

## THE STORY OF AN OKLAHOMA COWBOY, WILLIAM MCGINTY, AND HIS WIFE

By Leslie A. McRill

There is drama on these plains—drama of human striving, failing and accomplishment. Here are a couple of Oklahoma pioneers who have lived a typical Oklahoma life and still march on into the sunset of their travel, taking events of every day with humor and satisfaction. Satisfaction because of a long, well-lived course; satisfaction in their children and grand-children, seeing them in well-regulated participation in all that is good and wholesome.

This is the story of Mr. and Mrs. William McGinty who were and are a part of early Oklahoma Territory and Oklahoma since Statehood. To all their friends they are Billy and Mollie. Living in the little village of Ripley, Payne County, they are known far and wide as two people who have never turned a deaf ear to need of any kind, always in the front vanguard for betterment of their community, and with a helping hand to every neighbor.

William M. McGinty was born in Mercer County, Missouri, son of Robert and Margaret Ann McGinty. His parents came to Oklahoma among the '89'ers and settled in the Ingalls community. Mary (Mollie) McGinty was born in Nebraska, daughter of Dr. J. H. and Charlotte Ann Pickering. The family were originally from Illinois. They moved to Oklahoma Territory in 1893, also settling at Ingalls. So, it was at Ingalls where Billy and Mollie met—young pioneers in a new territory.

Billy worked as a young man on the *Bar-X-Bar* Ranch in the Pawnee Reservation where he became the cowboy and roper who was to earn fame later on in life. It is difficult for a writer to pick out the important events of the lives of this well-known couple, there are so many unique, as well as typical, early day happenings woven into their lives. First, the early life of Billy, and then the lives of both after their marriage in 1902.

Billy, the cowboy, was fearless and perhaps never met a horse he could not conquer. One writer remarks:<sup>1</sup> "Roosevelt (Theodore) affectionately named him 'Little McGinty' . . . . and said that Little McGinty made himself a pledge never to walk if he could ride. It appears his preference in transportation was a horse. He did not care about the 'temper' of the horse, for the meaner, the better he liked it."

<sup>1</sup> Chris Emmet, "Rough Riders," in *The New Mexico Historical Review*, July, 1955, p. 177.

As a rider of wild horses McGinty perhaps has never been surpassed. A friend of the writer, Mr. Gilbert Shaw, also a pioneer of Oklahoma, of the Ingalls neighborhood, recalls, when he was a boy of twelve or thirteen years of age, seeing Billy riding an unbroken horse. While doing so Billy slipped the saddle, discarding it, then the bridle, and continued riding the frantic bucking animal successfully. When confronted with this recollection by Mr. Shaw, McGinty remarked: "I would never tell that one, because most folks would think I was lying."

Billy was still riding and roping cattle in his ranch work when the Spanish-American War broke out. News was soon heralded that Theodore Roosevelt was going to organize a Rough Rider Regiment. Billy wanted to join-up, so he saddled his pony and took out from Ingalls for Guthrie where the enlistment roll was being made up. He tells of his trip on horseback, of sleeping at a negro cabin enroute, and finally arriving at Guthrie where he was successful in getting into the regiment. It was a trip of some two days in that day.

These remarks were published under a half-page photo of Billy:<sup>2</sup>

One of the most colorful and picturesque and best known characters in Oklahoma today is Billy McGinty of Ripley, Oklahoma.

He was a veteran of the Spanish-American War and was the only one of eight or nine applications from Payne County who was accepted in the organization known as "Roosevelt's Rough Riders."

He counted as his friends Teddy Roosevelt, Pawnee Bill, Buffalo Bill, "Death Valley Scotty," General Wood, General Wheeler and others.

Billy was accepted in spite of the fact that he was only five feet two inches in height. But when it came to getting the job done, riding and soldiering, he was right in there with the tallest and best, attracting the attention of his commanding officers, and liked by his comrades because of his quiet demeanor and fearless daring.

Quoting again from Chris Emmet (*op. cit.*): "Among those who early attracted the attention of both Colonel Wood and Lieut. Colonel Roosevelt, as well as the newspapers, was (and is) one William M. McGinty . . . . You men (members of the Rough Riders Ass'n) know him either as your life-time president or just plain 'Uncle Billy.'"

When speaking of the battle of San Juan Hill, Billy has this reminiscence:

It seems odd to me that in this action, I remember some of these things. But under fire of this kind, it is often these things we most remember. We could see the city of Santiago from the San Juan Hill. Many Spaniards had been left dead in the trenches, most of whom had been shot in the head.

<sup>2</sup>The Historical Souvenir Edition of *The United Spanish American War Veterans Magazine*, May 12, 1942.

When we reached the trenches we stopped, as it was late and as quite a number of men were missing. We could not figure out what had happened to them, but we found out next morning. About sixty of the men had charged on over the hill. Since these men were not sure of their position and were between two fires, the Spanish, during the night, tried several counter attacks, but were driven back. The Spanish and these men over the hill were at very close quarters—only just across a small draw were the enemy.

When daylight came, these men started digging back, using their small dagger knives which they carried, and taking cover in the shallow trenches as they dug along in the sandy, gravelly dirt of the hill. By morning, our regiment had found the location of the men, but had no way of getting them back until nightfall again. The previous night they had not wanted to disclose that they were cut off, or they would have been in a very serious position. That day was really hot, being the 3rd day of July. Col. Roosevelt knew that the boys could not stay there all day without food and water. The morning was sultry, with a light fog, and then the sun came out, bearing down with all its combined southern intensity. Col. Roosevelt and Captain Kane decided to send some tomatoes and hard tack and coffee to the boys. I was standing close by. When the officers were talking about trying to get food to those stranded over the hill, they asked for volunteers. I stepped up and told them I would try and get some food to them. When I started to go, Col. Roosevelt said, "Wait, I'll go with you."

Captain Kane replied, "No, Col. Roosevelt, if any one goes with him, I will go. The whole regiment is depending on you, but no one depending on either of us."

Then I told them that there was no use in risking two men, so I took a case of food over to the lines. When I hit the brow of the hill, it seemed that the entire enemy line started firing. I had the case of food on my shoulder and was humped over trying to stay as close to the ground as I could. The firing seemed to come in a bit of cross-fire. A number of bullets hit the case of food, some being canned tomatoes and the juice ran down my face and back. But I never got hit any place and when I reached the boys, I stayed there and dug me out a hole to crawl into. In a short time, another one of our boys, Dick Shanafelt, came over with a big can of coffee, and as luck would have it, we never got a scratch. To keep from getting shelled out, the boys started tunneling back toward the trenches. They would dig in the ground just deep enough to hide their bodies and keep inching as they completed more trench. Some of the main regiment tunneled toward us and later we reached the main trenches at San Juan Hill.

I am proud to be a Spanish-American War veteran.<sup>3</sup>

Another interesting event which occurred at San Juan Hill is related in the following narrative, also told by Billy McGinty.<sup>4</sup>

Where we were camped there was a small stream where we got our drinking water. Below this stream was a nice water hole and we were allowed to swim there. One day while swimming, a sergeant of our troop named Sherman Bell was badly ruptured as he slipped and fell. The injury was small but four of our doctors there tried to help him, but could do him no good. They finally decided to ease him by taking him to the Headquarters General Hospital. His condition had grown so bad, that they immediately

<sup>3</sup>The above narrative was given to the writer by Mrs. Rose Jacobs, former editor of the *Ripley Review*, to whom Billy gave it. She was intending to use it at some future date.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*

detailed me and one of Bell's friends, named Ben Daniels, to take him down the mountain to the hospital.

I got the outfit together ready to go, and they shot him full of morphine and told us we had better get him to the hospital before the drug played out. We put him in this two wheel cart we had rigged up. The back-band of the harness was padded like a saddle, and it fitted right on the mule's back, so the lift and weight was mostly on the mule's back. When we first started, for a ways, Ben Daniels walked behind, while I sat up in the back of the cart with a rifle in my hands. We had to go through a very spooky part of the jungle, although I don't think there was much danger of anything. The walking was mighty hard, and it was hot, too, and in a short time Ben was just rolling in sweat. I kept telling him we would have to hurry, but he would get behind, and I would have to pull up and wait. He kept telling me there wasn't room for both of us in the cart, but I told him that if he didn't get in that way I wasn't going to stop for him again.

Ben Daniels held a higher rank than I in the army, and I should not have talked to him like that. But I guess he figured he was the same as I, for we fussed back and forth all the time. The road was rough as all put together going down that mountain pass to the hospital. I kept whipping the mule trying to hurry, and Ben kept telling me that I would kill Sherman Bell if I didn't slow up. But I knew that if we didn't get there before the morphine played out we would have lots of trouble. I didn't pay much attention to Ben's hollering, for he was having a time holding onto the cart, and couldn't do much anyway.

That old cart hadn't been greased for many a month and the wheels would squall out plenty loud every time they turned around. And there we were going down the mountain lickety-split, the wheels squalling, and Ben Daniels trying to hold on, yelling above the noise for me to "take it easy." Sherman Bell's head was about a foot or more lower than his feet, the way we had laid him in the cart, and the morphine had relaxed his body so that he took each bump with the cart. This, of course, was much better than if he had not been relaxed, since then he would have received more jarring around.

We reached the Hospital before the drug played out, and I gave a note from our doctors to the head doctor there. Ben and I took it easier going back to camp. When we got back to camp, the doctors were anxious to know how we made out. I told our Doctor Thorp how Ben had griped about jarring Sherman Bell so much, and he told me he didn't think it made much difference, as he didn't hold much chance for him anyway.

I never thought much more about it, just figuring that I would never see Sherman Bell alive again. But after the War, when I was in New York City, I became ill and was taken to the hospital there. One day at the hospital, a man and his girl friend, came to visit me and who should it be but Sherman Bell? He introduced me to the lady by saying "Here is the McGinty that saved my life in Cuba." and gave her a "line of bull" about me and him. I had thought him to be a truthful fellow, and must have looked at him like it was a mystery to me, for he said, "You act like you don't know what I'm talking about. Remember when I was in that awful fix in the mountains of Cuba."

I told him of course I remembered that. "Well," he went on, "The doctors told me that trip down the mountain side was what saved my life. My head being lower than my feet, and I being relaxed, the jolts along the rough mountain side worked that rupture slowly back until when I reached the hospital, the doctors did not need to operate, or do much else, since I was already on the road to recovery."

Sherman Bell was later an official in Colorado, and before the War, had been a Wells-Fargo man on the Denver Run.

When the troops returned to the States and were being mustered out, Colonel Roosevelt asked Billy to take his horse, "Little Tex," from Long Island to Oyster Bay. McGinty was glad to do so, but along the route the curious and souvenir hunters beset Billy and "Tex," each one pulling a hair from the horse's tail, until when Oyster Bay was reached, "Little Tex" had no hair remaining in his tail. Roosevelt remarked upon seeing him, "Bully!, but he surely doesn't look very natural."

An amusing incident occurred before the mustering out. Fellow soldiers wanting to pull a trick on Billy, prevailed upon him to ask the *Mustering Out* officer when they were going home. They assumed that if he asked a superior officer point blank such a question, and without being addressed, he would be reprimanded. When Billy approached the officer and put his question the officer met him with a smile and they sat down on a log and had a good chat, much to the surprise and chagrin of Billy's comrades.

Upon leaving the army McGinty made contact with William S. ("Buffalo Bill") Cody and became a rider in that world famous circus. The riders gave a most colorful spectacle with their fast riding and well drilled horses. Billy was the first man to ride a bucking horse on the stage in New York City. This was in 1907 in the old Vanderbilt Theatre. He also won fame in Madison Square Garden before the days of Will Rogers, whom he was able to count as a friend.

He was with the Buffalo Bill Circus for three seasons, leaving that organization in 1900, as he and Mollie were married in the fall of 1902. They had the distinction of being serenaded by the Circus Band after their marriage. Soon after marriage they settled in western Oklahoma on a claim and ranch in old Day County (now part of Ellis County) east of Grand, then the county seat. They called their ranch "The Crossed Sabres Ranch." Here they were busied in the exciting events of first settlers, trying to make a home in the almost forbidding sandy country. They lived in a typical dug-out and "cut their teeth" on primitive ranch life. An amusing incident was the time they arrived home from a neighborhood social function, and entered their dug-out home. They heard a scratching on the ceiling of their dug-out, which Mollie had papered with old newspapers and magazines. Billy armed himself with a club and hit on the ridge-pole. Thereupon the paper ceiling gave way and a skunk fell through taking refuge between the sheets on their bed. Billy was caught in the back corner of the room, while Mollie was near the door. He was calling out: "What shall I do? What shall I do?" while Mollie says she was chuckling so hard she couldn't answer. Finally they gathered up the bed

clothes to make an exit and carry the varmit out. But Mollie was so amused that she let go of her end of the bedding and the unwelcome guest fell out between Billy's legs. Needless to say, they had to go down to another house on the ranch for the night, where they were not the most welcome guests considering the circumstances.

In that day the writer became acquainted with Billy and Mollie, when he was a "printers devil" on the *Day County Progress* at old Grand. There were some one hundred residents of the county seat in normal times. When Court was in session or the county teachers held their summer Normal, the town was almost doubled in population. Here the homesteaders and the cattle men, cowboys and what-have-you—for those were the days of the Socialist soap-box orators—all came to trade, to be amused, or to air their political views. The little red saloon was a most attractive place to some of the visitors, where a quiet, or even a boisterous game of poker would take place. As all cowboys of his day, Billy didn't mind a game of poker, but Mollie did not acquiesce. She once told the Sheriff, "Doc" Smith, to arrest Billy when he came to town and throw him in the calaboose until she could come after him. Billy came in as usual and he and "Doc" were having a quiet game when "Doc" looked up and saw Mollie coming horseback over the ridge of hills surrounding the little town. He told Billy to "run for the jail," which was located up the side of a steep hill, and he also followed Billy, both running up the hill to the jail. But Mollie saw them and wise to their little game was not fooled by the pseudo-arrest. Mollie enjoys telling about that incident to this day but Billy looks a little sheepish when the tale is told.

Cattle ranching was not too profitable, what with the homesteaders, the drouth, the shinnery, etc., so the McGintys returned in 1905 to Ingalls, after their short ranch life in Day County. Soon thereafter, they settled in Ripley, Payne County, where they have been a part of that community for many years. Here they reared their family, three fine red-headed boys: Delmar, the oldest, has been employed by one oil firm for more than thirty years; William O. (Jack) has also been in the oil business for many years; Clarence, the youngest, is the banker in Glencoe, Oklahoma, where he is one of the leading citizens in every type of activity. The McGintys have, beside the three sons, seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Billy and Mollie have been all these years a large part of the two communities of Ripley and Ingalls. While at Ingalls they knew personally Bill Dalton, George Newcomb (Bitter Creek), Bill Doolin, Roy Daugherty (Arkansaw Tom), Tulsa Jack and others of those outlaw gangs. They can tell some interesting stories of the "goings-on" in those days when the United States Marshals had their battle with the outlaws at Ingalls.

Now Mrs. McGinty has had a larger part in these events than is usually noted. She has gone with Billy all over the United States in his travels and always encouraged him in each activity. For her part, she served nine years as post-mistress at Ripley. All through the early days she was at the "beck and call" of neighbors, far and wide, to answer to any call for aid. Many a time she has ridden her horse to visit some sick neighbor, night or day, to minister to a sick child who was fighting a losing battle with fever or dread disease. She has nursed them back to life, administering to them until she saw the turn for the better. The writer has a good friend, a teacher, school superintendent, and coach in Oklahoma schools who was nursed by Mrs. McGinty until the disease was baffled and conquered. She is a worker and member of the Eastern Star Lodge at Ripley, and for many years was Treasurer of the Methodist Church there. When the church, some years ago decided they needed a Youth Center, Mollie became the treasurer of the project and never was a single payment missed until the building was paid for. Now Ripley has a fine Youth Fellowship Building, built of native stone, well furnished and equipped where the youth of the town may gather for religious services, class parties, wiener roasts, school functions, and similar gatherings. When the matter of furnishing the building was up for discussion, some one suggested that they could get a second hand stove, but Mollie spoke up and said that since the building was for the young people of the community, the best was none too good, and so the ladies bought a fine new range, hot water tank, steel sink, and all modern equipment, including dishes and silverware.

Billy has letters from many prominent friends he has made through the years, and their home is a veritable treasure-house of mementoes from all over the country attesting to their many trips and activities. They have attended all the '89er and other "Run" celebrations of Oklahoma all through the years and are members of all such organizations.

When Billy left the Buffalo Bill Shows, William F. Cody wrote him the following recommendation, among Billy's present day treasures:

**Buffalo Bill's Wild West**  
Memphis, Tenn., Nov. 3, 1900.

To Whom It May Concern:

The bearer of this, Mr. William M. McGinty, has been in the employ of the Buffalo Bill's Wild West for the past three seasons and has performed all of his duties in a thorough and satisfactory manner and I cheerfully recommend him as a sober, honest, and reliable man.

(Signed) W. F. Cody.

Billy has attended the yearly meeting of the "Roosevelt Rough Riders Association" which usually meets in Las Vegas.

New Mexico, year after year. He served as Vice-President of the organization for nine years. Finally, in 1954 he was elected President for Life of the association. Every summer he and Mollie and some one of the children or grandchildren make this trek to Las Vegas to meet the ever-dwindling number who attend. It is a gala State event for New Mexico. The group are "wined and dined" and entertained at sumptuous banquets and made very welcome indeed.

For many years their favorite method of transportation was their converted school bus. Billy bought a discarded school bus and together they fitted it up for travel. Inside were the bed, table, chairs, ice box, gas stove, lights, and dishes. Curtains at the windows gave it a very homelike appearance and with this bus they made long trips, stopping wherever they wished and really seeing the country they were visiting. Billy is a great believer in the health-giving qualities of the baths at Claremore, Hot Springs and Sulphur, to name a few they visit, and very often when the mood has directed, they have spent weeks or even months at some of these resorts.

One of Billy's proudest possessions is his "Museum" housed in a small building on the back of their lot in Ripley. Here one may see old saddles, including Mollie's side-saddle, a saddle won by Billy in a roping and riding contest held in Kansas; pictures of many events of the old days; letters from prominent citizens of the United States; clippings from newspapers and magazines covering some cow-boy event; rattlesnake skins and rattles; hides and horns from big game, and a thousand other mementos of former days. Classes from the local schools come with their teachers to the Museum to see the wonders of by-gone days. One animal hide is especially interesting as it belongs to a wild hog, which Billy roped in against the advice of those who knew their wild hogs. It dragged him over the sandy ground until he succeeded in getting the rope around a large cactus and stopped its flight.

One of the most interesting activities of the McGintys was their "Billy McGinty Cowboy Band," which played over the radio stations here in Oklahoma during the very early days of the radio. Mollie sang ballads, as did other musicians and some times a church choir would join in the musical broadcasts. The band played dance music, western ballads, and became very popular as radio entertainers. They had cowboy uniforms and made a very colorful aggregation in parades and driving to and from their engagements. This band was composed of Ripley community musicians of talent.

Perhaps one of the most outstanding facts of Billy's life was his part in the founding of the "Bull Moose Party," when Theodore Roosevelt called in his friends for that event. Billy was one of the



Rough Riders who had been invited to that memorable meeting at Sagamore Hill when the new party was organized and launched. The following is an account of that day, taken from the *New York Times* of June 25, 1910:<sup>5</sup>

#### ROUGH RIDERS CARRY FLAGS TO ROOSEVELT

Mr. Roosevelt had as guests also "Jack" Greenway of Coleraine, Minn., Capt. Edward Borein of California, William McGinty of Ripley, Oklahoma, Edward Emerson<sup>6</sup> of Boston, all old Rough Rider Comrades; Leslie Tarlton and Claud Tritton, who organized his African expedition, Francis J. Heney, the San Francisco graft prosecutor, and Mrs. Heney.

The Rough Riders went to Sagamore Hill on an earnest mission. Borein, McGinty and Emerson donned their uniforms in New York at sunrise, ferried across the East River, then rode all the way to Oyster Bay on cow ponies. They bore the Rough Riders' dearest possessions, the two regimental flags which they carried in their charge up San Jaun Hill.

Col Roosevelt was sitting in the veranda when he saw them coming up the hill. He walked down part way to meet them . . . . "Colonel," said Capt. Borein, "we have brought back the standards to the man who is best fitted to keep them." Colonel Roosevelt replied that he would treasure the colors always. One of them he had had before and loaned it to the Rough Riders for their celebration yesterday. The Rough Riders also brought a guidon, a cavalry flag, which was presented to Col. Roosevelt yesterday in behalf of the Grand Army of the Republic of Oklahoma.

Billy has had many letters from Theodore Roosevelt, but says he has not retained them all. One of them reads as follows:

The White House  
Washington  
Dear McGinty:

May 1, 1906

No letter could have pleased me more than yours. I am so glad to hear how well you are doing. Yes, Frantz<sup>7</sup> is all right. Have you met Abernathy, the Marshal, yet He is a crackajak (*sic*) and ought to have been in the regiment.

Good luck to you always,  
Faithfully yours,  
Theodore Roosevelt

Mr. William McGinty  
Ingalls, Oklahoma Territory.

In regard to Mr. McGinty's activities as president of the Rough Riders' Association, we include in this article a telegram he received last August from President Dwight D. Eisenhower:

1956 Aug. 3, A. M. 8:52, Aug. 2nd.

Billy McGinty, President—  
National Association of Roosevelt Rough Riders,

<sup>5</sup> In the headlines of this article from the *New York Times* were these words: "FORMING A NEW PARTY, THE OYSTER BAY PAPERS DISCOVER AT THIS MEETING."

<sup>6</sup> Edward Emerson, the historian whose books are in all well equipped Libraries, at home and abroad.

<sup>7</sup> Referring to Mr. Frank Frantz whom President Roosevelt appointed last Territorial Governor of Oklahoma.

To the National Association of Roosevelt Rough Riders, I extend warm greetings on the occasion of your annual reunion. All of you have my congratulations on your service to the Nation, and my best wishes for a meeting rich in memories of the leadership of Theodore Roosevelt.

Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Billy has in his possession a gavel to use in presiding at the reunions of the Rough Riders Association, which was sent him a year or two ago. This gavel and handle and chest in which it is contained have historical significance beyond any mere gavel. An addenda on the under side of the cover of the chest reads:

This gavel is from a tree planted on the lawn of the Public Library in Fort Worth, Texas, April 1, 1906, by President Theodore Roosevelt, in a public ceremony and became familiarly known as the "Teddy Roosevelt Tree." Because of a building expansion later, it was necessary to move the tree to the Memorial Plot in front of the Will Rogers Memorial Hall, where it was transplanted and dedicated in a befitting patriotic public ceremony, an account of which was printed in the newspapers and the *National Tribune* of May 12, 1936. The tree died a few months later and was replaced by the President's widow, now growing nicely. The handle is from a tree from the San Jacinto (Texas) Battlefield that grew near the tree under which General Sam Houston lay wounded when the Mexican General Santa Anna was brought captive before him, the wood secured through Governor Stephenson. Both the gavel and the chest were made by Comrade H. Herring, Fort Worth, Texas.

In February of 1950, Billy was surprised by the receipt of a medal and accompanying certificate from the Nation of Cuba. All was in Spanish of course, but the *Certificate* informed him that he was being awarded the medal and certificate as recognition of his part in the freedom of Cuba as a Roosevelt Rough Rider. It is printed on the letterhead of the President of the Republic of Cuba, and is signed by the President and the Minister of State. The writer translated the document for the High School class of American History at the Ripley High School the winter it was received. The signatures of the President and Minister of State are not very legible since the seal of each is superimposed over their respective signatures. However, this medal and "Diploma" (so-called in Spanish) are treasures that Billy prizes very highly.\*

\* "Diploma" from the Nation of Cuba:  
El Presidente  
de la

Republica de Cuba

POR CUANTO William McGinty, Soldado Esc. "K," 1 Regto., U. S. Caballeria ha comprobado debidamente que presto servicios en las Fuerzas Armadas de los Estados Unidos de America, o en sus cuerpos u organizaciones auxiliares, durante la Guerra Hispano-Americana.

POR TANTO: De acuerdo con el Decreto-Ley No. 867 de 13 de Febrero de 1935, le concede la Medalla de los Veteranos de la Guerra Hispano-Americana.

Y PARA QUE CONSTA, se expide este Diploma que refrenda el Ministro de Estado de la Republica, en el Palacio de la Presidencia, La Habana, a 25 de Febrero de 1950.

(SEAL)

REPUBLICA DE CUBA  
MINISTERIO DE ESTADO

(SEAL)

REPUBLICA DE CUBA  
PRESIDENCIA.

Neither Billy nor Mollie ever walked down the aisle holding a diploma of formal education, for they lived in the day of experience, when men and women were exerting every effort to build a commonwealth where their children and grandchildren might walk proudly down the aisle with diplomas of every phase of educational endeavor. But they have walked down the aisle of Life's School of Activity, conquering many difficulties, chuckling over hard luck when it struck, rejoicing in victories, both their own and those of their neighbors, so that now they enjoy the esteem and love of more than a whole community—for they have demonstrated how people in this land of opportunity may become world-citizens and exert an influence as wide as humanity. Pioneers though they were and are, they still carry on the most modern activities of the day, alert to every new movement, and contributing of their money, time and effort to make this a better State. They have had a part longer than the fifty years of statehood, for they laid the foundations with the '89ers and the superstructure of today stands as a monument to combined efforts of many such citizens as they.

And the "latch-string" literally hangs out at their Ripley home for visitors who are likely to drop in at any hour of the day or night from all over the Nation to "visit a spell," and recall the days of their associations in the past. They are an inspiration to all who know them.