

*A History of
Oklahoma's First
American Legion Post*

Tulsa, Oklahoma



By George E. Norvell

Foreword

When it was announced that the American Legion's Golden Anniversary Dinner would be held at the hut, March 18, 1969, I immediately set to work to prepare a history of Oklahoma's first post for this auspicious occasion.

The deadline made it prohibitive to accomplish more than has been done at this time. A more definitive history can be written later.

I hope a history of Unit No. 1 also will be published on the occasion of its 50th anniversary March 29, 1973. The record of the Ladies Auxiliary is equally bright and should be preserved for posterity.

The Tulsa World and The Tulsa Tribune have been valuable sources in this undertaking. I am grateful to Virgil Curry, librarian for the Newspaper Printing Corporation for his assistance and counsel, and also to Legionnaire Dexter Moss, president of the Dexter Publishing Company, for his help and advice.

The cooperation of Fran White and members of the excellent research staff which she heads at the City-County Central Library is gratefully acknowledged. J. Earl Simpson, editor of the "Carson-Wilson Post News", furnished copies of former post publications, the "Ex-Serviceman," and the "Joe Carson Post News", together with many newspaper clippings and other articles of historical significance.

Excerpts from a "History of Tulsa," by Clarence B. Douglas, pioneer newspaper editor, have been used extensively in Chapter I because this work has been out of print for many years and is invaluable. The quotations contain an eyewitness account of the birth and early activities of Oklahoma's first American Legion post.

— George E. Norvell,
Post Historian
Carson-Wilson Post No. 1
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Post First Named
After World War I Hero



JOSEPH C. CARSON

Beside the picture of Joe Carson in the foyer of the hut, located at 1120 East Eighth Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma, appears the following citation:

"JOSEPH C. CARSON
Sergeant, Co. D., 358th Infantry,
90th Division, U. S. Army

Killed in Action, September 26, 1918, in the Argonne Forest and awarded, Posthumously, the Distinguished Service Cross of the War Department, U. S. A.

CITATION

For extraordinary heroism in action near Les Huit Chemins, France . . . Sergeant Carson, with two other men, volunteered to rush an enemy machine gun which had concentrated its fire on an opening in some barbed-wire entanglement through which his company was endeavoring to advance. He had successfully silenced its fire when he was killed by the fire of other enemy machine guns."

Post Renamed to Honor Heroes
of World Wars I and II



ALEXANDER E. WILSON, JR.

The citation of the World War II hero, which appears beside his picture in the hut, reads as follows:

"ALEX E. WILSON, JR.
Private 1 Cl., Co. I, 28th Infantry,
8th Division, U. S. Army

Killed in Action, November 27, 1944, near Aachen, Germany, Awarded the Bronze Star with Two Oak Leaf Clusters, and the Purple Heart, and, Posthumously, the Silver Star for Gallantry in Action.

For Gallantry in Action * * * Private Wilson, with utter disregard for his personal safety, single-handedly attacked the enemy position firing his rifle and tossing hand grenades. He advanced upon the enemy position and demanded the occupants surrender. Although killed in this action by enemy machine gun fire, he so inspired his comrades that they advanced and reduced the position."

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CHAPTER I

Joe Carson Post No. 1

Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt, eldest son of the twenty-sixth President of the United States, was the prime founder of the American Legion. He was wounded and gassed at Soissons in World War I and died in Normandy in 1944 while serving with the Second A.E.F.

General Roosevelt served with the 25th Infantry, 1st Division, as a lieutenant colonel during World War I, and discussed the formation of a veterans organization with officers and enlisted men even prior to the Armistice, November 11, 1918.

With this object in mind, he invited the following officers, who were on duty in Paris, to dinner at the Allied Officers' Club, Rue Faubourg St. Honore, February 16, 1919:

Lieutenant Colonel Francis R. Appleton, Jr., Second Army
Lieutenant Colonel G. Edward Buxton, 82nd Division
Lieutenant Colonel Bennett C. Clark, ex-35th Division. With
88th Division
Lieutenant Colonel Ralph D. Cole, 37th Division
Lieutenant Colonel D. J. Davis, ex-28th Division. Attached
to G.H.Q.
Lieutenant Colonel Franklin D'Olier, Q.M., S.O.S.
Colonel W. J. Donovan, Rainbow Division
Lieutenant Colonel David M. Goodrich, G.H.Q.
Major T. E. Gowenlock, ex-1st Division. With First Army
Corps.
Colonel Thorndick Howe, A.P.O. Department
Lieutenant Colonel John Price Jackson, Peace Commission
Major de Lancey Kountze, G.H.Q.
Lieutenant Colonel R. W. Llewellyn, 28th Division
Captain Ogden Mills, ex-6th Division. Attached G-2, S.O.S.
Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Moore, 82nd Division
Lieutenant Colonel R. C. Stebbins, Third Army Corps
Major R. C. Stewart, 1st Division
Lieutenant Colonel George A. White, ex-41st Division. At-
tached G.H.Q.
Lieutenant Colonel Eric Fisher Wood, ex-83rd Division.
With 88th Division.

At this affair, Roosevelt proposed that they undertake the organization of World War I veterans. The guests responded

favorably to his suggestion, and thereafter Bennett C. Clark, of Missouri, Franklin D'Olier and Eric Fisher Wood, both of Pennsylvania, and George A. White, of Oregon, were particularly effective in bringing the plan to fruition. Milton J. Foreman, of Illinois, and Henry D. Lindsley, of Texas, were not at the dinner, but they too became staunch supporters of the proposal.

It was agreed at the dinner meeting that at least two organizational meetings would be required; one to be held in France and the other in the United States.

The first caucus was held in Paris, March 15, and Lt. Colonel Clark, son of Champ Clark, Speaker of the National House of Representatives, presided. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., in the meantime had returned to the United States to promote the organizational work required for the State side caucus, which was held at St. Louis, May 8-10, 1919.

Clarence B. Douglas, a journalist and secretary of the Tulsa Chamber of Commerce, gave an excellent contemporary account of the birth of the Legion in Oklahoma and the founding of the first post in Tulsa in his "History of Tulsa," published in 1921:

"The history of the American Legion in Oklahoma had its commencement in the interval between the Paris caucus and the meeting at St. Louis. About the middle of April, 1919, the adjutant-general of the state called together a few representative ex-service men and with their aid effected a temporary organization, electing Ross Lillard, of Oklahoma City, chairman, and F. W. Fisher, secretary.

"Immediately after taking this forward step, the temporary officers thus selected issued a call for a state caucus to be held in Oklahoma City on May 3rd for the purpose of perfecting the state organization and choosing delegates to the meeting at St. Louis. Letters were sent out to well known ex-service men in each community, urging them to call local meetings for the purpose of sending representatives to the Oklahoma City caucus. Such a meeting was held at Tulsa on April 24th and Lee Daniel was selected as temporary chairman and Thomas J. Shea as temporary secretary. The following delegates to the Oklahoma City caucus were chosen: Alva J. Niles, Lee Daniel, Horace H. Hagan, G. F. O'Brien, H. W. Fulger, C. E. Wheeler, John Rogers, Dr. Paul Brown, N. A. Thompson, W. W. Tyler, David Weinstein, A. M. Bailey, Thomas F. Shea, Lemoyne Stroud, H. L. S. Halley, William Viner, A. L. Carmichael, Robert Evans and Charles Casey.

"Of the delegates so selected, sixteen attended the Oklahoma City meeting, comprising the largest single delegation from any one county in the state. The Tulsa spirit was in evidence throughout the sessions of the caucus and Lee Daniel was unanimously elected vice commander of the state organization. Horace H. Hagan was selected to represent the First Congregational District on the state executive committee. Ross Lillard was unanimously elected state commander and F. W. Fisher was selected, without a dissenting voice, for state adjutant.

"The Oklahoma City caucus resolved that anyone desiring to attend the St. Louis caucus as a delegate from Oklahoma should be allowed to do so. As a result, Oklahoma's St. Louis delegation of twenty-three included the following Tulsans: Alva J. Niles, Lee Daniel, Horace H. Hagan, Ralph H. Berry, N. A. Thompson, Thomas J. Shea, William Viner, Philip A. Fox and Howard W. Meyer. Most of these men served on important committees and helped to make a creditable record for Oklahoma.

"As a result of the stimulating session at St. Louis, the temporary officers of the Tulsa Post determined, upon their return home, immediately to perfect their own organization. A meeting was called for May 21st for the purpose of selecting a name for the post and electing permanent officers. By a unanimous vote the local unit was designated Joe Carson Post, in honor of a Tulsa hero who had made the supreme sacrifice on the fields of France. The community had known him both as a school boy and as a popular young business man and his unfailing cheerfulness had endeared him to all. At this same meeting the following permanent officers were elected: Post commander, Horace H. Hagan; post vice commander, John Rogers; post adjutant, R. H. Berry; post finance officer, Vergil Jones; post historian, William R. Meyer; post chaplain, L. C. Murray. To these officers there was soon thereafter, added an executive committee, consisting of the post commander, the post adjutant, John Rogers, Dr. W. A. Cook, T. D. Lyons, N. A. Thompson, Alva J. Niles, William Viner and Glenn Condon.

"As a result of the enthusiasm of the ex-service men of Tulsa in thus so speedily carrying through the work of organization, the signal honor of receiving the American Legion charter number one for the State of Oklahoma fell to the lot of Joe Carson Post.

"The first important step taken by the new officers of Joe Carson Post was to inaugurate a membership campaign. This campaign was held on June 7th under the able directorship of Glenn Condon. Howard Meyer, B. F. Noyes, Dr. Paul Brown, William Viner and P. A. Fox were also members of the committee in charge of the campaign and rendered most active and efficient aid. As a result of the campaign over eight hundred new paid-up memberships were obtained. The feature of the campaign was the stationing in the evening of a team of workers at each theater in the city. The captains of these teams were R. H. Berry, Harry L. S. Halley, T. D. Lyons, Glenn Condon, Alva J. Niles, G. F. O'Brien, John Rogers, Lee Daniel and S. E. Dunn. The team of R. H. Berry secured the most memberships, with that of S. E. Dunn a close second. The result of this campaign was to make Joe Carson Post by far the largest in the state.

"Another big event in the early history of Joe Carson Post was the reception to the One Hundred and Eleventh Engineers. This reception was entirely under the auspices of Joe Carson Post and proved to be the greatest gala day in Tulsa history. Its success was largely due to the untiring work of Lee Daniel, who had charge of its many details. A feature of the celebration was the erection, on Main Street, of an imposing arch.

THE FIRST STATE CONVENTION

"When the time of the first state convention, October 21st, arrived, it found Joe Carson Post in a commanding position in state legion affairs. At its regular meeting, held a few days prior to the state convention, Joe Carson Post unanimously endorsed its post

commander, Horace H. Hagan, for the position of state commander. John Rogers was selected as the head of the Tulsa delegation. Owing to the resignation of State Commander Ross Lillard, Lee Daniel, of Joe Carson Post, presided over the deliberations of the state convention, which unanimously selected Mr. Hagan for the office of state commander. John Rogers was chosen as the representative of the First District on the state executive committee.

* * *

"Within a few days after the state convention, new officers were selected for Joe Carson Post. The result of the election were as follows: Post commander, John Rogers; post vice commander, William L. Eagleton; post adjutant, Thomas J. Shea; post finance officer, P. A. McNeal; post historian, J. C. Chatfield; post chaplain, N. A. Thompson. The new executive committee, in addition to the post commander and post adjutant, contained the following names: Dr. Ralph Smith, H. L. S. Halley, Horace H. Hagan, Alva J. Niles, T. D. Lyons, Glenn Condon and S. E. Worthington. E. N. Kenney, who distinguished himself as chairman of the entertainment committee, was later added to the committee in place of Mr. Condon, whose resignation was necessitated by his removal to New York. W. L. Ditzler subsequently succeeded Mr. Chatfield as historian.

"Four members of Joe Carson Post, namely, John Rogers, P. A. McNeal, R. H. Berry and Horace H. Hagan, attended the first national convention held at Minneapolis on November 10th, 11th and 12th. The stirring accounts they brought back of the inspiring events of the convention added no little stimulus to the local enthusiasm. At Minneapolis, Mr. Rogers served on the Committee on Resolutions, Mr. Hagan on the Committee on Constitution, Mr. Berry and Mr. McNeal on the Committees on Post Activities and Credentials, respectively.

"On the last Saturday in January, 1920, Joe Carson Post held its second membership drive for the purpose of renewing old memberships and securing new ones. It had been feared that the raise in dues, owing to the increase of the national assessment, might be a serious handicap. This apprehension, however, proved unfounded and February 1, 1920, found Joe Carson Post with more than one thousand paid-up members. This campaign was in charge of P. A. McNeal with C. S. Worthington, H. L. S. Halley, J. P. McBride, W. L. Eagleton and Miss M. Alch as trusted and valuable subordinates. The team of P. L. Long secured the most memberships.

GENERAL PERSHING'S VISIT

"On February 11, 1920, the City of Tulsa had the great privilege of acting as host to General Pershing. Members of the legion formed the escort to General Pershing in the parade from the station to the hotel. Alva J. Niles acted as his personal host while their esteemed comrade, Miss Florence Heald, was his chauffeur. G. F. O'Brien had charge of the arrangements for the parade, while the address of welcome was delivered by the state commander. The outstanding feature of the exercises at Convention Hall was the presentation to Joe Carson Post by General Pershing, on behalf of Fitzhugh Lee Camp of the Spanish War Veterans of Tulsa, of a magnificent stand of the national colors. . . ."

After the American Legion was formally organized, a second charter was executed April 1, 1921 by Frederic W. Galbraith, Jr., of Ohio, National Commander, and National Adjutant Lem-

uel Bolles, of Washington. This charter was countersigned April 10 by Horace H. Hagan, Department Commander, Tulsa, and Josiah C. Chatfield, Assistant Department Adjutant, also of Tulsa.

The "birth certificate" of Oklahoma's first Legion post has been preserved and is displayed proudly in the business offices of the post:

Original Charter

The American Legion

Temporary Headquarters, 19 WEST 44th STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y.

Charter for JOE CARSON Post, State of OKLAHOMA, No. 1

This is to Certify that the National Executive Committee of THE AMERICAN LEGION hereby grants a charter to

W. L. Eagleton
H. L. S. Halley
Horace H. Hagan
Alva J. Niles
John Rogers
P. A. McNeal
N. A. Thompson

Albert Elden

for the formation of a Post of THE AMERICAN LEGION at TULSA State of OKLAHOMA, under the name of JOE CARSON Post, State of OKLAHOMA, No. 1

- This charter is granted on the recommendation of the State Organization and on the following terms and conditions:
1. All acts heretofore duly and properly taken for the formation of the above-named Post are recognized and confirmed by the National Executive Committee.
 2. The above-named Post shall uphold the declared principles of THE AMERICAN LEGION and shall conform to and abide by the regulations and decisions of the State Organization and of the National Executive Committee, or other duly constituted national governing body of THE AMERICAN LEGION.
 3. This charter is subject to revocation by the National Executive Committee, on the recommendation of the State Organization, prior to the national convention for permanent organization to be held November 11, 1919, and after that date by the proper authority established by the national convention.

In Witness Whereof, we have hereunto set our hands this Eighteenth day of June, 1919.

Ross H. Lillard
James T. Dostel

Henry D. Lillard
Eric F. Wood

Post Commander — 1968-1969



M. A. Eddingfield

Thirty-two outstanding Legionnaires served as commander of Joe Carson Post No. 1 before it was renamed Carson-Wilson Post No. 1 in 1947. Since that time twenty other prominent leaders have headed the organization.

Otto Koenig and Ben B. Ballenger held the office twice and Herschel Chism served a full term and filled out an unexpired term. Charles Allen succeeded Alva J. Niles in 1923 when professional commitments necessitated the latter's resignation. James M. Hunt resigned the commander's post to seek political office in 1944, and Joe Payne served for the remainder of the term. The pictures of the 52 former post commanders appear at pages 32-44.

Marion A. Eddingfield, the present post commander, was installed by Department Commander Gene Hassman, July 30, 1968. He has enjoyed a busy, successful and prosperous administration and will have an important role as commander of the host post when the Department Convention convenes in Tulsa, July 26-27, 1969.

CHAPTER II

Joe Carson Post No. 1 becomes

Carson - Wilson Post No. 1

World War II veterans became eligible for membership in the American Legion in 1942 when favorable action was taken at the national convention held in Kansas City. National Commander Lynn U. Stambaugh, of North Dakota, had advised the state organizations and posts throughout the land that the question of opening the Legion's membership rolls would come before the convention in the fall.

The reasons for the action were four-fold: (1) More than 100,000 members were serving or would serve in the second World War; (2) The underlying principles involved in both wars were the same—the preservation of our Nation and opposition to the forces of tyranny and oppression; (3) The physical facilities, resources and programs of the American Legion already were in existence and would be valuable to a new generation of veterans; and (4) Social activities and meaningful relationships would be rewarding to the young veterans, who in turn would bring new blood and leadership to the organization.

Those who objected to opening the membership to the veterans of World War II were not numerous, but they were vocal. They realized that the young men would quickly outnumber them and within a few years would dominate the organization. Some were fearful that the World War II veterans would not be interested in answering the Legion's invitation and that the organization's prestige would suffer for the rebuff.

The whole question was thoroughly aired and discussed after which the delegates attending the convention at Kansas City voted to invite the World War II veterans to join ranks.

The amended Legion charter became law by Act of Congress, October 29, 1942. No drastic changes resulted from the action, and the transition proved to be a harmonious one. As a matter of fact, only one letter was required to be added to the cherished preamble to the constitution of the American Legion. It was necessary to make the word "war" plural.

Consequently, the inspired work of authors John C. Greenway, of Arizona, Hamilton Fish, of New York, and George N. Davis, of Delaware, was left intact. The following preamble

which they composed in 1919 remains a part of the opening ceremony at post meetings:

“For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:

“To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America;

“To maintain law and order;

“To foster and perpetuate a one-hundred-percent Americanism;

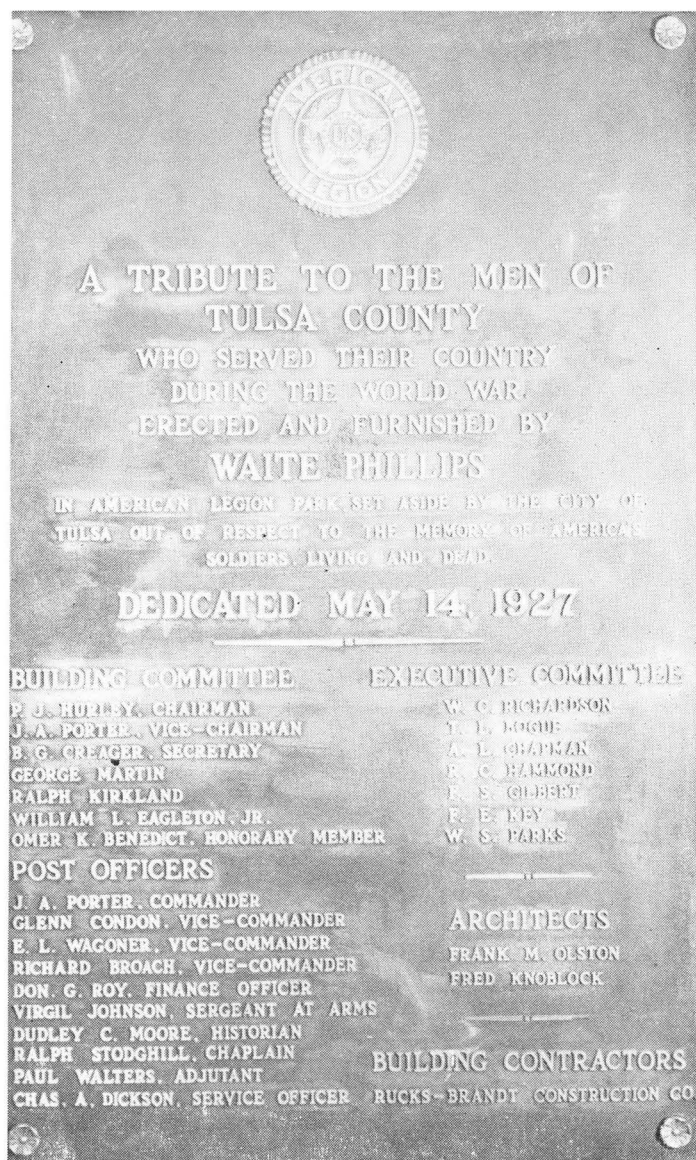
“To preserve the memories and incidents of our associa-

At present, four members of the executive committee are World War I veterans. Eight of the members, including the Commander, are World War II veterans. One is a Korean veteran and one member is a veteran of the Vietnam war.

Post Executive Committee

1968 - 1969

Tribute in Bronze
in
Foyer of Post Building



CHAPTER III
The Post Gets A Home

May of 1927 was an exciting and momentous month for Legionnaires and the citizenry at large. The post home was dedicated May 14. A week later Captain Charles A. Lindbergh piloted "The Spirit of St. Louis" across the Atlantic and landed in Paris approximately 33 hours after take-off from New York City. Observing the vast excited crowd, he exclaimed "So this is Paris?" "Somebody cable Mother!" When Evangeline Lodge Lindbergh, heard the news, a mother's love for her young son surfaced and she said, "All I hope is they let him get right to sleep." The feat gave impetus to the plans of many post members to join their fellow-Legionnaires in a pilgrimage to the National Convention in Paris in September.

The presentation of the post facility attracted wide local interest. Omer K. Benedict, a leading citizen, represented Waite Phillips, the benefactor who had provided the funds to construct and furnish the building. Benedict read the following letter he had received from Phillips to the large and distinguished audience which had assembled for the occasion:

"I regret to advise you that a combination of circumstances will prevent my being in Tulsa at the time of the dedication of the new American Legion home. Therefore, I shall take this method of presenting my views on this matter, and I hereby authorize you to represent me at this meeting and, if requested, you have my permission to read this communication as my expression of good will and greetings to the boys of the Joe Carson Post.

"I might attempt to paint in glowing terms the record of their achievements during the World War, but my idea is there is nothing I could say that would add to or take away from the feeling of satisfaction they must have for the wonderful service they rendered. My memory is green to the fact that they responded to this call of duty, many at a great sacrifice, so when you took up with me the matter of building and furnishing a home for these Legion men, it appeared as a welcome opportunity to repay a just obligation and I would consider myself unworthy and ungrateful if I failed to respond. I make this statement from the simple fact that I did not perform military service, while they did, and it is yet to be proved that the conflict they settled was not in a just cause, and at the same time inured greatly to the benefit of all Americans.

"I am one of the many who cannot glorify or justify war in its destructive force, but, on the other hand, believe strictly in the principle of the brotherhood of man as taught by the Man of Galilee. This principle, however, when applied to the human race in its present development, is difficult to fulfillment.

"To my mind, human life is justified only by growth and service. The factors being present, together with selfishness and envy, plus the ego in man to reach great heights of achievement, make it next

to impossible for the present and until further development to avoid wars. I am sure history will prove, and I am proud to state as an American, that this nation has never taken to arms only in a just cause, and that in my opinion is one of the many reasons why she is today so powerful and so wonderfully blessed.

"At 16 years of age, my father joined the Union army and did active duty for four years in the Twenty-second Iowa battery. At Vicksburg and Corinth, bursting shells injured his ear drums and for many years before his death he was totally deaf. There is no material thing I possess today that I treasure more highly than I do the copper Grand Army button which he willed to me at his death.

"The background for an association such as the American Legion is of the best, for a comradeship acquired during times of hardship and adversity, when men stood side by side in defense of a common cause, where prevailed the principle of 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends,' has the proper basis for an enduring one. Therefore, it seems to me that the banding together of the World War veterans into the American Legion is most appropriate and fitting. And as for a permanent home where they might meet and associate, it occurs to me that as far as the Joe Carson post is concerned, appropriate quarters is several years overdue.

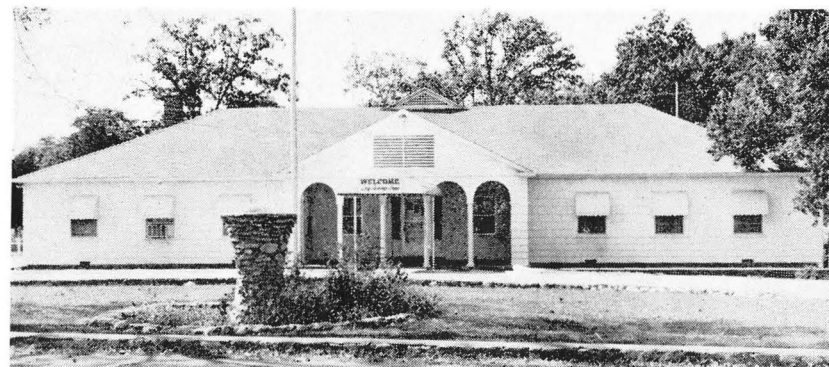
"The history of the departure of these splendid young fellows with bands playing and the flags flying, and of those who were fortunate to return, receiving the grateful thanks of the stay-at-homes, reminds me of a story, which I shall not attempt to give in detail, but simply sketch. At a stockholders' and directors' meeting of a mercantile concern, which had had an exceptionally successful year, unusual dividends were declared and the management was highly commended. At the height of these satisfactory proceedings, it was suggested by a stockholder that some consideration should be shown the employees, they having been instrumental in helping to bring about this prosperous condition of the company's business. Acting on this suggestion, the presiding officer arose and made the following resolution: 'I propose we give three cheers for the employees.'

"Now, while the legion boys of the Joe Carson post are the most energetic and cooperative bunch of fellows I have ever encountered under a similar condition, they are hardly able to build a structure of timber and stone and furnish it out of 'three cheers,' for I will repeat, I consider it a great privilege to have had the opportunity which you presented to me of building and furnishing this beautiful structure, and I hope that for many years to come it may be used by these boys and their friends as a place to congregate, exchange ideas, formulate ideals for the betterment of the community and the nation and, not least among its many possible uses, be a place where they can spend many a happy evening of camaraderie with their buddies in just having a good time, for I think they have earned it."

On hand for the ceremony was Judge John Oliphant, who had served in the Union Army during the Civil War, and seated close to him was Colonel A. P. Watson, a Confederate veteran. Each viewed the ceremony with great interest and joined in the spirit of the evening.

Post Commander Jack Porter presided during the program and introduced George L. Watkins, who, on behalf of Mayor Herman F. Newblock, made the formal presentation of the building site to the Legion. Patrick J. Hurley, who was destined to become Secretary of War during the administration of Herbert Hoover, to rise to the rank of major general during World War II, and to serve as Ambassador to China, delivered the speech of acceptance on behalf of the post.

Department Commander Roy Hoffman, an Oklahoma City attorney, delivered the principal address for the occasion. Hoffman was a brigadier general having served with the Ninety-Third Division in France. Earlier he had seen duty as a colonel in the First Oklahoma Infantry on the Mexican border. General Hoffman's first Army service, however, was as a private in the Spanish-American War.



Post Home, 1120 E. Eighth Street

(NOTE: Insignia of World War I Divisions, which appear on the walls of the hut, were painted by Legionnaire Morton Harrison, according to Milt Phillips, publisher of "The Seminole Producer," and former Department Adjutant.)

Within ten days after the new home was opened, the post excitedly launched a membership campaign with five free trips to the Paris Convention as the prizes.

At the regular meeting May 24, 1927, the following members announced themselves as contestants for the trips to the scene of the Legion's birthplace:

Rolland M. Broach, insurance dealer, National Bank of Commerce building;

Alvin L. Chapman, employe Wilcox Oil and Gas Co.;

Stanley Campbell, lawyer, Kennedy building;

Dick Elkins, engineer, Mid-Continent Petroleum Corp.;

Arthur Fox, resident contractor, Fox & Fox;

Clarence V. Houston, purchasing agent, Independent Oil and Gas Co.;

T. H. Hollingshead, laborer;

Robert E. Klicker, assistant cashier, Tidal Oil Co.;

George D. Kyger, clerk, St. L. & S. F. Railway Co.;

Ralph Stodghill, life insurance salesman;

Lauron C. Sears, student, Tulsa Business college;

Bura E. Taylor, postoffice clerk; and

Thomas O. Wiley, bookkeeper, Central National bank.

Some 20,000 Legionnaires and members of their families made the sentimental journey to Paris. They renewed old acquaintances, reaffirmed the Franco-American friendship, and were welcomed at the opening session of the convention by President Doumergue of the French Republic. It was one of the American Legion's finest hours.

CHAPTER IV

Depression and War

In 1928, the stock market crashed and the country entered a depression period that was to last for nearly a decade. Members of the Legion played a stellar part in combating the depression during the '30's. The Legion team led all other groups in the Community Fund drive in 1932. A story appearing in "The Ex-Serviceman," an early post publication, November 5, 1932, stated that "The Joe Carson Post was the first team to go over the 100 per cent quota mark, but continued to pile up a total of 131 per cent of the goal set for the team." The story mentioned that plans had been made in the fall to sponsor a number of athletic events, including wrestling and boxing matches, in order to raise funds to provide school lunches for needy children. The post executive committee also undertook a program to provide Christmas trees for underprivileged children "in spite of the depression, hail or high water," and to furnish a municipal Christmas tree with candy and toys for "every little boy and girl who might be missed by Santa Claus."

In the spring of 1933, a project was undertaken to furnish garden or farming spots for every unemployed or needy ex-serviceman. The plan called for furnishing to individuals an acre tract with seeds for early spring planting. The post saw the opportunity for utilizing the scores of "pieces of acreage" around Tulsa that could be used for this purpose.

In addition, Joe Carson Post staged a city-wide "Clean-Up, Paint-Up" program to provide extra work for the unemployed servicemen and to improve the appearance of the city at the

of California, announced the national objectives which were supported whole-heartedly by the members of the Tulsa post:

"Immediate payment of the Adjusted Service Certificates as an effective relief and recovery measure.

"A Universal Service law providing that in war capital, industry and manpower shall be conscripted, with special privileges and profits for none.

"A strong National Defense, not to foment war but to assure peace.

"Making Americanism the primary thought of American citizens and the primary duty of The American Legion.

"Promotion of Child Welfare, abolition of child labor and encouragement of healthy youth activities.

"Individual and collective community service in the highest sense.

"Withdrawal of recognition to Soviet Russia and the banishment of all un-American doctrines from our land.

"Protection of our educational system at all hazards.

"Elimination of discrimination against World War veterans in all forms, and wherever found.

"To make sure that aliens enjoying American benefits shall also bear arms in defense of America if the need arises.

"To compel the deportation of every alien who can not become a good American citizen.

"The payment of our war debts without further postponement or reduction.

"Elimination of subversive influences from our institutions of learning, high and low.

"To keep partisan politics out of veterans' affairs.

"To promote safety and the elimination of traffic hazards on our highways."

In connection with the last objective J. Earl Simpson energized the local traffic safety program in 1937 when he was appointed chairman of the post safety committee.

The "Joe Carson Post News" became the official weekly publication in 1937. Walter W. Eastman was the editor of its predecessor, "The Ex-Serviceman" which was published in the early 30's. Albert Edward Galloway became the first editor.

While the home front was struggling with depression and domestic strife, Hitler was talking peace but preparing for war. In 1933, Germany withdrew from the League of Nations, repudiated the Versailles Treaty and restored universal military training.

German troops marched into the Rhineland in 1936, then formed the Berlin-Rome Axis with Italy, and by 1938 had assembled the greatest mechanized army and the largest air force in the world. That year Irving Berlin published "God Bless America," which he had composed in 1918, and this song became to World War II veterans and to all Americans what "Over There" had meant to the citizens and soldiers in 1917-1918.

In 1939 Hitler took Memel from Lithuania and all of Czechoslovakia. He concluded a non-aggression pact with Stalin, and the Germans thereafter invaded Poland. Norway, Denmark, Belgium and the Netherlands were rapidly subdued, and France fell in 1940.

The United States transferred fifty over-age destroyers to Great Britain hoping their beleaguered ally could hold the line against the Axis. The National Guard was called to active duty in October, and the Nation adopted peacetime compulsory military service for the first time in its history. Long had the American Legion advocated a universal military training program, but it took the rapidly developing war crisis to awaken the country to the facts of life.

Germany double-crossed Russia June 22, 1941, but the invasion of this vast country bogged down in the winter snows. The attack, however, had led the Japanese war lords to believe that a German victory was certain, so they began preparations for the air strike against the United States' possessions in the Pacific.

It is significant that post membership increased through 1941, 1942 and 1943, as it did nationwide. A majority of the 70,000 reserve officers who had been called into service between 1940 and 1942 were Legionnaires. Hundreds of other "retreads" as they were called, enlisted in the ranks or received commissions. Post No. 1 of Tulsa contributed its share of "retreads." Other veterans who were unable to go to war served on draft boards, in civilian defense, war plants and in other important capacities.

Tulsa provided many opportunities to the veterans who had to stay at home. Groundbreaking ceremonies for the bomber

Joe Carson Post News

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AUGUST 22, 1941.

NO. 50.

Delegates to Department Convention

Muskogee, August 30th, 31st, September 1st

J. EARL SIMPSON, CHAIRMAN JOSEPH F. HERMAN, VICE CHAIRMAN E. B. MITCHEL, SECRETARY
C. E. MARSHALL, CHN. STEERING COMMITTEE JOE CARSON POST HEADQUARTERS, SEEVERS HOTEL

DELEGATES

ALLISON, EDW. L.
ALLRED, JOHN
ARENSMAN, WILL
BAKER, TROY B.
BARNETT, VICTOR F.
BEAL, HAROLD, C.
BERNARD, MERRILL S.
BEWLEY, JAMES P.
BENTON, E. B.
BIEBER, HARRY P.
BIGGART, W. W.
BLACK, OLIVER S.
BOGUE, TRAVIS
BORDER, C. A.
BREWER, E. D.
BOND, IRA
BROACH, R. M.
BRONSON, A. H.
BURNHAM, SAM
BURNS, L. A.
BEALS, RUEBEN E.
BOGGESS, HENRY W.
CARRIGER, J. M.
CASS, EARLY
CAMPBELL, JOE C.
CLARK, EDDIE
CLINE, CHAS. J.
CLINE, CAMERON
COBB, RUSSELL

ODDINGTON, GLENN
COLLEY, R. P.
CONDON, GLENN
COOK, HARRY D.
CRAIG, SAM
CRAWLEY, FRANK H.J.
CREAGOR, BARON G.
DAUGHERTY, WM. C.
DEGEN, SOL
DeHONEY, A. W.
DOREN, CLARENCE E.
DUNN, SAM E.
DYE, ROBERT G.
EAGLETON, WM. L.
ECKER, D. P.
ERICKSON, OSCAR P.
ELKINS, DICK
FAULKNER, ALEX
FETTERLING, H. J.
FULLER, LEE
GALLOWAY, A. E.
GAMBILL, EDDIE
GEORGE, L. B.
GITTINGER, C. O.
GRAMMER, ALVA W.
HERMAN, JOE F.
HARPER ROSCOE E.
HALLLEY, HARRY L. S.
HERBSTER, JOHN G.

MANGAN, L. J.
MARSHALL, C. E.
McEVOY, A. R.
McDONALD, GLEASON
McCASLIN, L. S.
MELLNEY, W. F.
MELTON, WM. J.
McCRARY, C. C.
McFETRIDGE, L. W.
MITCHEL, E. B.
MORGAN, VIRGIL L.
MOSS, JIM
MURRAY, T. D.
PARIS, FRANCE
PARKINSON, JOE T.
PIERCE, J. H.
PINSON, REX
PORTER, JACK A.
PRAILL, EUGENE
RAINWATER, WM. I.
RAY, CLYDE N.
RHODES, RUSSELL S.
RENICK, MARK A.
RHEUARK, J. W.
ROGERS, JOHN
RUTHERFORD, S. M.
SAXON, MIKE
SARTIN, JAMES L.
SIMPSON, J. EARL

SHAW, ORAS A.
SLAUF, J. F.
SMITH, HUBERT A.
SMITH, S. R.
SOUTHWICK, JOHN J.
SPAIN, LESLIE L.
STAFFORD, SNOOKS
STRINGFIELD, W. L.
SWEET, GILBERT W.
SUMMERS, C. S.
STRODE, ELMER
TAYLOR, ELWOOD J.
THOMPSON, GEORGE
THOMPSON, N. A.
TOMLINS, H. V.
UNDERWOOD, J. B.
UTTER, GRANT Z.
VICTORY, C. G.
VICTORY, SARAH F.
WATKINS, GEO. L.
WHEELER, PAUL C.
WILCOX, LESLIE A.
WILD, ROEDER
WILLIAMS, ARCH D.
WOOD, EVERETT A.
WOODARD, C. C.
YAGER, SAUL
YOUNG, FAY
YOUTS, ROY

ALTERNATES

ACUFF, CLYDE
ADAMSON, ANDREW
ALLEN, C. E.
ALTAPFER, FELIX
ARNOLD, CAL
ARMSTRONG, K. M.
AVEY, SAM E.
BAILEY, LARKIN
BAXTER, FLOYD H.
BEAL, GEO. F. S.
BEARD, A. H.
BERKMAN, H. B.
BENEFIELD, B. H.
BLAKE, GEO. L.
BLAIR, W. L.
BLACKFORD, C. H.
BORDEN, W. H.
BROWN, C. E.
BROWN, H. B.
BURNLEY, PAUL E.
BUTTON, PERCY
BUCKLEY, GERALD T.
BLAN, H. H.
CAMPBELL, S. D.
CALKINS, W. C.
CHAPMAN, AL
CLIMPSON, A. W.
COLBERT, FRED
COMBEST, PAUL M.

CONWAY, L. J.
CONWAY, JOHN C.
COX, WALTER F.
COVINGTON, N. D.
DAHLEM, JOHN
DAVIS, N. H.
DEAN, C. P.
DAVIDSON, W. M.
DICKSON, CHAS. A.
DONOVAN, JOHN S.
DOOLEY, JAS. H.
DUNLAP, DR. ROY W.
DUNLAP, ZANNIE Z.
EZZELL, A. F.
FAIR, HARRY C.
FAIR, HARRY C.
FELLOWS, BLANCHÉ
FEXTON, HOWARD
FIST, HENRY L.
FOSTER, ELL C.
FORBSTER, C. C.
FORSYTHE, GRANT
FRIEDHOFEN, W. R.
GALLOWAY, FRANK H.
GOODNER, EARL
GRAY, WM. K.
GREEN, JOHN B.
GRANGER, R. W.
GRIFFITH, C. R. V.

HEARN, H. A.
HEDRICK, SAM
HAYDEN, HENRY
HALL, L. L.
HAMILTON, HARRY H.
HAWLEY, N. J.
HARRIS, FLOYD B.
HARTSHORNE, G. E.
HENNEBERRY, W. C.
HIATT, LEO
DOOLEY, JAS. H.
JAMAR, WALLY W.
JONES, O. A.
KELLY, ARGUS L.
KELLY, HUGH B.
KAUFMAN, KAY
KIRKLAND, RALPH
KOCISS, PAUL C.
LANE, R. K.
LAGOS, LOUIS
LANCASTER, H. W.
LEAVELL, JOHN H.
LEON, HARRY C.
LEWIS, JUDE R.
LEMMON, J. L.
LIND, ELMER W.
LAND, R. E.
LEFKO, LOUIS
LOTRIDGE, EDW. M.

LUNDBERG, MARTIN
MAULDING, NORMAN
MASON, JOE G.
MAYFIELD, HUGH
McKEE, CHARLES
McCULLOUGH, REX J.
MORROW, T. C.
OBANNON, M. E.
OHARA, FURMAN
ODORIFERO, A.
OLDHAM, RAHE L.
PASCOE, BYRON T.
PERKINS, EARL J.
PIERCE, LONNIE F.
PLEASANT, R. J.
POPE, EVERETT A.
POLLACK, E. W.
POYNOR, W. L.
POULOS, GEORGE
PROBERT, EDWARD
RAPHAEL, JOE
RITZ, E. C.
ROBERTS, M. C.
ROSS, RAY P.
ROSS, ROBERT E.
SCHEER, HARRY Y.
SHERROW, FLOYD F.
SAMPLES, GEORGE C.
SHEA, THOS. E.

SIATER, TOM
SMITH, ROY G.
SMITH, ROBT. A.
STONUM, GEORGE
SULZBACH, JOE
SULZBACH, FRED X.
STEINER, FRED W.
SUMMERS, WALTER
STRECK, I. B.
STROUD, FRED
STEVENS, CHAS.
SWEENEY, ARTHUR C.
TAYLOR, LLOYD J.
TRAINOR, DR. W. J.
TREMAYNE, RALPH E.
VANN, EDWARD F.
WEBB, R. N.
WELCH, JOHN
WELCH, CATHERINE
WATKINS, A. W.
WHITAKER, RAY B.
WHITAKER, C. E.
WIENECKE, ED. L.
WILDER, L. C.
WILLIS, CARL
WOOLLEY, W. D.
WORK, W. H.
YADON, R. C.
YADON, TOM J.

plant were held May 2, 1941. Victor F. Barnett, post commander in 1929, was the general chairman for the occasion. Many of the famous B-24 bombers rolled off the assembly lines at this plant.

The preceding month Flag dedication ceremonies were observed at the new National Guard Armory, which had been constructed by the Work Progress Administration. Albert Edward Galloway, post commander in 1939, served as master of ceremonies, and the Sons of the American Legion Drum and Bugle Corps participated. The armory, which was nearing completion, was the largest in the State and was one of fifty-five similar structures in Oklahoma, all of which were built by the W.P.A. More than 300 W.P.A. workers employed on the Tulsa project purchased the Flag which was raised at the ceremonies April 6, 1941.

Over 500 persons witnessed the dedication ceremonies of the new National Guard hangar at municipal airport as Tulsans observed the opening of the Flag Week celebration in June, 1941. The air facility was also a W.P.A. project. Snooks Stafford, a former Post Commander, was chairman of the program committee for this occasion. He was assisted by Commander J. Earl Simpson, C. O. Gittinger, Sam Courtney, Judge Harry L. S. Halley, Judge Oras A. Shaw, Frank H. J. Crawley, E. B. Mitchel, Alec Faulkner, C. C. Johnston, Jesse L. Jones, Eddie Gambill and Jerald Rainwater.

At the department convention held in Muskogee three months before the sneak attack of the Japanese on Pearl Harbor, the delegates adopted a resolution which favored the employment of necessary convoys to assure delivery of lend-lease supplies to Britain. The resolution furthermore approved the extension of the vital "peacetime" conscription and advocated the "rapid achievement of military preparedness superior to any possible combination of enemy forces and the retention of this state of protection until universal disarmament becomes an actual fact."

All hell broke loose, Saturday, December 7, 1941, and the next day President Roosevelt delivered his war message to a joint session of the Congress in which he assessed the damage and charted the nation's course:

"Yesterday, December 7, 1941—a date which will live in infamy—the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan.

"The United States was at peace with that nation and, at the solicitation of Japan, was still in conversation with its government

and its emperor looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific.

"Indeed, one hour after Japanese air squadrons had commenced bombing in Oahu, the Japanese ambassador to the United States and his colleague delivered to the Secretary of State a formal reply to a recent American message.

"While this reply stated that it seemed useless to continue the existing diplomatic negotiations, it contained no threat or hint of war or armed attack.

"It will be recorded that the distance of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious that the attack was deliberately planned many days or even weeks ago.

"During the intervening time, the Japanese government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace.

"The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian Islands has caused severe damage to American naval and military forces. Very many American lives have been lost.

"In addition, American ships have been reported torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu.

"Yesterday the Japanese government also launched an attack against Malaya.

"Last night Japanese forces attacked Hong Kong.

"Last night Japanese forces attacked Guam.

"Last night Japanese forces attacked the Philippine Islands.

"Last night the Japanese attacked Wake Island.

"This morning the Japanese attacked Midway Island.

"Japan has, therefore, undertaken a surprise offensive extending throughout the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday speak for themselves. The people of the United States have already formed their opinions and well understand the implications to the very life and safety of our nation.

"As commander in chief of the army and navy I have directed that all measures be taken for our defense.

"Always will we remember the character of the onslaught against us.

"No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory.

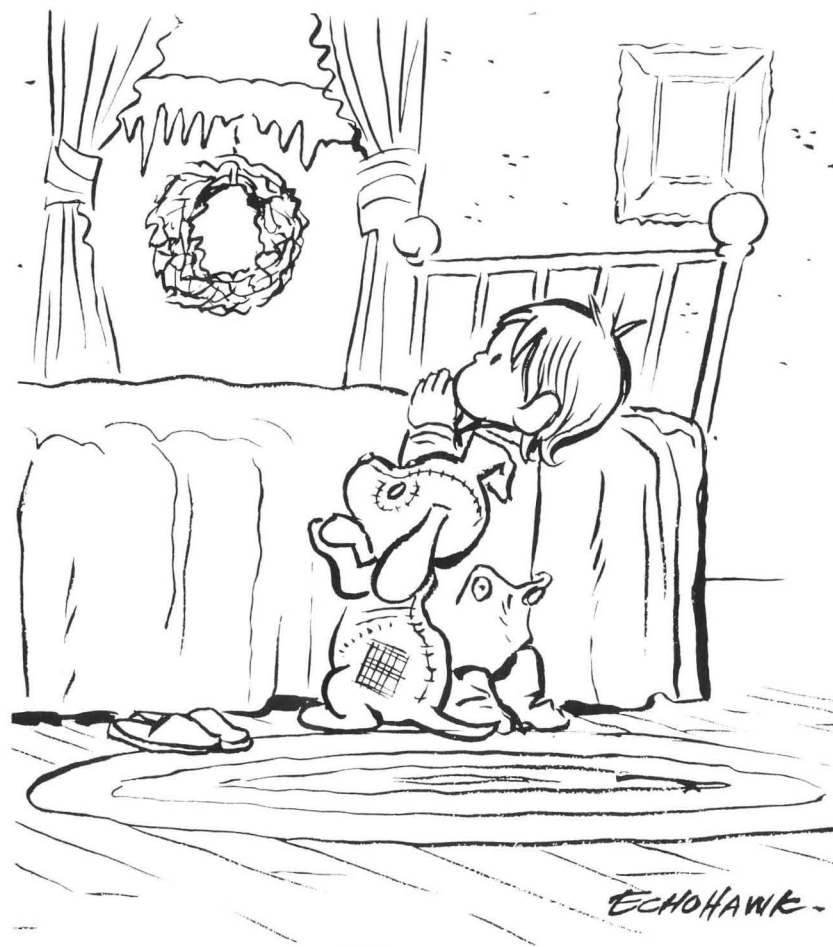
"I believe I interpret the will of the Congress and of the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost but will make very certain that this form of treachery shall never endanger us again.

"Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory and our interests are in grave danger.

"With confidence in our armed forces—with the unbounding determination of our people—we will gain the inevitable triumph—so help us, God.

"I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December 7, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire."

History Repeats Itself



"For his daddy over there."

(Drawing by Brummett Echohawk, Pawnee Indian Artist, who fought with Oklahoma's famous 45th Division in World War II.)

CHAPTER V

War and Rehabilitation

Tulsans reacted quickly to the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and after the initial shock had worn off, like Americans everywhere, they began to dig in to accomplish the great task ahead. Within three days Congress also declared war against Germany.

During the month of the nation's great war disaster, Joe Carson Post opened its doors to the hungry children of the community. On December 25, hundreds of underprivileged children attended a Christmas dinner with all the trimmings. As early as 10:30 a.m. more than 200 children were waiting in line at the post home.

Throughout 1942 the post, under the leadership of Joseph F. Herman, helped with the war effort. Major Wiley J. Adams, Army Recruiting Officer for Oklahoma, commended the Tulsa post in November "for the work already accomplished in the national defense program." He explained that being a Legionnaire caused him to turn to the Legion as his chief aid.

The war was furiously waged in 1943. Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands fell to United States Marines and Army forces in February. A large part of the Japanese fleet was destroyed in the conquest. In November American forces invaded the Gilbert Islands, and a Marine Division stormed ashore at Tarawa, which resulted in some of the bloodiest fighting of the war.

The allies had invaded Sicily the preceding July, and the fiercely fought Italian campaign knocked Italy out of the war. The United States naval forces deserved a great deal of credit during the year. By the end of 1943, the allies had almost ended the submarine menace in the Atlantic. Also the United States Air Corps did a tremendous job during the year. The "round-the-clock" bombing took a heavy toll on German industry.

Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Carson, mother of Joe Carson, died January 28, 1944. Jim Hunt, Leslie L. Spain, Joe F. Herman, J. Earl Simpson, Joe Lynn, and Snooks Stafford, all past post commanders, acted as pallbearers at the service held January 31. "Mother" Carson was buried in Rose Hill Cemetery.

By mid-June, approximately 7,000 servicemen and a few women had returned to Tulsa County from war duty. Most of these had been discharged because of wounds, illness or passing age limitations.

The battle of the Pacific continued throughout 1944, and General MacArthur's forces returned to the Philippines as he

had promised. After savage fighting, the conquest of Leyte was completed in December, 1944.

In the European Theater of Operations, American troops stormed the Normandy beaches, June 6, 1944. Within a week they had driven about twenty miles inland, but casualties were extremely heavy. By the year's end the allied forces were set to destroy the Nazi military machine. The Germans collapsed in April of the following year and General Alfred Jodl signed a surrender at Reims, May 7, 1945. The Japanese accepted allied surrender terms August 15.

The GI Bill of Rights was signed by President Roosevelt in June 1944, which created many advantages for the returning soldiers. The American Legion had led the fight for this legislation. The law was amended by a statute signed by President Truman, December 28, 1945, which provided increased benefits. The bill provided veterans with unemployment pay, tuition assistance allowances for completing their education, and loans for home or farm buying or starting in business. Little wonder that many ex-GI's showed their appreciation by joining the American Legion.



Bristow Parade, May 12, 1945.

Post members, assisted by entertainers of Station KTUL, toured Oklahoma cities in 1945, campaigning for important amendments to the GI Bill of Rights. Those who were a part of the cavalcade were Gregg Chancellor, Rex Candlish, Harold Shaver, Otto Koenig, Joe Herman, Eddie Gambill, director of the Carson-Wilson Post band, and Bob C. Hammond, leader of the Drum and Bugle Corps.

The Post busied itself helping returning veterans find employment, housing and to make the necessary readjustments to civilian life. A "Jamboree Session" in honor of discharged veterans was held at the post May 25, 1945. The evening of entertainment afforded post leaders an opportunity to discuss the background, program and objectives of the organization and to extend to guests an invitation to membership.

Although anxious to recruit active members from the ranks of World War II veterans, post members did not forget the veterans who were hospitalized. Frequent visits were made to the VA Hospital at Muskogee, and outstanding talent was enlisted to provide entertainment. Gifts often were furnished by the Post and the Ladies Auxiliary, and the patients who made the red crepe paper poppies received financial remuneration for their efforts when the memorial flowers were sold on the streets in the Spring of each year.



Patti Page and Betty Barbour were members of Post troupe which visited and entertained veterans in the VA Hospital at Muskogee in 1945. Patti was 17 years old at the time and a student at Webster High School.

At the National Convention held in San Francisco in the fall of 1946, the American Legion advocated the following security measures:

- Universal military training;
- Unified command of Army, Navy and Air Force;
- A Regular Army sufficient to meet peacetime requirements; to be augmented by trained citizen reserves if necessary;
- Scientific research in nuclear and technical fields;
- A merchant marine which could be made an arm of defense in time of war;
- Maintenance of stockpiles of strategic materials;
- Expansion of the American department of world intelligence;
- Establishment of a civil defense program;
- Maintenance of necessary bases;
- Expansion of all phases of transportation.

Delegates to the convention knew the terrific toll which had been taken during the past five years, and they did not want the tragic debacle to be repeated. The Veterans Administration had revealed some startling statistics the preceding spring. They reflected that as of March 31, 1946 "the veteran population of the United States as 15,296,000 men and women from World War II, and 3,986,000 from all other wars. The disability compensation cases already allowed from World War II had reached 1,260,000. There were 450,000 compensation and disability pension cases from World War I and the Regular Army still on the books. There were 75,000 veterans in V. A. hospitals and 10,000 in contract hospitals, with another 25,000 awaiting hospital admission. Forty-two new hospitals had been authorized by Congress, and 53 additions to existing hospitals, but none of the new ones had been finished, and only two actually were under construction. Twelve of the additions had been finished and sixteen were under way. Insurance was being paid on 341,000 World War II policies, with 82,000 claims pending.

"Under the GI Bill the government was paying unemployment allowances to 1,499,000 veterans, and had 379,000 in schools and colleges, with more than a million and a half applications for educational benefits pending. Disabled men in vocational training classes totaled 296,000 with 62,000 applications pending. There had been 111,000 loans granted for home and business purposes."

It is easy to see why the Legion and the Ladies Auxiliary gave the hospital and rehabilitation program top priority during the following years. On the local level, the Tulsa post provided skilled service officers to handle the caseload at home and to help eligible veterans to receive benefits provided for them under the GI Bill of Rights.

The post also augmented the child welfare program inaugurated in the 20's. Throughout the years no post in Oklahoma has contributed as much money or given greater support to this program. Post No. 1 has been a major benefactor of the American Legion Home maintained in Ponca City for some 100 needy, neglected or orphaned children of veterans, who are also afforded an education in the public schools of that city.

On the national level, by 1950, the Legion, its Ladies Auxiliary, the Forty and Eight and the Eight and Forty had made expenditures in excess of \$77,000,000 for direct financial aid and service to children of both World Wars.

CHAPTER VI

LEADERS

Old and New — Tried and True

Former post commanders served with dedication and many achieved prominence in the community, state and nation. They were chosen from the professions, the business world, and from the ranks of both the blue and the white collar workers.

One became a newspaper editor; one is the vice president and business manager of the Newspaper Printing Corporation; another is a beloved and outstanding minister; one served as Secretary of War after World War I and as Ambassador to China during World War II. He rose to the rank of major general in the second World War. Another was a brigadier general during World War I.

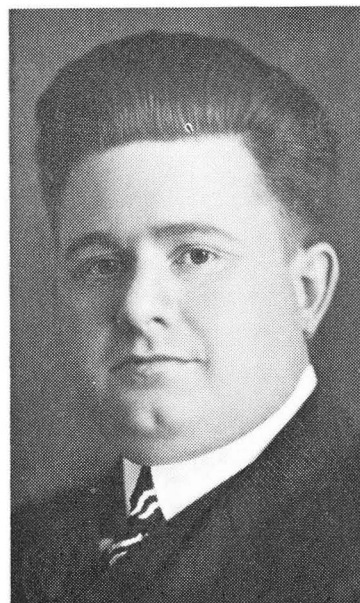
Two former commanders served as mayor of Tulsa; another became mayor of Okmulgee. One served as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Oklahoma, and has enjoyed a distinguished career as a jurist. One became a banker and another was elected to the highest office of the national organization of the Forty and Eight.

Two former commanders became building superintendent of the National Bank of Tulsa; one served as director of the Legal Aid Society of Tulsa County, and one has enjoyed a distinguished tenure as founder, faculty member, and dean of the College of Law of the University of Tulsa, and has been president of both the Council of Churches of Greater Tulsa and the International Convention of Christian Churches.

Three former post leaders became department commanders.

Most of the pictures which appear on the following pages were taken at the time the individuals held the post's highest office.

Former Post Commanders



***HORACE HAGAN**
1919



JOHN ROGERS
1920



W. L. EAGLETON
1921

* Deceased



***R. A. BEARD**
1922

Former Post Commanders



***ALVA J. NILES**
1923

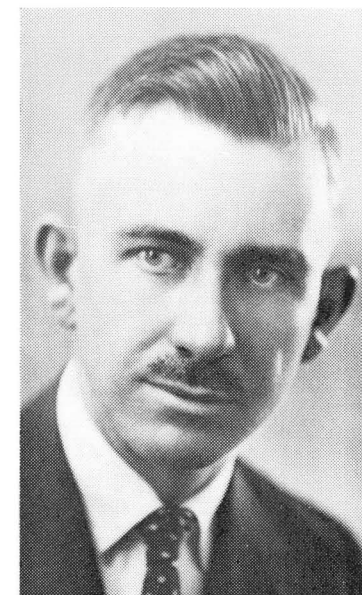


***CHARLES ALLEN**
1923



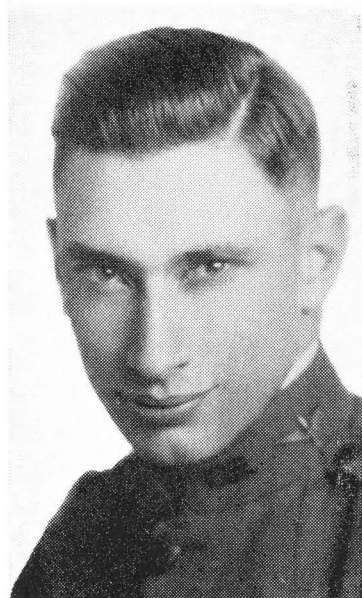
C. S. SUMMERS
1924

* Deceased



E. L. ALLISON
1925

Former Post Commanders



***ALVIN L. CHAPMAN**
1926



***J. A. PORTER**
1927



***P. J. HURLEY**
1928

* Deceased



***VICTOR F. BARNETT**
1929

—34—

Former Post Commanders



T. P. GILMER
1930

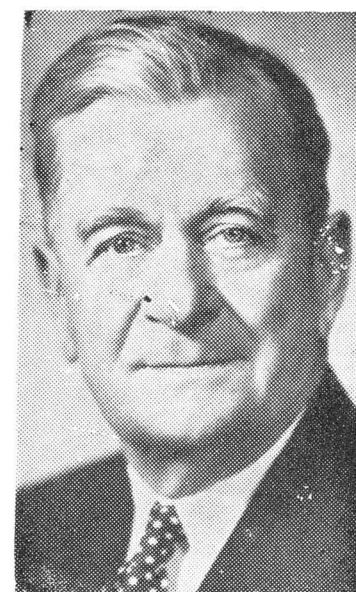


GUY C. TETIRICK
1931



***WALTER W. EASTMAN**
1932

* Deceased



***GEORGE L. WATKINS**
1933

—35—

Former Post Commanders



L. W. McFETRIDGE
1934



FRANK S. HUGILL
1935



***ARTHUR H. BRONSON**
1936



***JOSEPH W. LYNN**
1937

* Deceased

Former Post Commanders



***MIKE SAXON**
1938

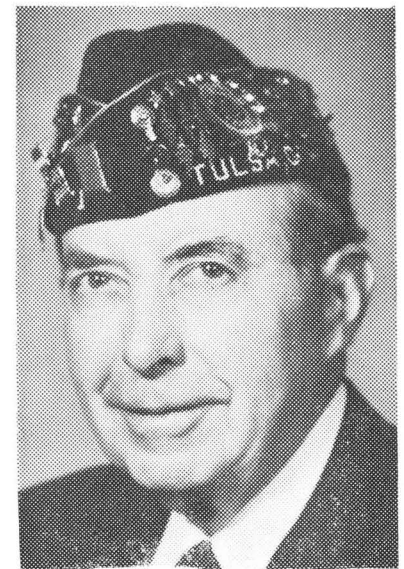


***ALBERT E. GALLOWAY**
1939



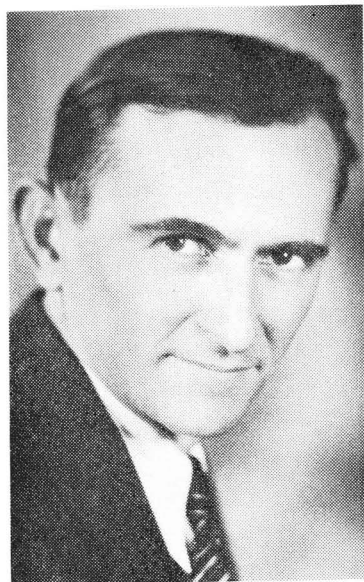
SNOOKS STAFFORD
1940

* Deceased

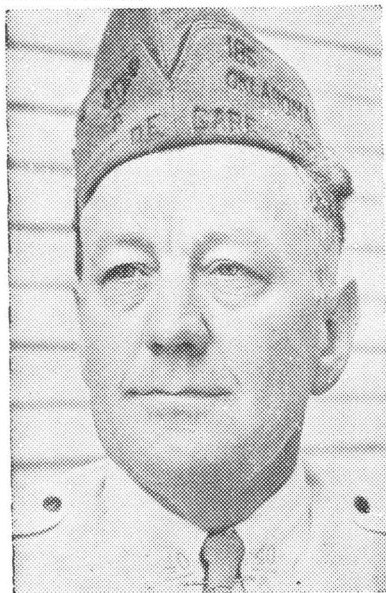


J. EARL SIMPSON
1941

Former Post Commanders



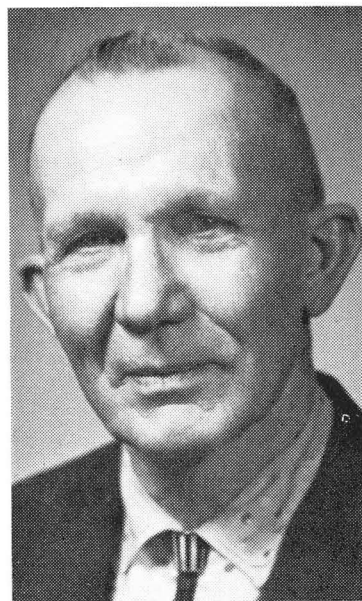
JOSEPH F. HERMAN
1942



LESLIE L. SPAIN
1943



***JIM HUNT**
1944



***JOE PAYNE**
1944

* Deceased

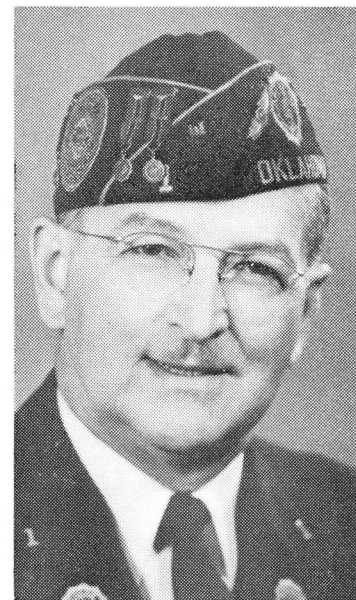
Former Post Commanders



***OTTO KOENIG**
1945 & 1954



***WALTER J. PETTY**
1946



EVERETT A. WOOD
1946

* Deceased



***GLEN H. CODDINGTON**
1947

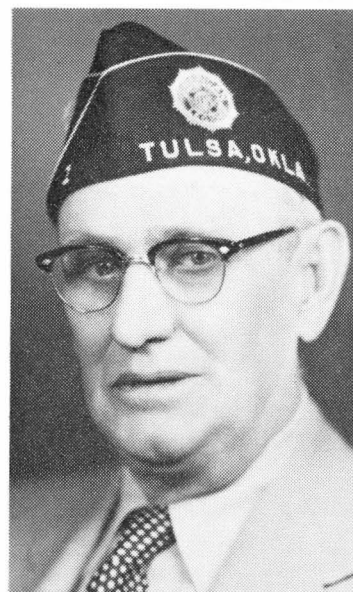
Former Post Commanders



JUDGE HARRY L. S. HALLEY
1948



CLINTON J. BOHANNON
1948



***ALEX E. WILSON, SR.**
1951



HERSCHEL R. CHISM, JR.
1952 & 1956



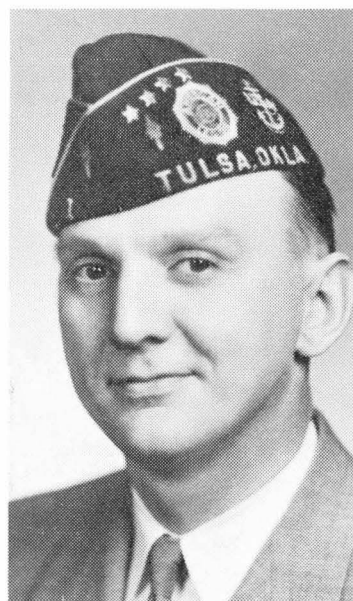
***GUY BELFORD, JR.**
1949

* Deceased



N. H. DAVIS
1950

Former Post Commanders



WALTER C. DEPPE
1953

* Deceased



GEORGE HUNT
1955

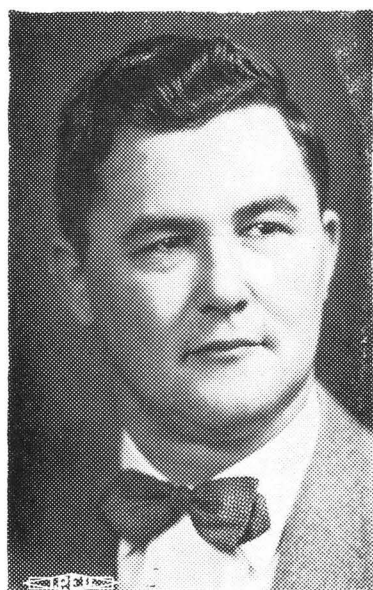
Former Post Commanders



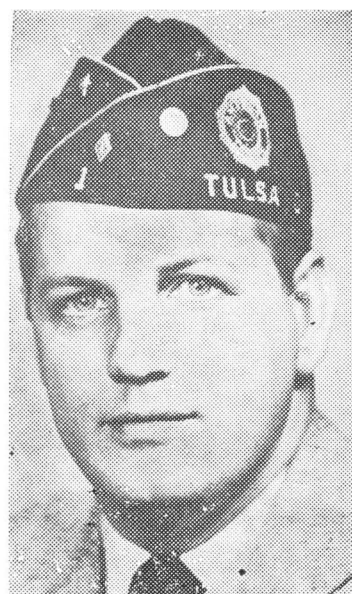
GEORGE E. NORVELL
1956



SHELBY W. MARR
1957



THOMAS D. FRASIER
1958



BILL KELLY
1959

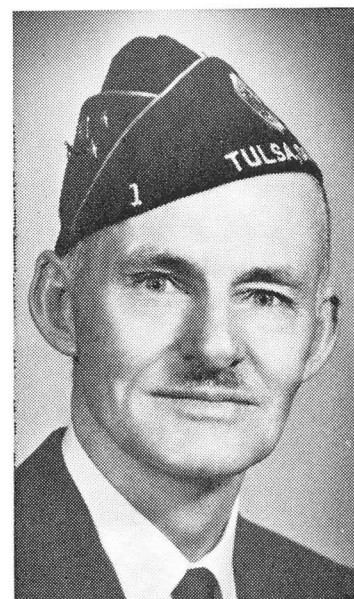
Former Post Commanders



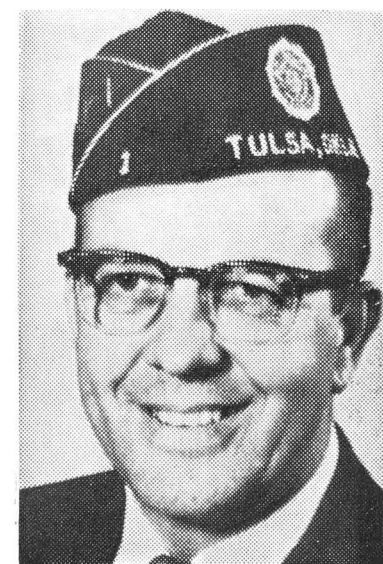
CLARENCE W. COX
1960



BEN B. BALLENGER
1961-1962

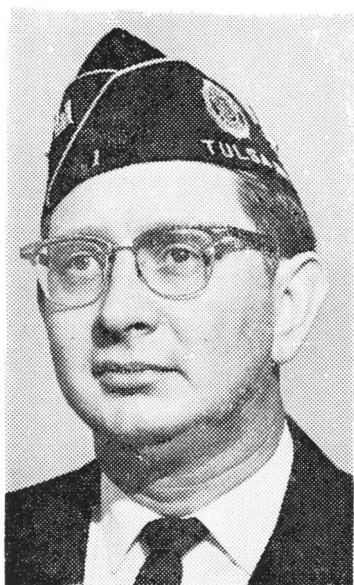


FLOYD R. MARSHALL
1963



JESSE HUNTER
1964

Former Post Commanders



JAY GIBSON
1965



JOHN CHRONISTER
1966



CLEMMIE D. GROSS
1967



ENLO E. WARMA
1968

Roster of Life Members

J. Earl Simpson, 1949	*Harry A. Pope, 1959
Joe Herman, 1949	*Mike Saxon, Sr., 1960
C. C. Victory, 1950	Rodney E. Larkin ,1960
*Sam Craig, 1951	*Carl Hoel, 1961
Alec Faulkner, 1952	George E. Norvell, 1961
*Otto Koenig, 1953	Floyd Marshall, 1962
*Alfred Jarvis, 1954	E. D. Brewer, 1963
*A. E. Wilson, 1955	*James F. King, 1963
*Calvin Blackford, 1955	Frank S. Hugill, 1964
*Joe W. Lynn, 1956	Ben B. Ballenger, 1964
Walter C. Deppe, 1956	Jesse F. Hunter, 1965
E. J. Taylor, 1957	O. D. Waters, 1965
H. R. Chism, Jr., 1957	Jay C. Gibson, 1966
*Sam Burnham, 1958	James E. Hall, 1966
*Guy Belford, Jr., 1958	Harold L. James, 1967
*Grover Bourland, 1958	Julius Wild, 1967
Lon Markham, 1959	Clemmie D. Gross, 1968
	Wayne Calhoun, 1968

* Deceased

Post Remembers Tulsa Children



Post Commander Marion A. Eddingfield, Judge James E. Griffin and Jim "St. Nick" Catron, enjoy bringing happiness to a little girl at the 1968 Post Christmas Party for children under the supervision and care of the Juvenile Court of Tulsa County.

CHAPTER VII

Post Activities

As the post embarks on its 50th year, the following officers and committeemen are at the helm: M. A. Eddingfield, Commander; James F. Catron, 1st Vice Commander; Charles Polson, 2nd Vice Commander; Leroy Foutch, 3rd Vice Commander; Ben B. Ballenger, Finance Officer; Luther Ingle, Jr., Sergeant-at-Arms; O. D. Waters, Chaplain; Ben B. Ballenger, Adjutant; and George E. Norvell, Historian. Ed Brewer is Post Judge Advocate.

Members of the Post Executive Committee are: J. Earl Simpson, Jesse Hunter, Ralph Younger, Ronnie Hancock, Eddie Warma, E. J. Taylor, Leon Kaufman, Jim Thrush and J. P. Watson.

The office is staffed by Joe Herman, Service Officer, and Pearl Vance, Secretary.

The extent of the activities which have been undertaken during the year 1968-1969 is indicated by the major committees and their chairmen and other appointees: Membership, James Catron; Entertainment, Leroy Foutch; Band, J. Earl Simpson; Americanism, George Norvell, Ronnie Hancock and Gerald Webb; Sick & Visitation, J. Earl Simpson; Baseball, Wayne Calhoun and Ben B. Ballenger; Boys' State, Ben B. Ballenger; Fireworks Display, James Catron; Child Welfare and Home School, Ralph Younger; Flag Detail, Luther Ingle, Jr.; Graves Decoration, Harold "Puny" James; Blood Donor, Ralph Younger; Publicity, J. Earl Simpson; Women's Membership, Irene Howe; Sons of Legion, Ed Blackburn; Naturalization, John Chronister; Juvenile Court Christmas Party, James Catron; Public Relations, George Norvell; Ritual, Joe Herman; V. A. Hospital Christmas Party, J. Earl Simpson; Veterans' Day Dinner, Ben B. Ballenger; Safety, George Hunt; Poppy Boards, Jim Thrush; Funeral Detail, Joe Herman; Clubroom, Ray Harris and Eddie Warma; Veterans Day Parade, George Norvell; Birthday Dinner, J. Earl Simpson; and Dance, Leon Kaufman.

In addition to continuous participation in programs advocated by the National Organization, which include Boys' State, American Legion Baseball, American Education Week, School Awards, Poppy Sales, Flag Education, High School Oratorical Contests, Education and Scholarships, Traffic Safety, Hospital and Rehabilitation, Sons of the American Legion, and Child Welfare, Carson-Wilson Post No. 1 has engaged in numerous activities.

Regarding Child Welfare, the National Commission released figures in August 1968 which reflects the following:

"The National Child Welfare Commission has reported a new record high of expenditures of over \$9.5 million for child welfare

and related children and youth activities. Chairman Earl D. Franklin, Jr., Sterling, Colo., pointed out that The American Legion itself accounted for contributions in excess of \$7 million. The American Legion Auxiliary had expenditures in excess of \$2 million and the Eight and Forty had expenditures totaling nearly \$300,000. Total amount contributed for this program activity since its inception has now reached over \$230 million."

On the local level in addition to providing financial support to the American Legion Home School at Ponca City, the post sponsors two boys who are cared for at the home. The two lads appreciated their Christmas presents in 1968 according to the following letters:

Carson-Wilson Post 1
1120 East 8th Street
Tulsa, Oklahoma
Dear Legionnaires:

Jan. 9, 1969

How are you doing? Fine I hope.

Our wrestling team traveled to Bartlesville before Christmas. Our "A" team was beaten and our "B" team won. On Saturday the 21st I left for Bartlesville for the Christmas holidays at 8:00 o'clock and arrived there at about 10:30 a.m. I had a very nice time there. Then on Saturday the 28th we came back to Ponca City at 3:30 and during the evening I went to wrestling practice all week, except Wednesday and Friday.

Wednesday we got out for New Years' Day and Friday our wrestling team traveled to Blackwell. Our "A" team lost and our "B" team won 24 to 21.

I would like to thank you for the I.D. bracelet you sent me for Christmas.

At this point I am passing in all subjects in school. Well its about time to close.

Sincerely yours,
Hurley Duncan
American Legion Home

American Legion Post 1
1120 E. 8th
Tulsa, Oklahoma
Dear Friends:

Jan. 9, 1969

I am writing this letter to thank you for the present I got from you for Christmas. I wear it all the time. I like it very much because it matches my watch. I went to Bartlesville and stayed with some real nice people for Christmas. They gave me a radio and a good model car for Christmas. I hope you had a nice Christmas and a very happy New Year.

We had a nice New Year's party. I will close for now, because I have to get ready for supper.

I am enclosing you a colored picture of both Hurley Duncan and myself. Hope you like them.

Sincerely yours,
Roger Benham

SPECIAL POST ACTIVITIES

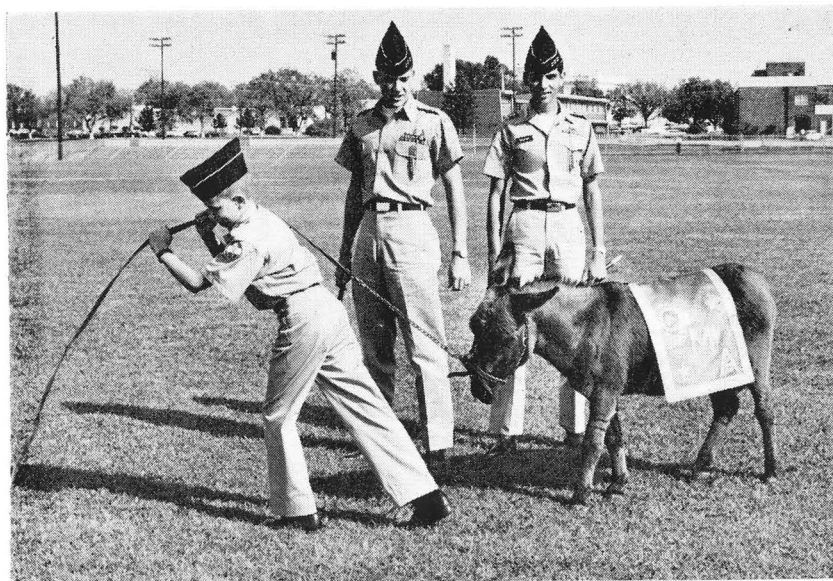
Special Post activities which take place each year include the following events:

- APRIL:** Sale of poppy boards.
Presentation of school awards at assembly programs.
- MAY:** Memorial Day Services.
- JUNE:** Boys' State.
- JULY:** Fireworks Show, Tulsa County Fairgrounds.
The 40th annual show sponsored by Post No. 1, July 4, 1968 was attended by approximately 8,500. The fireworks gala is preceded by a sparkling performance of the Sundowners, junior affiliate of the ladies auxiliary, and a stirring band concert by the post band.
Flag raising ceremony with program covering Flag etiquette is annually conducted at the Juvenile Court's Lakeside Home. The singing of patriotic songs and bell-ringing ceremonies are features of this program.
Hamburger cookout held on Legion grounds for families and guests was inaugurated in 1968. Post hosts Department Convention every two years. It will be held in Tulsa, July 25-27, 1969.
- AUGUST:** American Legion baseball tournaments held at Legion Park. In 1968, Carson-Wilson Post No. 1 hosted the state tournament.
- SEPTEMBER:** Junior Achievement Project co-sponsored in 1968. The post voted to co-sponsor the 1968-1969 Junior Achievement Program. This youth project is an economic program sponsored by the business community for high school students who are instructed in the operation of their own companies, selling stock, keeping books, paying salaries and wages, paying taxes, and preparing annual reports.
Traffic Safety is emphasized at beginning of each school year.
Traffic safety programs are conducted, and protection of school children is stressed. "Drive with Pride" bumper stickers were distributed in 1968 by Jim Thrush, member of the post executive committee, and originator of the safety slogan. "Drive With Pride".

OCTOBER: Post operates booth at the Tulsa State Fair. Members distribute American Legion literature other patriotic material, and American flags. The Carson-Wilson Post Band played a concert near the booth located in the I.P.E. Building in 1968. In 1968 Post Color Guard participated in patriotic parade held in Bartlesville, Oklahoma.

NOVEMBER: The annual Veterans Day parade in 1968 attracted thousands of spectators, and the open house at the hut which followed was attended by 800 members and guests, who were served hot lunches.

The following post leaders officiated in the parade: J. Earl Simpson, marshal; Jack Purdie (chief of police), chief of staff; division commanders: C. C. "Chick" Woodard, Sam Hedrick, E. J. Taylor and M/Sgt. Bill Sykes; members of parade committee: George Norvell, Jim Thrush, Jim Catron, Ronnie Hancock, Harley Van Cleave, M/Sgt. Bobby Wilson, George Hunt, Leon Kaufman and Virgil Curry.



More than 300 cadets from Oklahoma Military Academy marched in the 1968 Veteran's Day Parade. Carson-Wilson Post No. 1 sent 8 buses to Claremore to transport them to Tulsa. Cadet Charles Keys Miller had a hard time loading the Corps mascot who preferred to walk. Cadet Captains Dan Bolt and Phil Goldfarb obviously were a big help.



Lt. Col. Ernest Childers, native of Tulsa County, served as reviewing officer for the parade and proudly wore his Congressional Medal of Honor for the occasion. Band Majorettes Gail Connor and Micki Sims presented the World War II hero with the national and state Flags after the crack Broken Arrow Band had played a 30 minute concert preceding the parade spectacle.

Carson-Wilson Post No. 1 Color Guard traditionally leads the mammoth Christmas parade through downtown Tulsa.

DECEMBER: Three Christmas parties are sponsored annually. The first is for children under the supervision of the Juvenile Court of Tulsa County. The second is for children of Post members and the third is presented at the Veterans Hospital at Muskogee.

Also members of the post ring bells each year for the Salvation Army Christmas fund.

JANUARY: Gene Hassman, Department Commander, spoke on the Legion Legislative Program at a joint meeting of the post and auxiliary, January 21, 1969.

FEBRUARY A family night dinner was an attraction of the month.

Annual city and county oratorical contests were conducted at the post hut.

A patriotic program was presented to the Oil Capital Chamber of Commerce, February 19, 1969.

MARCH: Dedication of "Flame of Freedom" on post grounds, March 15, 1969.

Plans made for April sale of Poppy Boards.

Prominent Legionnaire Milt Patrick, of Skiatook, Oklahoma, who is favored to take over the reins of the world's largest veterans organization, at the National Convention to be held in Atlanta, Georgia, August 22-28, 1969, accepted the post's invitation to speak at the 50th Anniversary Dinner March 18.



GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY DINNER SPEAKER — TULSA COUNTY'S OWN MILTON J. PATRICK FROM SKIATOOK, OKLAHOMA.

REGULAR EVENTS AND MEMBERSHIP

In addition to the special events and programs held throughout the year, regular post meetings are held each Tuesday night, and dances, which are open to the public, are scheduled on Saturday nights. On appropriate occasions entertainment is provided for the veterans confined in the VA Hospital at Muskogee.

The extent of post activities depends in a large measure upon membership, and the post has been able to accomplish major goals because it has remained strong. As of September 2, 1946, there were 3,338 members. The membership lines held firm, and under the leadership of Walter Deppe the post exceeded its quota of 3,075 allotted by the Department of Oklahoma for the year 1952-1953 by 260.

Membership began to level off in subsequent years and now the post maintains an annual average of 2,400. This year's quota is 2,500. Although there are several in the post who are top-membership getters, J. Earl Simpson holds the record for having secured an average of 350 members a year over a period of 36 years. The Department quota for 1969 is 46,088, and the national membership goal for the next target date, March 31, 1969, is 2,371,720. Ben B. Ballenger has secured the most members among the W. W. II veterans.

AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL

Special mention should be made regarding the baseball program, both nationally and locally. The "national pastime" was first adopted as a Legion activity at the convention held in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1925. The American Legion has maintained its interest in the sport since that time, recognizing that it offers possibilities for teaching lessons in citizenship and at the same time provides a wholesome outlet for the restless energy of youth. Qualities of loyalty, respect for rules and the decisions rendered, fair play, courage and physical fitness are essential to the growing boy, and these desirable characteristics are developed and encouraged in the junior baseball program.

As a by-product of this activity, professional baseball has reaped some of the finest talent in the history of the game. There were 15,912 teams participating in American Legion Junior Baseball in 1949. The number of teams has increased each year.

American Legion Junior Baseball becomes more and more attractive to American boys who enjoy the national pastime. They know they will get expert coaching on an American Legion-sponsored team—many of which are under the tutelage of former major league players. The boys know that scouts for the big league aggregations discovered among American League

junior players such baseball greats as George Kell, Stan Musial, Bob Feller, Hal Newhouser, Dom DiMaggio, Roy Campanella, Ted Williams, Lou Boudreau and many others equally famous and of more recent vintage.

The growth of the Legion baseball program in Tulsa has been spectacular. In 1956 when Wayne Calhoun entered the program as a coach, Tulsa had only one lighted diamond for the use of the entire city, and there was no room for the American Legion teams. They played wherever they could find an open space for three years. Then Calhoun was appointed chairman of the post baseball committee and things began to happen.

With Ben Ballenger as co-chairman, they began to develop one of the best athletic programs in the nation. J. A. LaFortune provided a playing field in the park bearing his name. Through the efforts of Calhoun and Ballenger, the Mabee Foundation was encouraged to contribute \$15,000 for lighting the diamond. The remainder of the cost necessary to put the facility in physical condition was borne by the post from 1960 to 1968. A total of \$21,567.34 has been invested in the physical plant to date. The cost of operating the baseball games during the same period has amounted to \$24,908.65. Much of the revenue has been derived from advance ticket sales which Ballenger has successfully conducted.

In a recent letter regarding the baseball activity, Legionnaire Calhoun made these observations:

"In my opinion, we have one of the best programs in the United States. Our teams always make us proud and we have had a team in the state tournament every year since 1960. We won the state championship in 1967. Last year we had seven Class A teams and two Class B teams. If a check was made, I doubt that any city in the United States can boast of this many teams.

"We had approximately 40 boys and men in 1956. We now have around 200 boys and adults working in our program.

"We have built one of the best lighted diamonds in this area with an electric scoreboard and public address system, and we are planning to make many additional improvements in the near future."

Carson-Wilson Post No. 1 also has furnished equipment and supervision for Babe Ruth teams, who owe much of their success to the untiring efforts of legionnaire E. B. Benton, better known as "Chief".

Other sports enthusiasts and supporters are Paul Polin, George M. Barr, Max X. Beard and John Chronister.

The baseball story deserves the most acclaim among post achievements during the 60's.

CHAPTER VIII

Post Cemetery and Funeral Detail

Except for the national cemeteries, no burial site in the United States compares with the Legion grounds at Memorial Park.

Back in 1927 while post members were anxiously awaiting the completion of their new home, they also were thinking of providing a final resting place for their departed comrades. Groundbreaking for the central monument, at Memorial Park which occurred July 16, 1927, was attended by state and local dignitaries.

Thereafter, step by step, year in and year out, the plans were developed under the dedicated and tireless leadership of Edward Denton Brewer.

Land acquisitions, fencing, and an attractive gateway were essentials. The erection of the monument was a labor of love and Legionnaire Brewer watched its construction as each layer of native stone was placed. He even helped Tom Brandes, a Spanish War veteran, perform the manual labor involved.

Between 1927 and 1960, land for approximately 4,000 gravesites has been acquired. The first veteran was buried in the Legion Cemetery in December 1933. Today nearly 700 sleep beneath the hallowed sod.

The formal dedication of the monument took place at 3 p.m., November 11, 1946. An imposing statute of a World War I dough-boy, which had been carved from Indiana limestone, was placed in an elevated position on the four sides of the monument, Brewer had designed. Conrad M. Berglund, a Tulsa stonemason, was the sculptor and Brewer took the time to pose as the model. Because of his modesty, he would not permit the sculptor to use his face, and Berglund instead used a picture of movie star, Tyrone Power, for the facial features of the statue.

The finishing touches to the monument were not added until December 1960, when Brewer donated the bronze tablets for the base of the structure.

Upon the beautiful tablet which faces the arched gateway is the date of the groundbreaking, July 16, 1927. A second tablet which faces the east contains the following inscription:

"This graceful spire points Heavenward over the graves of our honored dead, is the symbol of our gratitude to all our heroes of all American wars . . . It keeps alive fresh in our memories the glorious spirit of all those boys and girls who left their homes and peaceful pursuits to fight and die for our country.

—Carson-Wilson Post No. 1
of The American Legion."

Memorial Day 1968



"Finally, O God of mercy, we remember lovingly before Thee our departed comrades who with Thee, share the rewards of life everlasting. May their splended example guide us, now and forever more. Amen."

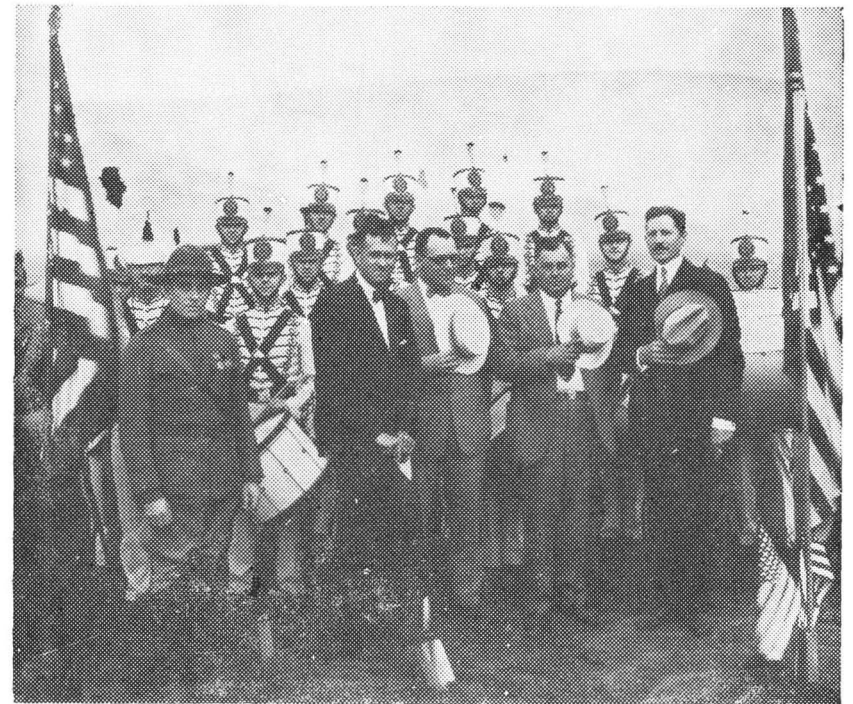
On the south side of the monument, Brewer selected a verse from a poem of James Whitcomb Riley:

"Deep, tender, firm and true, our Nation's heart
Throbs for her gallant heroes passed away.
Who, in Grim Battle's drama, played their part
And slumber here today."

The fourth tablet, facing the west, has lines which were penned by the Legionnaire who has given the most in time, talent and material goods to make the dream of early post members come true:

"Here is no rank or station—no high or low estate. The famous and the lowly are not famous or lowly here. Every grave is hallowed alike, not for fame, wealth or wisdom, but for what they and all patriots have done, from Valley Forge to Heartbreak Ridge, under the American Flag, for Freedom and the myriad of wonders that are America. — Edward Denton Brewer."

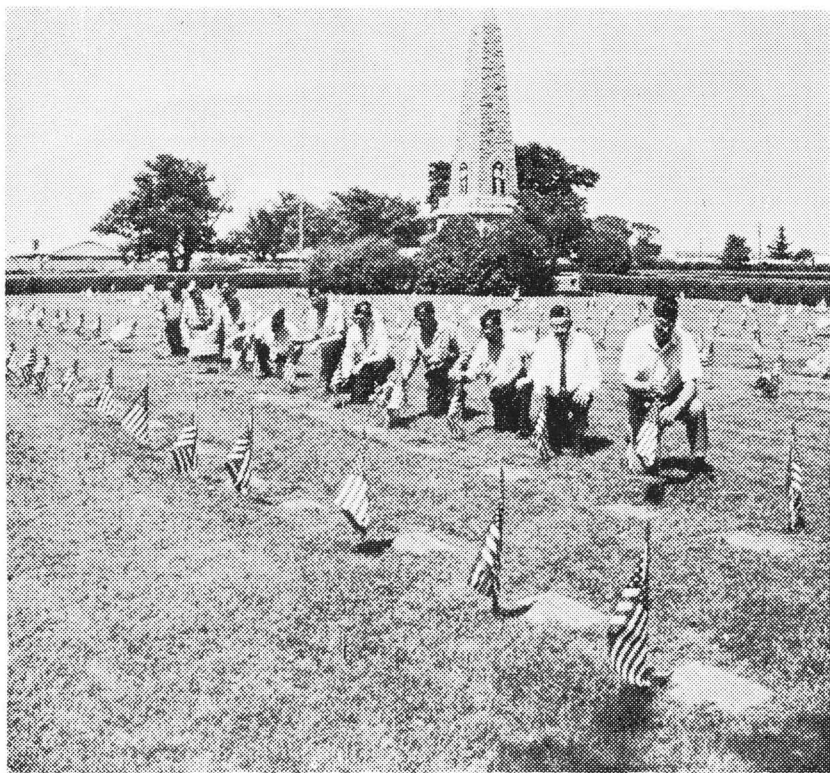
Officers of The American Legion Cemetery Corporation are: John Rogers, president, Joseph J. Shea, secretary, and Edward D. Brewer, vice-president and general manager.



Post Commander J. A. Porter, Mac Q. Williamson, O. W. Beck, State Senator C. H. Terwilliger, and Patrick J. Hurley, participate in ground breaking ceremonies at site of monument July 16, 1927. Post drum and bugle corps also took part.

THE FUNERAL DETAIL

Faithful members of the funeral detail who perform the last military rites for deceased veterans are: Joseph F. Herman, commander, Post Chaplain O. D. Waters, J. C. Baker, Ray Bedard, John Carr, Alec Faulkner, Harry Fry, Louis Hale, Floyd Harris, George L. Hunt, Luther Ingle, Harold L. James, Rodney E. Larkin, Frank Kelton, L. J. Meistrell, Ira McPherson, Charles Polson, J. Earl Simpson, Tom Slater, Arthur Tedder, C. C. Woodard, Harley Tomey, Amos Lewis, bugler, and Dave Dawson, bugler. Many other Legionnaires have served on this important detail in years gone by. Members deserve the highest honors the Post can bestow.



Harold "Puny" James, Lawrence J. Meistrell, Arthur Tedder, Floyd Harris, Harry Fry, Alec Faulkner, C. C. Woodard, John Carr, Charles Polson and J. P. Watson decorate graves at American Legion Cemetery prior to Memorial Day Services, May 30, 1968.

On Memorial Day, post members attend services for their departed comrades where they are privileged to hear the tender rendition of "My Buddy" by Legionnaire John Lovejoy. The post band plays an inspiring concert preceding the formal program. When the address is concluded, poppy wreaths are placed at the base of the Soldiers' Monument. Then the firing squad fires the traditional salute to the honored dead after which Post Bugler, Amos Lewis sounds "Taps".

The following letter from N. A. Thompson, a charter member of Post No. 1, dated June 12, 1945, poignantly reveals how much these services mean to a bereaved family:

Joe Carson Post No. 1, American Legion
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Gentlemen:

May I express to you the heartfelt appreciation of Mrs. Thompson and myself for the part you played in the memorial service on Decoration Day. Our son's name, Lieutenant Fred M. Thompson, was on the chart and we took it as a sincere gesture on your part to him personally, expressing the sentiment that you are not going to forget the sacrifice he has made.

Such initiative on your part will make it less necessary for us to raise our voices in supplication and thereby subject ourselves to criticism that we are seeking cheap publicity.

May we all be able to exhibit the Christ-like spirit in the reconstruction of our world and truly draw inspiration from His death as well as the death of our boys, for literally they saved us but could not save themselves.

In all sincerity, I thank you.

N. A. Thompson

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