I'd cut appropriations for the military a billion or two; a billion or two would really never be missed. I wouldn't pay those members of the national legislature more than \$18,000. I wouldn't raise the justices of the Supreme Court at all. We don't need to. Did you ever hear of a lawyer refusing an appointment to the Supreme Court? And how much do you think such men as Tom Clark and Warren know about the law and the constitution? With two years of specialization, you and I could become as good legal scholars as either of them. Nor would I raise those other federal judges. We must keep these salaries down in order to balance that budget and stop inflation. Pay those politicians and bureaucrats too much and they will keep on taxing and spending.

Does this not suggest why I shall be retired?

I am grateful for your two articles (reprints). I liked them both. I prize the one on Turner very highly. He sought me out in Washington, D. C., in the early 1920's to tell me that he wanted to meet a young man who had won the praises of Bolton and Dodd. E. P. Cheyney did the same, and so did Beard a year or two later. The modest and humble great paid their respects to the fumbling beginner. I have had only these three experiences, which tends to make me think that such men are rare.

Turner asked if I knew Dale. I could only reply that I had heard of him. Turner asked if I were a native of Texas. I answered that I was born in Tennessee but had spent a good part of my youth in Texas; that my part of Tennessee and my part of Texas still had the flavor of his frontier. What did I mean? Well, I said, conditions were rather primitive and a little wild; educational facilities were not good; I was the first graduate of the public schools I attended ever to obtain a college degree. How did that happen? My mother was a school teacher before she married, and my father owned a country store in which I served

as a clerk long before I was grown. Did not others living in those sections appreciate education? I thought they did. They seemed to be fond of me. They invited me into their homes. They pointed to me as an example for their children to imitate. They drove for miles to hear me make a speech on politics or at the Sunday School conventions. Did they stress religion? Yes, indeed. Both sections were Bible Belts. They wanted me to become a preacher, a lawyer, or a politician. Were they not materialistic? To some extent, money was the measure of the man; but I think they placed greater emphasis upon wisdom and morality. Were there any real characters on those frontiers? I can recall a few; they were intense individualists; they had sharp tongues; they were witty; they liked to deflate the egotists and puncture the inflated frauds. My Tennessee grandfather was one of them. A very corpulent old man named Rowland was another. They were both good local politicians. They used pungent phrases and told good stories that always embodied principles: "I would not want a better living than I could make trading horses with Tommie." "Where did you stand during the Civil War?" "I was neutral and danged little of that." "Has Woodson quit practicing medicine?" "No, practice has quit Woodson." I gave Turner many illustrations. He laughed and laughed. I told him about Bob and Alf Taylor and how they appealed to the voters.

I said nothing about Angie Debo in my letter to Savoie. She wrote her Master's here under me. She has great ability; but she must be a little peculiar. I helped get her a position under my friend Sheffy at Canyon. He dropped her with profuse apologies to me. I guess she should have had better teachers.

Cordially,
Rippy

February 10, 1955.

Dear Friend Rippy:

I have your kind letter of recent date and hasten to reply. While most of my friends seem to think that I am a hopeless optimist I find myself in complete agreement with all that you say with respect to "the state of the nation." My own experience has been that an individual can never spend himself into prosperity and there seems no reason to think that a nation can. As for members of Congress I've never seen one that could do anything for me for which I'd be willing to pay him even \$18,000.00 a year – assuming that I had \$18,000.00 which is a pretty wide assumption! As for our wholesale spending abroad and at home, my experience with Indians has shown me how quickly the receiving of gifts tends to become a vested right! I've seen whole tribes completely pauperized by the ration system and human nature seems to be about the same regardless of the color of the individual's skin. I still believe in the old pioneer philosophy that the way to succeed in times of stress or distress is to tighten your belt and buckle down to work rather than to hold out your hand for a donation from a beneficent government. Back in the old days I would sometimes get a little check from the govt. based on my ownership of a little farm. I never knew what for. Apparently I had planted the right crops or had not planted the wrong crops or had done a little terracing or something. I'll admit that I did not send the checks back so am probably in some measure guilty, but at least I had never asked for them. Feed a man for a year, whether he is Indian or white, American or "furriner," and the next year he thinks that he has it coming to him and that the former donor is a heel if he fails to continue the practice!

Am so glad that you liked the two reprints. Turner was a great teacher and a great man. I remember most distinctly how he and I used to lie on the sunny side of a rock on the beach at Hancock Point, Maine, and talk about the West and swap stories of our experiences. Cheyney and Beard I never knew – much to my regret for they were both great historians and very remarkable men. Your early life and mine must have been much the same. I was born in a log house in the edge of the Texas Cross Timbers and lived there until thirteen years of age when we migrated to the prairies of Southwestern Oklahoma, where I clerked in the village store, punched cattle, and eventually began to teach country school. I too knew many picturesque pioneer characters – some of them from the hills of Tennessee. We too lived in a "Bible Belt" both in Texas and Oklahoma. In the latter region I've known my father to ride sixty miles horseback to attend Saturday and Sunday preaching. Most of his descendants can't make it ten blocks in a car unless the signs are just right!

Yes, I know that Angie Debo did her master's with you. I seem to remember that her master's thesis was published in the Smith College Studies. Please do not get me wrong about Angie. She did her PhD with me and has produced more than any other PhD I ever had. In fact an adaptation of her dissertation, The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic was awarded the Dunning Prize of the AHA. She dedicated one of her later books to me and I am very fond of her. But, as you say, she is a little peculiar and Savoie became much discouraged with her over the last book of hers that he published. Let me know how you come out with Savoie and if I can help in any way be sure to let me know. Write me again when you find time.

Sincerely your friend
E. E. Dale

43.

September 16, 1957

Dear Angie:

I guess that was just about the nicest thing anybody ever said of me.

Your compliments to me in the New York Times review of September 8 of OKLAHOMA: A GUIDE TO THE SOONER STATE remind me of a two word declaration that set a now great historian upon his path.

When he was twenty-one years old, Walter Prescott Webb was teaching History in a one room school house in east Texas. Every morning, there was a mild competition between him and a young Indian boy named Henry Woods to get to school first, so the place could be straightened around for action when the rest of the pupils arrived. One morning Walter got there ahead of Henry, and, sitting down at his desk, he composed a little word sketch of the Indian boy. When Henry arrived, Walter said, "Sit down, Henry, I've written something about you that I'd like for you to hear."

While Henry sat, Walter read his little piece. At the end of it, Walter looked down at a misty-eyed little boy, who said, "Professor, that's purty."

Walter told me this in May, when I asked him how he had first been stimulated to a writing career.

With every good wish,

Yours faithfully,

Savoie Lottinville

SL: cw

Miss Angie Debo
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma

Diaries:
1948 – 1952
(Angie Debo Collection, Box 5/folder 4)

January 4, 1948

Mrs. Goodman & the Davises called but we missed them. Church this morning. Then dinner at the Leakes and a wonderful P.M. & evening. Met Miss Crawford & Dean & Mrs. Thomas. Harold read Mark Twain's Mysterious Stranger aloud.

January 10, 1948

Got my new dress from the store. I like it (and need it) but still feel guilty about spending so much. Warm but rather cloudy. I called on Miss Campbell who has been laid up with a blood clot in her leg. It is a disgrace that I have not gone to see her before.

January 12, 1948

I spoke to two clubs – outlined Okla. history for Lahoma Club in P.M., & reviewed Prairie City for a circle of the woman's club in evening. It is turning cold. I have a cold.

January 13, 1948

Colder day but not bad. My cold is bothering me a little. These evenings I am reading A Lantern in Her Hand aloud to Mother. I had never read it before. It reminds me of Prairie City.

January 16, 1948

Cold day. Got letter from S. Lottinville that he is not pleased at all with the book I wrote. I am distressed about it but not discouraged. I have written enough to have confidence in myself.

January 18, 1948

I went to S.S. & church this A.M. Aggie Theatre, one block away, burned down last night. The Becketts and I watched it preparatory to moving out. It is only one block away and the wind was carrying the sparks over us. My dear Esther Potter and her lovely "Missy" called this P.M. Missy is a senior here, but I didn't know it.

January 19, 1948

I spoke to a club group – reviewed Prairie City. I think it went off rather well. Weather getting nice again.

January 20, 1948

Nothing much happened. Bright nice day. I wrote to Mattie Mack asking if she would read my MS. Too bad I didn't think of it two or three days ago.

January 22, 1948

Temporarily ran out of maps so spent P.M. at Vet Village preliminary to some work I may do on hist. of A. & M. Met Mrs. McCurtain, Mrs. Sanders, etc. Wind swept to north this P.M. Getting cold.

January 27, 1948

I went to Newcomers' Club at college – heard lecture by Dr. Levin on Russia's foreign policy. This is a terribly cold day. Not far above 0 this morning and not warming up any. I am going to start hist. of A. & M. I suggested it & Pres. Bennett approved.

February 3, 1948

Dark, warm, and misty but no rain. I have my article on pre – Chronicles of Oklahoma finished except copying for which I shall have to await letters from O.C.

February 4, 1948

Weather – more of same. Today I began sitting in training class for library workers – taught by Mrs. Juhlin – very fine. I still am out of maps to organize.

February 5, 1948

Snowed all day – about 5 or 6 inches in all. Mother made mince meat. Commodities & stocks are dropping. Is it the crash?

February 8, 1948

Very cold day. Everything frozen. Dorothy and Harold Leakes were here at dinner. We enjoyed them very much. They had read my MSS and gave me some very fine criticism.

February 10, 1948

Still warm and sloppy and dark. I went this evening to an A.A.U.W. [American Association of University Women] dinner at Willard Hall. The radio talks terrible things about a coming storm.

February 13, 1948

It is getting warm and thawing. I am enjoying my work at the library. Today it was the document room.

February 16, 1948

Really warm – still sloppy. I spoke to a circle of the woman's club – reviewed And Still the Waters Run.

February 21, 1948

Wrote all day. Am doing a little polishing on my MS – though it is discouraging because of the way the Press is taking it.

February 27, 1948

Grass is beginning to show a faint green. I looked at hats. Trashy ones cost \$13 or \$15 – one rather pretty one cost \$23. I'll do without.

March 1, 1948

Warm rain off and on all night & all day. Mr. Low asked Miss Campbell and me to get him some data for a very important project the college may undertake. I am very happy about the project for it needs doing.

March 13, 1948

I went with the Leakes to the rodeo at the Tulsa stock fair. Enjoyed it very much. The day was warm but sloppy. [Later – see March 11, 1950. I used this experience in my Will Rogers story.]

March 17, 1948

President Truman addressed Congress today very seriously and frankly about Russia – advised financial aid to Western Europe, and universal military training & selective service. Mrs. Adams and Winnie Branen called – so glad to see them. They had been attending a flower show in Stillwater. They thought we had stowed things away pretty well in our tiny apartment.

March 20, 1948

I worked hard today as usual. I am working over my "Oklahoma" manuscript – not to please the critics but to please myself.

March 21, 1948

Raining most of the day. I went to church this morning, to a student recital in the P.M. In the evening Mother and I took supper with the Leakes and spent the evening reading Conrad's Typhoon.

March 22, 1948

Some more rain. The Leakes spent the evening here and we finished Typhoon.

March 26, 1948

Surprised to hear a tornado struck Tinker Field O.C. last night – then Wetumpka, Boynton, Eufaula, Sallisaw – killed about a dozen people. Getting cold this evening.

March 27, 1948

We wanted to go home this morning but too cloudy – then it cleared off later but we didn't go. I worked on my book all day.

March 29, 1948

Spent all morning hunting hat and coat – then drove to Guthrie. Prices beyond my reach. But finally found a coat for \$17 and jewed down price of a hat to \$7 or \$8 – I forget which. Terribly tired tonight.

March 30, 1948

Woke tired – tired all day – terribly tired tonight. Yesterday's shopping was too hard, but I am finding it very hard to live in my salary with these inflated prices.

March 31, 1948

Nothing in particular happened. Mornings I am making some revisions on my "Okla." MS – afternoons I am straightening out bound magazines in the branch libraries.

April 3, 1948

Terrible wind. Band festival day and how I did enjoy it. I planted 190 onions. They should have been planted in Feb. Our jonquils and daffodils are blooming.

April 4, 1948

I enjoyed church even more than usual. Early this morning I sprayed the plum trees – too windy yesterday. Mrs. Hawkins ate lunch with us.

April 6, 1948

Went to Pi Gamma Mu dinner. Heard Dr. Keso speak on Geopolitics – subject too big for him to handle.

April 7, 1948

Mother got a permanent – cost \$2.50. I sent my MS to Dr. Dale who is attempting to arbitrate my misunderstanding with the Press.

April 10, 1948

This evening I spoke to a convention of Indian students from the various state colleges. Wonderful group of young people. Called Ittanaha Club.

April 19, 1948

Came home very tired. I do not know why a little work tires me so. Just like Dagwood Bumstead, I guess.

April 21, 1948

I got a permanent. It cost \$12.50. Hope I'm worth it.

April 22, 1948

Went with Eula Mae to hear college symphonic choir & glee club sing Mozart's Requiem Mass. Very fine.

May 5, 1948

Worked at library eight hours today. Trying to accumulate some hours to be ready for extra work on my manuscript.

May 12, 1948

Attended banquet of Theta Sigma Pi and heard wonderful lecture on India by Margaret Bourke-White.

May 20, 1948

Went to Pi Gamma Mu picnic. Enjoyed conversation with Dr. and Mrs. Levin regarding their stay in Russia in the 1930s.

May 26, 1948

Went to Guthrie with Mrs. McMillan, Mrs. Kidwell, & Mrs. Riggs to meeting of Okla. Hist. Soc. Very boresome program but I enjoyed meeting some friends who were present.

May 29, 1948

Cleaned and decorated graves in cemetery. Went to afternoon and evening meeting of M.H.S. [Marshall High School] alumni & former students. Not a very good meeting – too general and all hired entertainment.

May 30, 1948

Started back early; ran ahead of a very evil looking cloud, which caught us in a heavy rain on the edge of Stillwater. Rested a little then went to church after the rain ended. Worked at maps in P.M. – went to baccalaureate service in evening.

May 31, 1948

Fine commencement address by Lewis W. Jones, pres. Uni. of Ark. By my count 1,019 bachellor's [sic] degrees; 133 master's, 1 Dr. of Ed.; 1 Ph.D. (the first for A. & M.) Hurried home to beat rain, but it didn't rain. Jimmie Beckett got degree. Spent evening unpacking.

June 4, 1948

Cleaned rest of house and put up remaining curtains. Cleaned cellar. Mr. Van Hanen mowed weed-grown lawn (\$3 and cheap at price). Now our place is entirely livable.

June 5, 1948

Read and clipped newspapers that had piled up. Attended to some correspondence.

June 8, 1948

(Perhaps this happened June 9) Got letter from my publisher that he is returning my MS with comments by Dr. Dale. We are having trouble with this MS. Some of the publisher's readers condemned it. I refused to accept their verdict, so it was referred to Dr. Dale.

June 10, 1948

Am in a hurry for MS to come. My experience with the Univ. Press has not been happy. They asked me to write it – and gave me a straight-out contract to publish. Then some anonymous profs. to whom it was submitted gave it a thorough panning and I was asked to do the whole thing over. Which I won't!

June 11, 1948

Got my MS with a very careful conscientious criticism by Dr. Dale. I will follow all his suggestions – whether or not I agree – except in matters that seem vital to the integrity of my interpretation.

June 12, 1948

Worked on my MS incorporating some revisions I had made in the carbon during the last weeks. Will take up Dr. Dale's suggestions tomorrow.

June 13, 1948

Working on Dr. Dale's suggested changes. His work was done in a far different spirit from that of the anonymous first readers. Some of his ideas are excellent; others do not appeal to me so much but I will weigh them all.

June 14, 1948

Church this morning. Sermon not very profound, but a fine spirit in the congregation. In the evening Claudia Ahrensback called & we had a nice visit. But my head ached all day. Worked too hard yesterday.

June 15, 1948

Our lucky day. Our beloved Gene Goodman called with his lovely wife and our dear Grace, his mother. He is a fine young man – 24 now. Then Bess Truitt of Enid called. I had long wanted to meet her. And in the evening our beloved Winnie Branen came for a nice long visit. And I did work on my MS, too.

June 16, 1948

The wheat is surprising everybody by its good yield. I don't know how it made it. There was the terrible drought last fall; then this dry spring. The standing crop looks pitiable, but when it is cut it turns out an average yield.

June 17, 1948

Hot wind – terrible day. We are having very bad weather for this early in the summer. The soil is dry beyond anything I have ever seen at this time of year.

June 19, 1948

I got so tired writing I quit at three o'clock and washed the front porch (all caked with dust) and the front windows. We got our check from the farm at Okeene – wheat went to 9 ½ bu.

June 22, 1948

Rained nearly all night last night. I sent off my MS today. Mrs. Burchardt, who has been in Calif. the past two months, returned. Brought Kay and Jackie. We have missed her terribly. It is raining again this evening.

June 24, 1948

No rain here, but threatening. Stories of a 19-inch cloudburst at Hydro. Creek rose and trapped cars on highway – killed 9 and some more missing. Ted McCracken killed in Normandy invasion was buried here. Funeral at schoolhouse – military service at cemetery by Tinker Field contingent.

June 26, 1948

Heard Mrs. H. D. Hearn had stroke. It rained again last night. These are good rains & not too much except there is no chance to cut the small amount of wheat left. I finished washing the windows. Worked on Nelson's Memoirs.

June 29, 1948

Great news! Dr. Duffy says my appendix is O.K. What a load off my mind. Checked Mother and found her fine. We stopped to see Esther Porter & Missy – found Mrs. Engler & Fay there, too. Also stopped at Covington to see the Rogers family.

July 1, 1948

Nothing in particular. I am working on the Nelson manuscript. I hope Savoie gets back from Calif. today so he can take up my "Oklahoma."

July 5, 1948

This was a holiday but I worked all day on Nelson. I have let it be for some years after I failed to sell it. Now I am making considerable revision.

July 6, 1948

Shower collected but went around. This is primary election day. I took Mother and Mrs. Hawkins down to vote. Tired tonight for no reason.

July 14, 1948

Canned 28 qt. tomatoes this A.M. (The rest was too green.) Allie Cooper called. We went to W.S.C.S. at Pearl Burchardt's this P.M. Very hot day. Tired.

July 15, 1948

Shower last night – lovely day. We had Club picnic at Evelyn Day's – had wonderful time. In evening canned 5 qt. tomatoes. Went out to Henry Seefeldt's & got ¾ pk. cucumbers for \$0.75. Ralph & Allie called. They are watching an oil well drilling on Freelove farm close to theirs.

July 16, 1948

Hard rain this morning just before getting up time. Lovely cool day to write. I am making a dress in my spare time.

July 17, 1948

Light shower this morning. We put up some pickles.

July 21, 1948

Mr. M. finished steps. Had lesson at WSCS [Women's Society of Christian Service] at Mabel Bryson's. Gladys and Katherine came this evening – great to see them.

July 22, 1948

Took girls to Stillwater to show them college. Then in evening they took us to Enid to visit a Methodist youth caravan group Gladys helped train. The girls are leaving tomorrow.

July 24, 1948

Cut out and partially sewed up a dress for Mother. Nice cool day. I work part of every day on Nelson story.

July 25, 1948

Went to church and Sunday School.

July 29, 1948

Canned some dill pickles. Got very bad news from my publisher. I don't think they will ever publish that book – or release it. To be sure I have a contract, but apparently it has no meaning. I don't know their motive.

August 10, 1948

Rained hard early this morning. Cool today. Drove around Beattie and surrounding roads. Found stone house where I was born was torn down. Talked with Nora Story & her mother (aged 91) & Leslie Harry. Then with Tom Tucker and his son & daughter Mrs. Miller at Frankfurt. In tourist camp at Wamego now.

August 12, 1948

Drove to Wichita and are spending night with Agnes Clark. She came down with us and we had a delightful visit all the way. We came through Dwight and White City which I remember so well from our covered wagon trip in 1899.

August 16, 1948

I am plowing through the pile of newspapers that accumulated while I was gone. I have to watch every news item in order to keep my book up to date. Weather still cold.

August 17, 1948

Finished the newspapers. I should enjoy this work more if I had any assurance that bunch of nitwits at O.U. would ever approve it.

August 18, 1948

It is starting to get more like normal August weather. I worked on Nelson book and cleaned the house.

August 19, 1948

Just worked. I started to make some underwear for my mother in my "spare" time. Washed some.

August 20, 1948

Ironed & pressed things we used on our trip. Worked more on the underwear. Got very fine letter from Dr. Dale about my MS.

August 21, 1948

Just worked – took underwear down to Mrs. Hawkins and talked with her while I made buttonholes. Finished first draft of Nelson MS.

August 23, 1948

Wrote letters of inquiry etc. about points I wanted to clear on Nelson MS. Finished the underwear I was making for Mother.

August 25, 1948

Tire went down at edge of town – had to buy a new one -- \$16.50. Finished reviewing a book I started July 21 for WSCS. We met at Mary Burchardt's. Had nice crowd. It is warm these days.

September 2, 1948

Unpacked some more. Worked in library with my maps in afternoon. It is good to get back.

September 3, 1948

Worked all day with maps to make up for missing the afternoon of Sept. 1.

September 6, 1948

Spent the whole day (holiday) writing. Started making final copy of Nelson MS. Had a good day. We are having bad weather.

September 7, 1948

The Leakes called – we had a fine visit. Got good news from Savoie Lottinville. They are finally ready to start publishing “Oklahoma.” What grief I have had with that writing job.

September 8, 1948

The weather turned cold last night. It had been pretty bad. I worked all day revising my “Okla.” MS bringing it up to date – for the last time I hope.

September 9, 1948

Still cool. I worked all day on my MS. Will make up the time I lost at the library later.

September 10, 1948

Sent off my MS with what I hope is the last revision. Worked at library in P.M. Nice cool day.

September 13, 1948

Did odds and ends in forenoon I had postponed because of work on MS. At library in P.M. Drove to park in evening. Pretty tired.

September 14, 1948

President Bennett spoke to faculty – launched the school year. Very fine address – spoke of future of A. & M. – expects continued high enrollment.

September 17, 1948

Worked on Nelson book and at library.

September 23, 1948

Much cooler day. I am making good progress on the Nelson MS. But I am completely disgusted with the OU Press. They just mess around.

September 24, 1948

Nothing in particular – just worked. Still have heard nothing from the OU Press. It has been about two weeks since I sent them some revised pages.

September 25, 1948

Rather coolish, sunny day. I went to the football game (Aggies 14; TCU 21) and got a wonderful lift from the crowd & the game & the afternoon in the open. I stay at home too much.

September 27, 1948

Mother is sick with a cold. I was really worried about her this P.M. She is 83 today. We are having beautiful weather.

September 29, 1948

I don't think she had a cold at all. Mother is still feeling bad – a series of migraine headaches. I do not think she is much better. No use getting a doctor for they know nothing about migraine.

October 3, 1948

I went to church this morning – took Mother to a World Communion Service in P.M. She slept most of P.M., however, & I went to Leakes' to listen to music on radio.

October 6, 1948

For the first time since she took sick, Mother has no migraine today. She seems to have suffered less permanent weakness, etc. than one would have expected.

October 7, 1948

Mother is still free from migraine. Library staff meeting at 1 – were introduced to Miss Phelps, Mr. Shelby, (Miss Edwards absent), Miss Hammond, and others. Attended an executive meeting of Pi Gamma Mu at 4. Very high wind – dust storm over half of state. We are a little too far east to get it.

October 8, 1948

“Dr.” Charles Evans was here and Dr. Chapman tried to pin him down to something to plan for the spring meeting of O.H.S. But we only listened to his flow of flapdoodle. He is the most disgusting person I have ever known.

October 12, 1948

Mother and I went to a lecture by Dr. Levin on religion in Russia – very interesting. It was given by Brandeis Club, but public invited.

October 14, 1948

Finished organizing all summer's backlog of maps & started on magazines.

October 15, 1948

Worked more at magazines. Am getting a boy named Campbell to draw a map for the Nelson book. A few drops of rain fell.

October 18, 1948

First frost of season last night. Official thermometer stood at 31° in Stillwater. Listened to very wonderful chorale concert directed by Robert Shaw – heard queer “Mass” by Poulenc. They did it well, but why do it at all?

October 19, 1948

Just another day.

October 23, 1948

Our beloved Eula Mae & Jimmie Beckett were here to see us. They live at Bartlesville. I tried to take Mother to a place where we could see the Homecoming parade but we missed most of it. Then during the game I took her to see the decorations at the houses. The game was with Temple & A. & M. won. Beautiful day for it. Wish I could have seen it.

October 29, 1948

I went to Norman on the bus to help celebrate the opening of the new University Press bldg. I met Pres. Cross – had a good visit with Gaston Litton, saw Savoie Lottinville and Helen Burton.

October 30, 1948

We drove home today. It was a very busy day for me for I had to get Mr. Matthews top drain the pipes so it wouldn't freeze up – also got some coal for our occasional visits home.

November 1, , 1948

Fine rain last night, much to the surprise of everyone. This evening Dorothy Leake and I went to concert by Ebe Stignani – very fine. Mother was too tired to use her ticket.

November 3, 1948

Everybody (but Truman) surprised over the election. I am spending some time these days with two boys who are drawing maps for my Nelson book – Campbell and Sollars. In the afternoons I work at invoicing the bound magazines in the library. I am pretty tired tonight.

November 7, 1948

Should be Nov. 5. Turned two pages. Cold wind with some fine rain falling, but nothing like freezing. I received a copy of America's Heartland. It looks interesting.

November 14, 1948

I went to church & S.S. this morning. Mother, a little under the weather, stayed at home. In the afternoon I went to the Payne Co. Hist. Soc. A young fellow named Melton has some proof that the battle of Round Mt. was fought in Payne County.

November 25, 1948

I took Mother to the Edgewood where we ate (very badly cooked) turkey dinner (cost \$1.75 each); then we went for a drive. I spent the afternoon pasting illustrations in place for the Nelson book.

December 1, 1948

I have the Nelson MS ready to go except I am waiting on a map I got a boy to draw. My mother's poor nose is so raw I can't help worrying about it; but the dr. said it might get sore.

December 15, 1948

Summer weather till middle of afternoon, when it turned cold. Tonight Arturo Michelangeli was her on Allied Arts, but I gave away my tickets. I am leaving Mother alone too much.

December 16, 1948

Rather cold this morning, but nice tonight. I sent Nelson MS to Knopf. Savoie says he is going to start work on "Okla." Jan. 1. It will be out about six months later.

December 18, 1948

I got my Christmas letters from the printers today. I had to delay because I wanted news about my book to go in them. I got quite a file ready to mail. I have been sending these printed letters for three years.

December 19, 1948

I went to the nine o'clock Methodist service, then to a Xmas concert at the eleven o'clock Presbyterian service. In the P.M. I took Mother to a very fine singing of the Messiah by the college choir in the auditorium. We enjoyed it so much we feel we have had our Xmas. The rest of the time I sent letters.

December 20, 1948

Worked some more sending letters. It is a great saving to have them printed so I can add a few typed lines and out they go.

December 23, 1948

It was a miserable dark day but very little rain fell. I had planned to drive home if the weather had been good. Instead I finished my Christmas cards and letters, worked at revising my MS to bring it up to date, and worked at the library in the afternoon.

December 22, 1948

This was the last day of school before vacation. Everybody is hurrying about on mysterious business between offices and classes. Of course the library stays open most of the vacation. Spent very lovely evening – Mother & I – with Hammonds.

December 24, 1948

Nasty, miserable misty day. In the morning I worked at the last (I hope) revision of my “Okla.” MS to bring it up to date. Worked at library in P.M.

December 27, 1948

Holiday at school. I worked all day on my MS. The revision I am doing is changing a word here or there to bring it up to date.

December 28, 1948

I worked all day on my MS. The library is open today but I am entitled to some time off, so I took it now.

December 29, 1948

Worked all day on my Okla. MS.

December 30, 1948

Worked on my MS this morning – at library in P.M. It was nice and sunny but pretty cold today. So very thankful I have such a grand boss as Mr. Low.

December 31, 1948

Worked on my MS in morning. At library in afternoon. Went with Marguerite Smith to see Claud Campbell, who is in a dangerous condition – ill, confused in mind, and alone.

January 1, 1949

Nice day, but I stayed at home and worked. I finished my MS but for some last minute entries to be made after I hear the A. & M. & OU football results. J.C. Lytton called. He is home from University of Chicago.

January 3, 1949

I went to the city and bought a very lovely coat – just rabbit, but doesn't look it. It cost only \$69, which with tax was \$84.18. I am very happy about getting it so cheap. It is a miserable cold day threatening snow.

January 7, 1949

Nothing much happened. I am making a map for "Oklahoma" – in fact finished it this morning. Mr. Ransom will do the actual drawing.

January 11, 1949

I saw a car run into a truck on Main St. This morning everything was covered with a glare of ice. Driving is hazardous, walking embarrassing. I took the bus again. It is pretty cold, too. The campus is breathtaking in its white beauty. The pines especially make great soft rosettes.

January 12, 1949

Warmer with some sunshine, but not enough to melt the ice on the trees. Stillwater is completely cut off from wire communication with the outside world. The newspaper has to rely on the radio. The trees are lovely. Every pine needle stands out separately with its white covering. I used the bus again.

January 14, 1949

Dark, sloppy thawing day. I finally got my car out of the garage. For two days now I have been making a record of legislative action for the use of the president.

January 16, 1949

Cold day & colder tonight. I went to church but mother didn't. Then Alice Carlson took dinner with us. In the evening we and several others of the library staff had a buffet supper at the Low home. We spent a delightful evening.

January 17, 1949

Down to 14° in Stillwater this morning. To me that's cold. The Nelson book came back from Knopf, so I wrote to Savoie about it. I hesitated to send it to him for he has a bunch of professional readers who for some reason are hostile to me.

January 23, 1949

Mr. Copeland told us he is going to San Antonio. Rained all night and practically all the snow was gone this morning. It was cloudy and misty all day – but warm. It is

certainly good to be rid of the snow. I went to church this morning. Then we took dinner with the Leakes, listened to the Philharmonic and then Harold read the life of Dolly Madison.

January 26, 1949

Warmer, but not melting. The pellets of sleet are about four inches deep all over. I sent my Nelson MS to the OU Press. Knopf didn't want it – too local in interest, he said.

February 3, 1949

Bright, beautiful day – still much snow left. The paper says it was the coldest and wettest January in the history of Stillwater. We plan to move tomorrow. I dread the work.

January 10, 1949

The snow is still packed solid in the shade. I am still so happy in the little cottage I can hardly contain myself. Every day Miss Gordon adds something new to our comfort. Today it was bathroom and kitchen curtains.

March 10, 1949

Cold crisp morning. I went to Guthrie on the bus and attended to the tax assessment and homestead exemption. Saw Grace Goodman. Poor girl! She has been ill with her heart. I had a nice visit with her.

March 11, 1949

Got teeth cleaned this morning. This evening took Mother for a long drive. The grass shows very faintly green – also the wheat, which was delayed by the long dry fall.

March 12, 1949

Heard Carl Sandberg. Was impressed by his all-embracing humanism, but he seemed to have a little trouble thinking of words and in articulating them as though he were very tired or ill – or even intoxicated.

March 14, 1949

Attended wonderful concert of Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra with Dorothy Leake. When we got out of the auditorium we found the wind had turned to the north and it was pretty cold. (Dorothy and I found a great contrast between our usual radio listening and the real thing.)

March 25, 1949

Went to O.C. with the Leakes & the Burns and Lou Emma Breckinridge to see the greatly-Oscared "Hamlet" with Lawrence Olivier. And it was so shallow it was disgusting. Movie brains are not up to it. It rained off and on during the day here and in O.C. apricots are blooming.

March 30, 1949

Got very bad news from Jessie Douglas. Monday Mrs. Douglas woke up with a bad headache, and soon became unconscious. I am so glad we got to see her. I am afraid this is the end. And last night Canton was swept by a tornado. I hope Dr. and Mrs. Rogers are safe.

April 1, 1949

We got the bad news about Mrs. Douglas. She died yesterday morning without ever regaining consciousness. Will be buried Sunday at 2:30 just two weeks from the time we were all enjoying our visit together.

April 4, 1949

I worked hard getting my pictures ready to send Savoie. He is really ready to start. This P.M. I got a helper, a very intense little girl from South Africa married to an American G.I. She is very homesick. These international marriages are hard. Name Anne Finley.

April 5, 1949

I worked hard another morning on the pictures. It is a complicated job deciding on locations, captions, etc. Heard a speech so poor it was disgusting at the Library Staff meeting – by Dean Thomas. Went to A.A.U.W. dinner this evening. Heard wonderful lecture by Dr. Oglesby.

April 8, 1949

I am pretty tired these days – my work in keeping up with the legislature is too hard. I have had Mrs. Finley to help some this week, but both of us can't catch up they transact business faster than we can record it. This evening Mother and I went to a music listening A.A.U.W. group at the Hammonds.

April 12, 1949

Mother had another bad day with her knee. She wants to exercise it, but I finally prevailed upon her to rest it. Saw a very wonderful production of Hamlet – no scenery, poor stage, but real interpretation. Certainly different from Olivier.

April 23, 1949

I worked at various things. Sent my Nelson manuscript to the Arthur H. Clarke Company. I hope it turns out O.K. Really hot.

April 24, 1949

Church this morning – fine sermon by Mr. Stowe. Then I took Mrs. H. for a drive over the campus & veterans village. I went to the Payne Co. Hist. Soc. this P.M. – had fine meeting. This is another hot day – bright and pretty though.

April 26, 1949

Went this evening to A.A.U.W. executive council meeting. Got some real inside history of the struggle on the part of some branches to decide on acceptability of members after society decides eligibility – meaning keep out Negroes.

April 29, 1949

Again had a little slack time, so am not so very tired. I have been too busy for nearly four months – working at highest possible tension.

April 30, 1949

Nothing much happened. I worked hard on that complicated Round Mountain article.

May 1, 1949

The Davises and Mrs. Goodman called briefly. We went to a concert by the college symphonic choir in the afternoon.

May 2, 1949

Had a lovely drive with Mr. Melton and Mr. Harold Straughn out to the supposed battlefield of Round Mountain. I came back from running up and down the creek entirely fresh and rested.

May 8, 1949

Rained last night. We took a wonderful drive up through the green hills to the FP Ranch. Went through the Woolaroc museum – saw many buffalo, deer, etc. on the grounds. Mother got pretty tired going through the museum.

May 10, 1949

I went to the university with Mr. Stratton, Miss Phelps, & Mr. Shelby in Mr. S's new Buick. Took Mother along and left her with Grace Goodman and the Davises. Am attending meeting of Okla. Lib. Assn. Heard very fine speech by Dean Taylor (I think that is the name) of OCW.

May 13, 1949

Went to Pi Gamma Mu dinner with Ruth Hammond while Grace H. visited with Mother. We heard a very superficial lecture by Dean Thomas of the School of Commerce, who depends on personality to cover up intellectual deficiencies.

May 14, 1949

Mother & I Went down and busted ourselves on wedding presents for two very special girls – Betty Congdon and Gertrude Emory. It rained some this morning. I should have liked to go to Marshall for H.S. baccalaureate of a class I greatly love. I finished my "Round Mountain" article.

May 18, 1949

Very hard rain last night. Tornado hit the edge of Meeker yesterday evening. I got permanent – cost \$7.50. Hope I'm worth it.

May 21, 1949

Got new dress in Enid – paid \$15. Rain here last night – report of tornadoes this morning. I took Mother to Enid to see Dr. Duffy because her blood pressure is up – nearly 200 he says. For a wonder it didn't rain. Beautiful day. The wheat around Enid is the finest I have ever seen in Okla. except the year my father died.

May 26, 1949

Okla. Hist. Soc. met here today – a very wonderful meeting thanks to the enthusiasm and careful planning of B.B. Chapman. John Melton spoke on the battle site – Gaston Litton on archives. Both covered themselves with glory. "Hog" Thompson gave a very entertaining after dinner speech.

May 27, 1949

Hard shower this morning – no hail, no threat of tornado. I did some revising of my "Round Mountain" article to include some things I learned yesterday.

June 2, 1949

Spent most of forenoon weeding flower garden. It looks nice. Then the man came with the goods -- \$12 to haul. I unpacked some. Also cleaned kitchen.

June 6, 1949

Drove out to Muskogee and out to Bacone to meeting of Nat'l. Fellowship of Indian Workers. I got pretty tired. Hit a calf in the road. It didn't dent the car, but the calf looked a little dented.

June 9, 1949

Took supper with the Foremans. Bless them! Cable came off my battery driving in and my car stopped. Colored boy repaired it temporarily. Had a hard rain this evening while I was at the Foremans.

June 10, 1949

Another very fine day at the conference. These Indian leaders are certainly fine. In the P.M. I went in and got Mrs. Foreman and brot. her out to see the arts & crafts. Also got new cable for car & new cotton dress.

June 22, 1949

My proof finally came for "Oklahoma," and I am reading it. Hot day for such hard work!

June 23, 1949

It rained last night, and so I had a cooler day for my proof reading. I am still having trouble with my publisher's desire to write my book.

June 24, 1949

Hard shower this forenoon. Beautiful cool day for hard job of proof reading. I am reading it the second time. There were so many typo. errors I was afraid of missing some.

June 25, 1949

I worked hard another day on my proofs. I finished the second reading and started the third. The galleys are full of typos.

June 26, 1949

Went to church this morning. Heard a wonderful sermon by the preacher whose name is Finis A. Crutchfield. The rest of the day I read proof, and started my letter, which is in the nature of an ultimatum to the University Press.

June 27, 1949

Sent out my proofs. Then worked at the Agency, but was too tired to accomplish much. Very hard rain before daybreak.

June 30, 1949

Hot day. The tribal leaders had a meeting in the office – not the chiefs, but their deputies. I met a Mr. Maytubby, who lives in Muskogee. I was greatly impressed by Charles E. Grounds of the Seminoles and John F. Davis of the Creeks. Fine Indians both.

July 1, 1949

Hot day. Worked at Agency. Met a very wonderful young Ind. – a Baptist preacher named Marcellus Williams, a brother of John Davis. I have met some fine people at the Agency – Marie Hayes, a Miss Croom and a Mrs. Hull – all Cherokees.

July 4, 1949

Special delivery letter from the University Press. It seems I lacerated their feelings a little but I am not going to be treated as something lower than a freshman writing a theme. It rained several times today, and was nice day to work.

July 9, 1949

I worked at home. Part of the time I corrected proof on my “Round Mountain” article for the Chronicles. Pretty hot day.

July 11, 1949

I was pretty tired today – and weather very hot. I quit early and bought me a dress for \$18.51 (including tax and 1.50 alteration). It is real silk – very pretty.

July 14, 1949

Worked some more at the Agency after all. Saw many people in town. Had a short visit with the Ira Williams family. I had not realized they were here. I

called on the Foremans. I am afraid I shall never see them again. It almost broke my heart to smile and take my leave.

July 18, 1949

Day started bad. Drove up to Atoka to meet Mr. Anderson by appointment, but he never showed up. Then in P.M. went to Ind. office, talked with Mr. Wilson, and went out to a colony of Miss. Chocs. around a Baptist church. Then called on the Downing family at Atoka. Son Fred was there and we had a most wonderful visit (Was with Mrs. Manning).

July 19, 1949

Went out with Mrs. Manning to visit some of the loan clients. Then drove to Chickasaw church 100 years old and talked with some of the Chickasaws. Came back and am spending night with Dorothy Leake.

July 20, 1949

Drove to Idabel starting at Hugo to see the Firebaughs. I got very tired. Went out with Mrs. La Grand (a grand person) to visit some Choc. spinners. It was so interesting I got rested. Am in pleasant tourist cottage.

July 21, 1949

Went out with Mrs. La Grand to her class in beadwork northeast of Hugo. None of real Inds. there – much interest on the part of white “Inds.” one of whom, Mrs. Jefferson, is starting a shop in Hugo.

July 30, 1949

Worked all day on my proofs. Some of the most objectionable editing was taken out, but a little still remains. How I have fought for that book! It rained most of the night last night. Got a little warm this P.M.

August 1, 1949

Worked some more on the page proofs. This weather is delightfully cool since the rain.

August 2, 1949

Finished the page proofs and sent them out by Mistletoe. I found eleven places – and probably thirteen – to which I object, but most involve only a few words.

August 3, 1949

I worked on my index all afternoon. This forenoon I had some other things to attend to – one was the map, another some slight revision of an article for R. Hudson.

August 4, 1949

Worked hard all day at index. We are having delightfully cool weather for this hard job. Tried to start my car and the battery seemed dead.

August 5, 1949

Finished the index slips and started sorting them. I wish I did not have the nagging worry about the objectionable editing.

August 6, 1949

Had to buy a new battery – cost \$20. The last one was \$12 I think. I worked at putting the index together. It got rather warm this afternoon.

August 8, 1949

I worked hard again on my index. It rained a little this evening. Beautiful sunset.

August 9, 1949

Finished the index all but copying. It rained hard several times today.

August 10, 1949

Took Mrs. Hawkins to Douglas. Worked hard on the index – planned to get it copied and off today. Called Miss Stith and found all our differences regarding editing are resolved – also that there is no need to get index there before Saturday – so slowed down.

August 11, 1949

Got my index off on today's mail. Now my troubles with that book are all over.

October 17, 1949

Back at work. Nothing much happened. The library staff – bless them! – are planning a celebration when my book comes out. Dr. Dale is going to be the speaker. Ruth Hammond is in charge.

October 20, 1949

Hard showers today. My Okla. – Foot-loose, etc. came out today. It is a very attractive book, but has some typographical errors. In fact the big initial letter of the first word of the first sentence is wrong. If the publisher had done some good editing instead of trying to rewrite it, it would have been better.

October 21, 1949

Hard rain last night. My MS came back from Arthur H. Clarke. Good – would like to publish but costs too high – perhaps would consider it later if costs come down. Mother and I went out with the Hammond sisters to see the house decorations for Homecoming. Very clever.

October 22, 1949

Had dinner with Dr. H. E. Thompson of original A. & M. faculty. Dr. Chapman invited several of us. Saw the Homecoming floats from a ringside seat on Mrs. Gordon's porch. Some very beautiful, some very clever. Fine crisp day for game – everyone in holiday mood. And then K.U. defeated Aggies 55:14. People came away in droves before it ended.

October 29, 1949

Yesterday finished my report to the Indian Rights Association all but copying. Today I started copying but had rather bad luck getting started.

October 31, 1949

Slight frost showing on the roofs. Bright, beautiful day. The Library Staff Organization (bless them!) is sending out invitations to a dinner celebrating my book.

November 1, 1949

I am reading the new book aloud to my mother. I think all the sparkle was taken out by various changes and some indefensible editing.

November 4, 1949

Everything is stirring with expectancy over the new book. Everyone entering into the most generous excitement.

November 5, 1949

Wrote to Savoie & told him I felt the book was damaged by changes. My book is released today. Very fine display in Mr. Hinkel's window. I had the satisfaction of giving away my free copies and some I bought.

November 6, 1949

Bright beautiful day like all our weather this fall. I went to early morning church service. Very fine review of my book by Edith Copeland in Oklahoman, one by Elizabeth Thomas in Stillwater paper.

November 7, 1949

Went over and gave Pres. Bennett a copy of my book. Had a very nice visit with him. He has a powerful – a Churchillian – intellect.

November 9, 1949

Katherine & Montye came – also Jessie Douglas. I was going to let one of them sleep on the Davenport, but Alice Carlson took Jessie. The dinner was perfect. I have never been as happy over anything. Dr. Bennett called off a trip to Tennessee to be there. Mother was in fine trim & everyone was nice to her. Alice & Jessie were here all the time till we had to go to bed – then they left. I am very grateful to the Amarillo girls. Their drive was 800 miles. The weather was so perfect we went to the dinner without coats.

November 11, 1949

The Library Staff (bless them!) is still rejoicing because everything went off so well at the dinner. It was one of those really perfect gatherings where everything was exactly right.

November 17, 1949

I am getting some lovely letters from people who like my book.

Diaries:
1953 – 1957
(Angie Debo Collection, Box 5/ folder 5)

January 12, 1953

They started moving the library today. . . .

January 19, 1953

. . . All last week they have been moving the library – documents and catalogue are gone now – perhaps other branches I haven't seen.

January 23, 1953

. . . They started moving my maps to the ten cases. It seems wonderful to be moving, but there seems to be no way of doing it without serious damage to the maps. . . .

January 25, 1953

. . . This P.M. I helped some in the map moving. They finished today – a big job. The crews are working hard moving the books from Quonset 23 – hope to be all done when school starts Wed.

January 26, 1953

. . . I dashed down town this forenoon and did some necessary things returning in the middle to see if Mother was O.K. Worked at the library the same way this P.M. dashing home at intervals. How wonderful to be actually working in the new bldg. . . .

January 27, 1953

We had a staff meeting in the lovely council room. It gave some a real lift. I worked all day in the new building. The maps were disarranged and damaged some. The cases are so big and heavy they couldn't be brought up the elevator except by standing them on end. I spent the day straightening them out.

January 28, 1953

The new semester started today and the students came trooping back. All day they streamed through the new library. Bless them! They have needed it so badly. Not all the moving is done, but it is open for business at the new stand.

January 29, 1953

The students are settling down to happy work in their convenient location. And visitors stream through. . . .

January 30, 1953

. . . I am still very happy over my work in the new place. I am having many more customers and am able to serve them better except that it will take some weeks to unscramble the maps mixed in moving. This is my lamented birthday.

January 31, 1953

. . . I bought me some very fancy flat boxcars of shoes with rubber soles. They feel like nothing at all on my feet and look not half bad. I need them on those tiled floors of the new library. . . .

February 7, 1953

Still hot weather. And I am still enjoying the work in the lovely new building.

February 23, 1953

The big day! Our library staff had several conspiratorial meetings buying a super wastebasket (price \$75, but cost us 56.50 – all brass & copper) for Mr. Low's new office, and planning a party for this evening. Elizabeth T. & a committee planned a fine dinner with flowers & candles in our lovely staff room. All 19 of us were there plus Mr. and Mrs. Low. It was a happy occasion. He was completely surprised to find he was guest of honor & greatly pleased with the gift.

February 25, 1953

Today I had the pleasure of laying an autographed copy of my book on Mr. Low's desk. (This evening he called and told me how pleased he was.) Then this P.M. I went over to Pres. Willham's office and gave him one. He was very pleased, too. He is a fine man – the very best choice they could have made after Dr. Bennett's death.

February 26, 1953

. . . Next a college photographer came to take a picture of the map dept. He stuck me in too conspicuously – I wanted to feature the map cases – but I hope the general effect is O.K.

April 16, 1953

A group of Bldg. & Loan Assn. people came to visit the library. We divided them into thirds & Mr. Low and Alice Pattee and I guided them through. We have visitors all the time – people from all over the state flock to see it.

April 19, 1953

. . . In the P.M. I went to a meeting of the Payne Co. Hist. Soc. . . .

April 20, 1953

Marshall Woman's Club came on tour of campus. I took them thru the library. . . .

April 22, 1953

Grant Foreman died yesterday. . . .

May 7, 1953

We are all looking forward to dedication of library tomorrow. Have made plans to have it look just right for visitors from all over U.S. will be there.

May 8, 1953

This is our big day. Library filled with distinguished librarians all morning – dedication in P.M. and more visitors. Carillon concert – very lovely. In evening we had ballroom packed (capacity 500) and overflow. Wonderful weather. The library looked lovely – flowers and spit and polish.

May 9, 1953

Library dept. heads (bless them!) sent Mother a beautiful floral piece. . . .