

THE PIONEERS

Ladies and Gentlemen and Fellow-Pioneers:

In addressing you tonight as fellow-pioneers, I am thinking in terms of those who came to what is now Northeastern Oklahoma, from other states, <sup>and</sup> ~~or~~ those who were born in this favored section, and also those who are the original pioneers, the sons and daughters of those marvelous tribes of Indians which have helped to build out of their country one of the greatest states in the union.

The very mention of pioneer days brings to all of us a flood of memories and takes us back to the time when this was one great stretch of beautiful prairie or timbered land, held in common by the citizens of the various Indian tribes.

There is not a pioneer here tonight but what could entertain us for hours describing the beauty and the lure of what was known in those days as the Indian territory.

Indian territory was truly a land of enchantment, and may I say to you sons and daughters of those pioneers, that unless you have made a study of this section of the State, called Northeastern Oklahoma, you may have failed to note the prairies of this section bears, according to a noted botanist, more wild flowers than any other section in the world, and that there is within a radius of seventy-five miles of the City of Tulsa more varieties of shrubs and trees than in any other section of the United States. We have more flowering trees and more nut-bearing trees than is found elsewhere. We have more mileage in beautiful clear streams, and only a few years ago, this same country was a paradise for the hunter and for the fisherman

6-20-35

Adapted at Board  
Meeting this date, and  
made part of records  
of asen. *W. L. Cross*  
*and son*



A pioneer who was educated in the school of hard-knocks had grown wealthy; he sent his son away to college and provided him with all the luxuries that go with a rich man's son attending a modern university. In writing to him one time he cautioned him about the expenditure of money and also advised him as to his opportunity in securing a good education. He wound up the letter by saying: "Son, I have not had your advantages, and you cannot have mine"

The sons and daughters of pioneers here today will never know the thrill of those pioneer men and women who have helped to carve out of the Indian territory the wonderful section of Oklahoma that we now live in. They will never know what it is to drive up to a river crossing that has no bridge; they will never have the opportunity of plunging a team into a swollen stream and trusting to their nerve and the faithfulness of their horses to bring them out safely on the other side; they will never know what it is when night comes and it is too dark to see how and where to drive; and they will never know what it is to bed-down on nature's blanket and wait for the sun to come up in the morning; they will never know the thrill and companionship of having to take a stranger in for the night and feed him and provide for him a bed and then send him on his way in the morning with good wishes and blessings; they will never know the terrible lonely feeling that comes to those who have lived alone on the range or in the woods in days when there were no electric lights no telephones, no radios, ~~not~~ even a newspaper!

The creed of the early pioneer was that the latch-string hung on the outside of the door. A neighbor in distress was always given aid. There was no such thing as hunger or want. Everybody lived well



as far as food and clothing were concerned.

The country in those days was truly a livestock country. We all made our living grazing and producing livestock and raising the necessary grains for to feed the stock. The herds and the flocks were our best companions, as they kept us interested and were always a source of pleasure as well as profit.

Then we were proud of our good saddle horses - and of our saddle that was worth more than the horse. We were proud of our high-top boots and broad-rimmed hats; we were proud of our Winchester; our Forty-Five, and above all - we were proud of our folks.

Since the period I have just been describing, many changes have been wrought. You have built homes, roads, schools, churches, cities and wonderful communities. You pioneers should be proud of the fact that you have marched along side by side with the other progressive citizens who came to live with us and helped us to build this great state. Many of you have been in the lead. I know of no worth while movement for the betterment of this country but what has had a large representation of pioneers to <sup>help</sup> promote it.

Our beloved pioneer who so recently left us, was a leader in religion, education, finance, and city building. He typifies the pioneers here assembled today.

In behalf of those here, I wish to express appreciation of those thoughtful ones who have made it possible for us to meet *here* today on these beautiful grounds, surrounded by the three great nations, the Osage, the Cherokee, and the Creek, and within the shadow of one of the most magnificent and modern cities in all the world!



We are hoping that the things we may have had a part in doing will be an inspiration to our boys and girls. We are hoping that sometimes when they think their road is a little rough and that they are having some hardships that they will compare their trials with those ~~of~~ their fathers and their mothers have had to endure.

Few pioneers in one short span of life have been privileged to witness the transition of an Indian Country sparsely settled to the modern and thickly populated area that we now enjoy.

Each and every one of you pioneers have played your part well. We are today looking backward, as it were. The very word pioneer suggests the past and not the future. However, we pioneers are looking toward the future, full of hope, earnestly believing that even better days are ahead for all of us.

In conclusion may I say to our sons and daughters  
"Today well lived makes every yesterday a dream of  
happiness, and every tomorrow a vision of hope."

- - - - -

Delivered June 13, 1935  
Pioneers Picnic.

By Cyrus S. Avery