

IN OKLAHOMA

There are several ways of seeing Oklahoma. There is only one way of knowing the Territory.

The Congressman and the red-haired girl proved that. They traveled from New York to Bluffville on the same car. He was looking for wheat statistics. She was in search of new experiences, and incidentally of a brother who had started a lumber yard in Bluffville.

Both travelers saw Oklahoma after a fashion, but only the red-haired girl learned to know it. That was because the Congressman, with masculine logic, contended that the way to see a country was to travel about it, while the girl, with feminine intuition, divined that the real way to accomplish the end was to sit on a lumber pile and look at the country through the eyes and the words of the men who made it.

There were a few Eastern women in Bluffville, but they were married, and several years in the Territory had rubbed off the old hall mark; so Wilson's sister made rather a sensation.

Billings, the saloon-keeper, saw her first.

"Say, boys," he announced, "There's a red-headed girl sitting on a pile of two-by-fours up in Wilson's lumber yard, and she's a peach."

The boys were doubtful. They strolled, singly and collectively, past the lumber yard, and Billings' reputation for veracity soared above par.

Bawson was contented with walking in the yard. He lit a large cigar by way of steadying his nerves, pulled his hat further over his eyes and turned into Wilson's office. A half hour later he was back in the saloon.

"She's his sister, Miss Betty Wilson, from New York, and she's the real thing," he said, with a deep conviction. Meanwhile, the girl on the lumber pile was feeling vaguely disappointed. She looked off across the plain, whose monotonous level was broken only by occasional farm buildings, and she wondered how one could live in a treeless country and not go mad.

Then she turned and looked down the wide, dusty main street of the town. It was flanked by rows of one-story wooden buildings, and ended in an open square surrounding a squat brick court-house, at whose door two sickly poplars stood guard like exiled and homesick grenadiers. From the main street the town wandered off in forlorn little shacks and tiny, neat, cigar-box cottages, dotted indiscriminately along broad, dirty roads that bore sounding titles.

It was all ugly, drearily ugly. The girl had lunched with one of her brother's married friends, and eaten chicken croquettes and salted almonds in a four-room shack whose good rugs and books and pictures and china seemed as much out of place as a fawn in a button factory. Betty wasn't old enough to see the dramatic interest of the surf line where east broke against west, and she went away from that luncheon exceeding sorrowful. Salted almonds and embroidered doilies, and not a cowboy or an Indian within sight. Was this what she had gone out in the wilderness for to see?

The street in front of the lumber office was lined with wagons and cow-ponies, and crowds of roughly clad men thronged the wooden sidewalks. On the opposite corner a number of horse-traders were gathered round a bunch of broncos, and gamblers had halted their loaded wagons to talk with the swaggering, loud-voiced group.

Suddenly something happened, and the red-haired girl sat up. A long, lean man, in riding clothes and sombrero, stood facing three burly, thick-set traders. "You'll swallow that or an ounce of lead," roared one of the trio, drawing a revolver.

The crowd surged back out of range. "You're a d—horse-thief, and I can prove it," said the man in front of the shining steel barrel. He moved quickly, as he spoke, and a bullet buried itself in the buildings behind him.

The three men lunged toward him, and he backed up against a wagon full of cord-wood. Something flashed in his hand. There was a second shot, then another, and another. Two men lay in the street. The cowboy stood unhurt save for a red streak, broadening as it spread.

The third horse-trader brought his heavy whip butt down viciously upon the cowboy's right wrist and the revolver spun across the road, but the disarmed man reached for a stick of wood with his left hand, and the last of his assailants went down in a crumpled heap.

The crowd closed in. When it opened out, two men were being loaded into an empty wagon. One, supported by friends, was limping toward the drugstore, and the cowboy, followed by an admiring throng, was slouching carelessly into the nearest saloon.

A loose-jointed, keen-eyed man dropped down upon the lumber pile beside the red-haired girl.

"Pretty sharp, wasn't it?" he drawled, as he lit his pipe. The girl recognized the sheriff, to whom she had been introduced, with due ceremony, earlier in the day.

"Aren't you going to arrest anybody?" she inquired breathlessly.

"What'd I do that for?" asked the Majesty of the Law, in mild surprise.

"Do you allow fights like that on your town streets?"

He shifted his pipe, and expostulated cheerfully. "Why, Jim licked, didn't he?"

"He'll spoil your taste for Willy boys, Betty," he said, "but he'll not hurt you, and he knows the Territory. Don't hurt him."

So the couple sat together under the shade of the lumber shed very often, and the gambler told the red-haired girl about the people who passed, and about a good many people who didn't pass.

"That's Slim Jim," he said one day, as he and Betty looked down the street from their vantage point on the lumber pile. "Did you ever meet him?"

"No, but I've seen him fight."

"That's good. He's a dabster at it isn't he? Bet eating in his long suit. He can eat more than any man in the Strip, and there isn't a boarding-house keeper who will board him at regular rates; but he can't get an extra ounce of flesh on those bones."

"He's an old Texas man. He says he can go broke anywhere with perfect impunity. All he needs to do is to tell the first man he meets a hard-luck story, and pump up a cough. They put him up at a hotel and take up a collection for him."

Just at this point in the conversation the sheriff hove in sight and came across the yard with his lazy, side-wheeler motion.

"Now wouldn't you think that man was slower than molasses in winter?" asked the gambler musingly. "He's made out of steel wire and raw hide. He's quicker on the trigger than any man in the country. He has a mind that works like chain lightning, and an iron nerve, and eyes in the back of his head, but just look at him."

The sheriff dropped in a disjointed heap upon a friendly joint.

"I was telling Miss Wilson about Slim Jim," volunteered the gambler.

"Oh—well, it's a long story. He's a character, Slim Jim is. Don't you get stuck on him, though, Miss Wilson. He's tarantula shaped, but he's married. Did Tom tell you about his marrying? No! Well, that was the only time anybody got the drop on Jim."

"You see, it happened, just a little while after the run for the Stri, and Jim's never been sorry but once. That's all the time. She was a Yankee, and came down to visit her sister. There wasn't another pretty girl within miles, and the boys went clean daffy about her. There were picket lines of cow-ponies hitched to her brother-in-law's fence all day and every day."

"The girl picked out two young fellows who had good claims, side by side. They were both soomers."

"What's a soomer?" asked the red-haired girl.

"Chap who gets in and stakes his claim before the Government signal is given. He has no legal right to his claim, and any one who can prove him sooner can turn him out, and stake his claim. Well, for a while this girl couldn't decide which of the two fellows she liked the better; but, finally, she made up her mind. Both of the duffers had told her sooner stories. She got the one she didn't want to marry to tell his story before witnesses. Then she discovered his title, staked his claim, and married the man next door. That was Jim. They've got a nice half-section, but Jim says that sometimes he feels as sick as he looks, and that he wouldn't advise any man to marry a business woman. If he were a woman he'd get a divorce, but a man can't very well do that, even in Oklahoma."

The girl looked thoughtful.

"Divorces are easy, down here, aren't they?" she asked.

"I lunched with the banker's wife the other day, and she said something about the time when she and John were divorced. She didn't seem sensitive about the thing, but I didn't like to ask questions."

The gambler and the sheriff both chuckled.

"Why, bless your heart, she wouldn't have cared," said the sheriff. "She and her sister both got divorces, just before the run. I on see a man and his wife can stake only one claim. That's a quarter section. Now those two couples wanted two half-sections. So they got divorced, made the run, staked their claims, and the claims were proved, they married again. Each family had a half-section. See?"

The red-haired girl gasped. There was a direct simplicity about Oklahoma methods that startled her.

"Did many women run?" she asked weakly.

"Dresses of them."

"Tell me about a run. What's it like?"

The sheriff blew a cloud of smoke.

"What's it like Tom? You tell her," he said, turning to the other man.

"Well, no; I can't say that the Sir Galahad act was popular. Still the men didn't try not to interfere with the women if it could be avoided."

"There were the Gateses," put in the sheriff dryly.

Both men looked amused. The gambler took out a fresh cigar.

"Tell her about them," he suggested, as he felt for a match and Mrs. Gates, did you?"

"No, I think not," said the girl, wrinkling her forehead in an effort to remember.

"Well, your brother knows them. That was a case, where a man and woman contested a claim, and no politeness about it neither."

"They both made the run. Mrs. Gates was Miss Johnson then, a crisp, pug-nosed Yankee schoolmarm. She staked her claim Gates happened to take the same quarter-section. That started the fight. Now when a claim is contested, the claimant who has put up a shack and broken ground first stands the best show; so as soon as they had filed, Gates and Miss Johnson went tearing back to the claim to begin operations. She took a workman, and they knocked up a shack at the southwest corner of the claim. Gates ran his up on the northeast corner. He had to pass the other shack on his way to town."

"She had some horses and began ploughing. So did Gates. She hated him like poison. He was the air blue ever since he thought of her. The contest dragged a long. Those things last forever down here. Every day the two parties got more bitter. There wasn't anything too bad for one to say about the other. When she got up in the morning she looked at the smoke coming out of his chimney, and talked to herself in a way that would have made any Yankee or English sinner. While he ate breakfast he looked across at her shack and said things that weren't fit for publication. Hating each other was their chief occupation. Between times they ploughed."

"One morning Miss Johnson got up and looked over at her enemy's shack. There wasn't any smoke. The next morning she found the air blue again. She knew Gates had passed her place. The third morning came. No smoke. Miss Johnson's curiosity fairly sizzled. It was too much for her. She put on her boots and went across to the enemy's camp. There wasn't any noise about the place. She stooped at the door and listened. Not a sound. She tried the door-catch, it turned, and the door opened. She pushed the door open and went in. There was only one room to the shack. On the side of the room opposite the door was a cot. On the cot was a man. He was tossing and turning. His cheeks were crimson. His eyes had a sort of vacant stare."

"Miss Johnson stood holding the door and watched the man. He didn't pay any attention to her. By and by she went in to the room, walked over to him, and felt his head. He was burning up with fever, and didn't notice her at all. She looked around the room. Everything was in an awful mess."

"She stood and bit her lip for a minute. That's a way she has. Then she came to a conclusion and trotted over to her shack. Pretty soon she hurried back with a medicine cove, rolled up her sleeves, and waded into that room. When it was tidy she put wet cloths on Gates' head, and gave him some more medicine. Night came along, and she rolled herself in a blanket and slept on the floor. The next day she made gruel for the sick man, and kept on with the medicine. She kept that up for four days, going home only long enough to tend to the horses and cow."

"On the fifth day Gates opened his eyes, and saw out of them. She was standing by him, and when he saw her he swore feebly. She set her lips."

"You shan't die on my land," she said.

"It's my land, and I'll die on it if I d—please," snarled Gates. Then he faint-ed."

"That was the situation for two weeks. The woman won out. A man's stubbornness ain't any match for a woman's. Miss Johnson wouldn't let Gates die on her land. He tried to assert his rights and do it, but couldn't. She nursed him back to life, but they wouldn't speak to each other. When he was getting well, but could not get any tank for himself, he used to watch her and grin sometimes. Then he would scowl."

"At last he was able to get up. She went home. That afternoon he walked in at her door."

"I reckon you won't give up this claim?" he said.

"No. Will you?"

"I'd see you in—first, but will you marry me, ain't it?" asked Miss Johnson.

"It's a good deal the same thing for me, ain't it?" asked Miss Johnson.

"Still she married him. That's the way that contest was squashed, and they're as happy as turtle doves."

"It's a funny country," mused the red-haired girl.

"It's that," agreed the men.

A dilapidated cart, drawn by a phantom horse, wandered down the street and stopped in front of the lumber office. In it were a dignified Indian, in gay raiment; a shrinking, frightened-faced squaw, wrapped in a blanket, and a scantily-clad Indian baby. The old Indian climbed out of the wagon. As he left, the squaw wailed shrilly, and the found father snuffed it over the head. Then he disappeared into the office.

"Old Lone Tree," explained the gambler.

"He's the meanest Indian unhang. He'll lie and steal and murder, and beat his wife, and do it all with imperturbable dignity. He's a Government pet, and always comes on top. You can shoot a white man down here, and not hear much about it; but wipe one of those dirty, vicious Indians off the earth, and you'll set the whole machinery of the Government working. Don't talk to me about the noble red man."

"Slim Jim gave Lone Tree that scar on his cheek," the sheriff added.

The tightest hole Jim was ever in was three years ago, when six Indians held him up fifteen miles out on the Creek road. Even a drunken Injun ought to have known better. Three braves were gathered to their fathers, and three more were laid up for weeks. There was a big fuss about it, but it was finally decided that Jim shot in self-defense."

The office door opened. Old Lone Tree stalked into the yard and across to the lumber pile where the red-haired girl sat. He looked her over calmly, while she snatched.

"How?" he grunted.

The two men nodded coolly. Lone Tree sat down on the lumber and smoked his pipe, looking superbly reserved and dignified. He was spectacular, a barrier to conversation. The Indians in Oklahoma are picturesque, but not inspiring. They shake one's faith in Longfellow and Cooper. They are dirty, ill-smelling, thieving, brutal; yet with it all, they do, at times, look the part.

Lone Tree finished his pipe in silence. Then he made another casual survey of Wilson's sister, and nodded. She wasn't sure whether the nod expressed approval, but she offered him a smile at a venture. He accepted it without any sign of appreciation.

"Day," he grunted solemnly, and went away.

As he climbed into the wagon the pappoose once more gave a frichtened cry, and Lone Tree struck the little one a brutal blow with his whip. The squaw moaned like an animal in pain, gathered her baby in her arms, and sat huddled in the bottom of the wagon, while her lord and master stately, serene, drove away into the sunset.

"See the day I shall kill an Indian," said Tom Bailey quietly. "I feel it coming on."

The red-haired girl's education went on apace. One day she was invited to a meeting of the Woman's Club, and found it uncommonly like Soreis, though, sartorially, not quite up to the standard of the mother club.

A frightened little woman read a long paper upon Icelandic literature, spelling all the names, because, as she explained, no one could by any possibility pronounce them. Then there was a discussion upon corporal punishment for children, which became so animated that only the strategic genius of the president prevented its ending fatally. Sandwiches and chocolate came to the front, and the ladies and Dick Wilson's sister escaped. It was depressing to find that even Oklahoma could not furnish new color effects to woman's clubdom.

At the lumber yard she found the sheriff Tom Bailey, and Dick loafing tranquilly. It was a relief after the glimpse of a "strenuous life. They moved along and made room for her on the lumber pile. She sat down and sighed for sheer satisfaction. Later that she asked a question that had been bothering her.

"Why Bluffville? There aren't any bluffs."

The three men looked lazily at each other. Each hoped one or the other would assume the effort of explaining. The sheriff finally came to the front.

"Didn't you ever hear how the town came to be here? We called the railroad bluff. Some of the soomers staked it out and nabbed town lots. The railroad company decided to locate its town nine miles east, and not stop here. Then there was a fight. The trains had to be stopped here, and the boys stopped them. They tore up track and broke up bridges. The railroad company sent a posse down to guard things. Some of the boys engaged the posse up at the north bridge while the rest of the boys blew up the south bridge. One night they moved a house, and set it squarely on the track. The engineer of the express train didn't see it until he was almost on it, so he threw his throttle wide open and ploughed right through the house. The engine never left the track, but it looked more or less like thirty cents afterward, and the passengers were scared."

"People wouldn't ride on the trains, and the trainmen wouldn't run them, so the railroad company had to give in. It ought to have known better than to buck up against the crowd of Oklahoma boomers."

"How long ago was all that?"

"Five years. We celebrated the town's fifth birthday last summer, spent five thousand dollars—everything wide open, fireworks till you couldn't't see, circus, baloon ascension, show at the Opera House, four deaths from pistol shots, scores of black eyes, drunks in bunches of twenty-five. It was a great occasion. Sorry you weren't here."

"Some day the bottom will fall out of this boom," prophesied the gambler.

"That's right," assented Dick. "We draw from 75 miles east and 150 miles west now, but a railway will cut in somewhere, and we'll go out like a candle. It's a great town, now, though."

"There ain't no place for a man in my profession." The gambler's tone had a touch of self-disgust in it.

"Why, why, why—" The red-haired girl looked embarrassed.

"Why do I follow my profession?" finished the gambler cheerfully. "Well, why not. I'm on the square. My word's my bond, and the boys know it. It's all a gamble, in one way or another, and I'm not sure but what the avowed gambler is the only really honest man in the bunch."

"The month's visit came to an end one October day. The red-haired girl kissed her brother tearfully, while all the bystanders turned their backs and diligently studied the landscape."

"The two showed hands with a large and varied assortment of men, among them Old Lone Tree, who eyed her stolidly, and grunted. "Day," but who had ridden twenty miles to make the eloquent remark."

Tom Bailey was the last man to step up. His face wore the expression that he usually reserved for a raise on a pair of deuces. A habit of bluffing calmly stands a man in good stead on such occasions.

"You've been very good," said the red-haired girl.

"Yes, I've been good. I'll probably make up for it."

Not a muscle of his face stirred, but that night he rode his pony fifty miles for no apparent purpose.

On the train the red-haired girl met the Congressman.

"It's a wonderful country," he said.

"It is," she agreed.

"Such crops," mused the Congressman.

"Such men," sighed the girl. She finds New York slow.—By Eleanor Hoyt in Everybody's Magazine.

Close friends of Mrs. Benjamin Harrison in Indianapolis state that she has requested those who have been supporting her claim to a pension to abandon their efforts. A bill granting her \$5,000 a year was introduced by Senator Fairbanks recently, but it is probable now that it will be withdrawn. Opposition to the grant, both among members of Congress and relatives of the late President, have induced Mrs. Harrison to ask that the project be dropped.

Opponents to the pension contended that Mrs. Harrison was not entitled to the operation of the precedent by which widows of Presidents have received government assistance. She was married to General Harrison after he had retired to private life, and therefore was not the wife of a President and is now only the widow of an ex-President.

Furthermore, the Harrison family pointed out that the General made generous provisions in his will for Mrs. Harrison and their child, leaving to his widow an income of \$10,000 a year and a house free of incumbrances.

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The Archduchess Elizabeth, in view of her marriage to Prince Otho von Windisch-Gratz, who is not of royal blood, on Wednesday took the oath renouncing all claims for herself and her descendants to the Austrian throne.

The ceremony occurred at noon in the Privy council chamber of the palace, in the presence of the emperor, a number of statesmen and the foreign diplomats. The archduchess took the oath kneeling before a crucifix.

The emperor's gifts to the Archduchess Elizabeth include securities valued at 320,000 pounds, (\$1,600,000), a yearly allowance of 50,000 pounds, (\$250,000), jewelry valued at 200,000 pounds (\$1,000,000), a gold dinner service and several residences.

Born September 1st, 1853, the Archduchess Elizabeth Marie was but five years old when the tragic death of her father, the Crown Prince Rudolf, occurred. She was brought up by her mother, the widowed Belgian Princess Stephanie, at the imperial court, under the fostering care of the Emperor Francis Joseph and the Empress Elizabeth.

The assassination of her grandmother by means of a dastardly anarchist's dagger at Geneva, befell the royal family in 1898.

These circumstances bound together the aged Kaiser and the child of his only son in the closest affection, and after her mother married a second time, two years ago, becoming the Countess Lonyay, the ties between the two have, it is said, been strengthened all the more by constant companionship.

The Archduchess, before she came of age, last year, had already made her choice of a husband, and gained her grandfather's consent to her betrothal to Prince Otho von Windisch Gratz, for what is purely a love match, Prince Otho, though belonging to one of the most distinguished Austrian noble houses, being only a cadet of a junior branch and a simple Uljan lieutenant.

The emperor gave his consent to the marriage on condition that nothing definite should be decided until the archduchess attained her eighteenth birthday. This was last September, and the wedding was fixed for the present month.

Under the pragmatic sanction, by virtue of which, in 1723, the emperor Charles VI, settled the crown on his daughter, Maria Theresa, and her heirs, it became the rule that the Austro-Hungarian throne shall always descend to direct male heirs. The Archduchess Elizabeth could not, consequently, have succeeded in the sovereignty of the Austro-Hungarian empire, nor would she or her children have any claim except through the absolute failure of male heirs. The emperor has grandsons in the direct line, his youngest daughter, the Archduchess Marie Valerie, who is married to the Archduke Francis Salvator, of Tuscany, being the mother of three sons, of whom the eldest is the Archduke Francis Charles, now nine years of age. On the death of the Crown Prince Rudolf, however, the succession passed to the emperor's brother, on whose death, in 1896, his elder son, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, became heir presumptive.

In the ordinary course of events the Archduke Francis Ferdinand will become the next Emperor of Austria, but when he marries his morganatic marriage with the Countess Chotek, in 1900, he renounced by solemn oath any claim to the throne on the part of his descendants by that marriage, and in all human probability the crown will descend to the Archduke Karl Franz Joseph, now fourteen years old, and the son of the emperor's second nearest nephew the Archduke Otho Francis.

Killed With a Sledge.

St. Louis Business Man Murdered in a Bath House. Robbery the Motive of the Crime—A Colored Man Employed in the Establishment Under Arrest—His Statement.

A. Dean Cooper, of St. Louis, treasurer of the Graham Paper company, died as the result of injuries sustained in a mysterious manner while in the Vista Turkish bath establishment at 3518 Franklin street Thursday, June 27, at St. Louis.

William A. Strother, the colored man in charge of the bath house, who tells conflicting stories about the affair, is under arrest, and a diamond ring worth \$1,500 and a valuable pin belonging to Mr. Cooper have been recovered from their hiding place in the cellar of the bath house.

Mr. Cooper's injury consisted of a fractured skull. A sledge hammer, covered with blood, was also found in the cellar and taken possession of by the police.

Strother made a statement to the police about midnight a boy brought Mr. Cooper a note, which he refused to answer. The boy went away, and soon after a man and two women entered. When he returned from the cellar where he had gone to fix the fire, Strother says he found Cooper on the couch unconscious.

Doctors operated on Mr. Cooper and removed pieces of bone that were pressing on his brain, but the injured man died without regaining consciousness.

Mr. Cooper was the owner of the bath house where the assault was committed, but it was not managed in his name. Mr. Cooper, who was interested in various lines of business, was considered one of the wealthiest men in St. Louis.

The Widows of Presidents.

The report made to the United States Senate favoring a pension of \$5,000 per year to Mrs. McKinley, recites that Martha Washington was given the franking privilege, while Louise C. Adams was accorded the same right by an act of Congress. The widow of William Henry Harrison received \$25,000, less any amount that had already been paid on the salary of that year, together with the franking privilege. Dolly Madison was given the franking privilege, and Mrs. Polk received a pension of \$5,000 year. Mrs. Taylor was given the franking privilege. Mrs. Taylor received a pension of \$5,000, while Mrs. Lincoln got a pension equal amount, together with \$25,000, less the amount that had been paid on that year's salary of the President. She was also given the franking privilege. Mrs. Grant was given \$5,000 annually and the franking privilege. Mrs. Garfield received \$50,000, less the amount that had been paid on that year's salary of the President. Special allowances of this kind also have been made to some of the widows of the Vice Presidents.

Husband 18, Wife 16.

Porter B. Moon, of Jersey Shore, aged 18 years, and Myrtle C. Austin, of Ebensburg, aged 16, eloped to Corning a few days ago and were married. The young lady while visiting at the Crawford house, Jersey Shore, met Moon, who is employed on the New York Central railroad. Landlord Letts, a cousin of the young lady, seeing the attention she was receiving, thought best to send her home, but instead of going to Ebensburg she accompanied it, it is said, her lover to Corning and the two were married by the Rev. W. H. Reese.

Silver Causes Arm Amputation.

Mrs. Devillo Dexter, of Delmar, Tioga county, several weeks ago ran a silver into the middle finger of her right hand. The finger became so badly affected that it had to be amputated. This did not stop the infection, and the other day the arm was amputated near the elbow. Only a few months ago her husband lost the sight of an eye by being struck with a nail he was driving.

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