

Muskogee County Genealogical Society Quarterly

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The Comb Grave

The comb grave, popularly known as a "tent-style grave," is most commonly found in a geographic band along the western foot of the Cumberland Plateau, including the lowland portions of White County. Here it is found in nearly every graveyard containing burials before 1920. There are relatively few comb graves in the eastern highland portion of White County, but elsewhere they are found atop the Cumberland Plateau, mostly to the western side of the plateau, rarely to the eastern side. (continued on page 16)

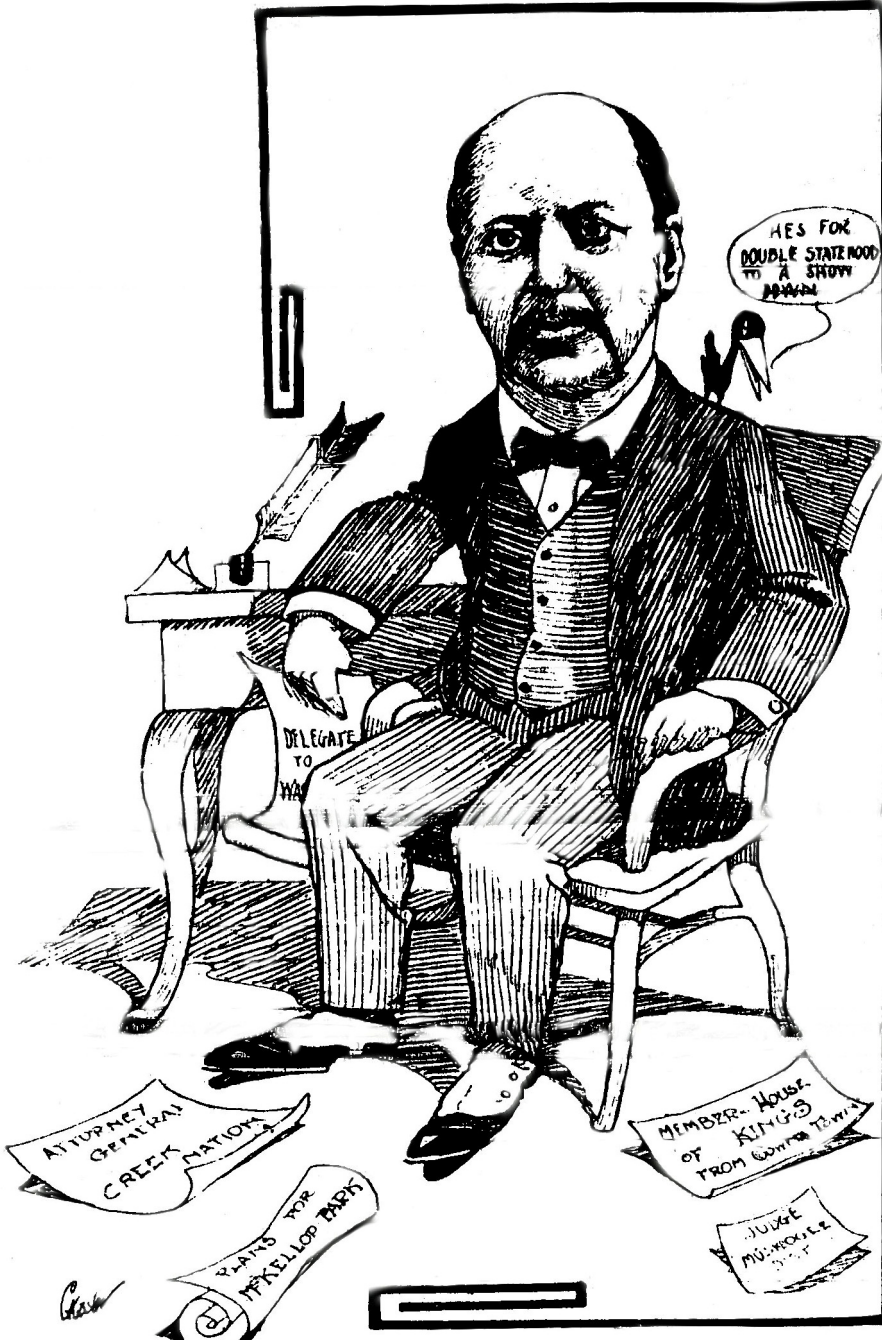
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Photograph of tent graves submitted by Karen Wagner, taken during a recent trip to the Tennessee area.



HON. A. P. M'KELLOP.

Mr. A. P. McKellop represents the highest type of the civilized Indian. He is a Creek by blood, educated, refined and a successful business man. His nation has honored him with many positions of trust and in every one of them he has made good. His home is one of the most beautiful in the city. He has a charming family and is identified with every movement which goes to make his people and the community better.



ABOUT THE ARTIST
Camillus Kessler
see the
December 2014 and
March 2015 issues.

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Editorial Omission: In the past issues of the MCGS Quarterly, articles have been included about Camillus Kessler and his sketches of the prominent men of Muskogee, short biographies. As the editor, I have failed in these presentation to give credit to The Three Rivers Museum, where the collection is preserved and to Karen Wagner and Barbara Downs for preparing same for these issues. My apologies, Nancy Lasater, Editor.

TULLAHASSEE SCHOOL WILL BE SOLD TODAY

The old Tullahassee Indian school buildings, the birthplace of Miss Alice M. Robertson, will be sold at public auction today in keeping with the announcement made by the Indian agency two weeks ago.

The sale will be in charge of Henry M. Tidwell, a field clerk of the department. It will take place on the grounds at 2 o'clock.

Creek freedmen petitioned the department some time ago to postpone the sale for some time in hopes that they might perfect some means to take over the buildings to be used in

the establishment of a university for negroes.

The department of the interior denied the request.

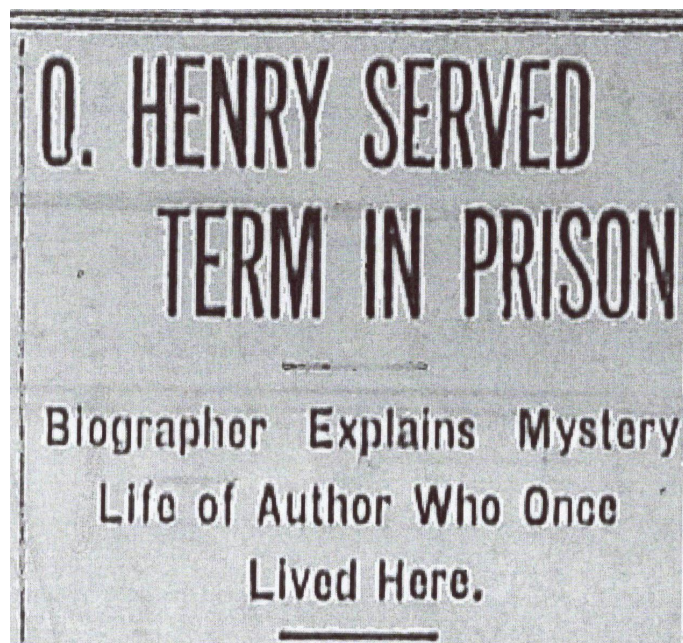
If people were as ready to make known that they are pleased about something as they are to make complaint, there would be more good will among men.—Albany Journal.

Some men like to be considered tightwads because of the implication that they have money when they haven't.—Houston Post.

We can strive to be better than some people, but we mustn't expect to excel most people in goodness.—Albany Journal.

Phoenix Want Ads Are Read.

This article found in a file for "Miss Alice" in the History and Genealogy Department at the Muskogee Public Library. Clipping was from the Muskogee Daily Phoenix newspaper, 16 Jan 1915, Page 5.



Originally published in the Muskogee Daily Phoenix. The full account of O. Henry's stay in Muskogee can be found in the November 15, 1916 issue, Page 10. A biography of O. Henry, aka William S. Porter follows on page 14 of this issue.

Austin. After a few years, however, he left the bank and founded the *Rolling Stone*, an unsuccessful humor weekly. Starting in 1895 he wrote a column for the *Houston Daily Post*.

Meanwhile, Porter was accused of embezzling funds dating back to his employment at the First National Bank. Leaving his wife and young daughter in Austin, Porter fled to New Orleans, then to Honduras, but soon returned due to his wife's deteriorating health. She died soon afterward, and in early 1898 Porter was found guilty of the banking charges and sentenced to five years in an Ohio prison.

From this low point in Porter's life, he began a remarkable comeback. Three years and about a dozen short stories later, he emerged from prison as "O. Henry" to help shield his true identity. He moved to New York City, where over the next ten years before his death in 1910, he published over 300 stories and gained worldwide acclaim as America's favorite short story writer.

O. Henry wrote with realistic detail based on his first hand experiences both in Texas and in New York City. In 1907, he published many of his Texas stories in *The Heart of the West*, a volume that includes "The Reformation of Calliope," "The Caballero's Way," and "The Hiding of Black Bill." Another highly acclaimed Texas writer, J. Frank Dobie, later referred to O. Henry's "Last of the Troubadours" as "the best range story in American fiction."

Porter died on June 5, 1910 in New York City at the age of forty seven. An alcoholic, he died virtually penniless.



Born William Sidney Porter, this master of short stories is much better known under his pen name "O. Henry." He was born September 11, 1862 in North Carolina, where he spent his childhood. His only formal education was received at the school of his Aunt Lina, where he developed a lifelong love of books. In his uncle's pharmacy, he became a licensed pharmacist and was also known for his sketches and cartoons of the townspeople of Greensboro.

At the age of twenty, Porter came to Texas primarily for health reasons, and worked on a sheep ranch and lived with the family of Richard M. Hall, whose family had close ties with the Porter family back in North Carolina. It was here that Porter gained a knowledge for ranch life that he later described in many of his short stories.

In 1884, Porter moved to Austin. For the next three years, where he roomed in the home of the Joseph Harrell family and held several jobs. It was during this time that Porter first used his pen name, O. Henry, said to be derived from his frequent calling of "Oh, 'Henry'" the family cat.

By 1887, Porter began working as a draftsman in the General Land Office, then headed by his old family friend, Richard Hall. In 1891 at the end of Hall's term at the Land Office, Porter resigned and became a teller with the First National Bank in

Austin. After a few years, however, he left the bank and founded the *Rolling Stone*, an unsuccessful humor weekly. Starting in 1895 he wrote a column for the *Houston Daily Post*.

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See also the webpage of the O. Henry Museum in Austin

Return to [Lone Star Junction](#) Home Page

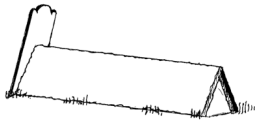
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Mayor of Muskogee 1904-1905



RUTHERFORD, S. MORTON, lawyer, Muskogee, born Lewisville, Ark., February 16, 1859; son of Robert Bealle and Sallie (Butler) Rutherford. Moved to Ft. Smith, Ark., immediately following the civil war. Was educated in public schools and graduated from law department of the Emory and Henry College of Emory, Va. Has lived in Muskogee for twenty years. Formerly lived at Atoka, Indian Territory. Is a Democrat, and served two years, 1895-97, as United States Marshal of Indian Territory under President Cleveland. Was Mayor of Muskogee in 1904 and 1905. Mason, Knight Templar, Shriner and a member of K. of P. and Odd Fellows. Married April 16, 1890, to Miss Sallie Dillard of Fort Smith. Four children: Helen K., S. Morton, Jr., and John D., grown; and Jane W., 16.

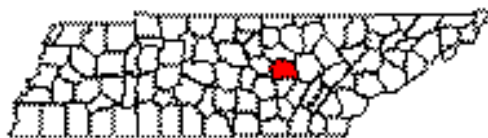
The Comb Grave (continued from page 11)



Old graves always settled to some degree, leaving a depression at the surface. Burial vaults were unknown, and coffins were hand-made of local wood. Eventually the coffin decomposed, allowing the soil above to subside. To compensate for this, the spoil left after the grave was filled could be heaped on top. A stone enclosure was fashioned to protect the grave with its spoil heap. Flat slabs of stone, usually sandstone but occasionally limestone, two to three inches thick were used, quarried from the Hartselle Formation, one of the strata of the plateau overlying its limestone foundation. Two triangular pieces were placed at the head and foot of the grave, forming the "gables" of the roof. Two rectangular slabs were then laid on the gables, overlapping at the "ridge" to form the roof. This enclosure was thus self-supporting, even after the spoil heap subsided. Occasionally the roof or gable slabs were inscribed with burial information, but more commonly a separate headstone was provided with the name and birth and death dates of the deceased.

The exact purpose of the grave cover is subject to speculation. It obviously served an aesthetic purpose. It may have been intended to prevent exhumation by dogs or wild animals, but a much simpler layer of stone would have served this purpose as well. It seems more likely that its function involved farm animals. In the days before power mowers, the easiest way to keep a cemetery mowed was to allow livestock to graze it. The cover protected the new grave from erosion by rain and by trampling. It prevented nuts from germinating on the grave. It also would have prevented livestock from becoming mired in the soft earth of the subsiding grave.

An excerpt from the forthcoming White County cemetery book.
in **The Past Finder**, Vol. IX, No. 3/July-September 2002, p 17
[Genealogical-Historical Society, White County](#), Tennessee
PO Box 721, Sparta TN 38583-0721



W.	FORT GIBSON NEWS.	
ono-	Special to The Phoenix.	
rie-	Fort Gibson, I. T., Feb. 10.—A	Dr. J
alk-	little child of J. L. Sandwirtz, a Jew	
	merchant, died here today, which	
	was the first Jewish death in the	
	town.	
aw-	John Bird, a Ft. Gibson citizen, is	
rs."	putting up ice on Ross Lake near	Ey
	town. It is about seven inches in	
	thickness. This is the first ice of	
R.	any thickness for fifteen years.	
	Hundreds of rabbits are being	
oss-	killed in this vicinity.	
	A. The Mammoth and the Mosquito	R

death

Clipped By:



ninnnac462

Tue, Oct 21, 2014



BIBLE MYSTERY?

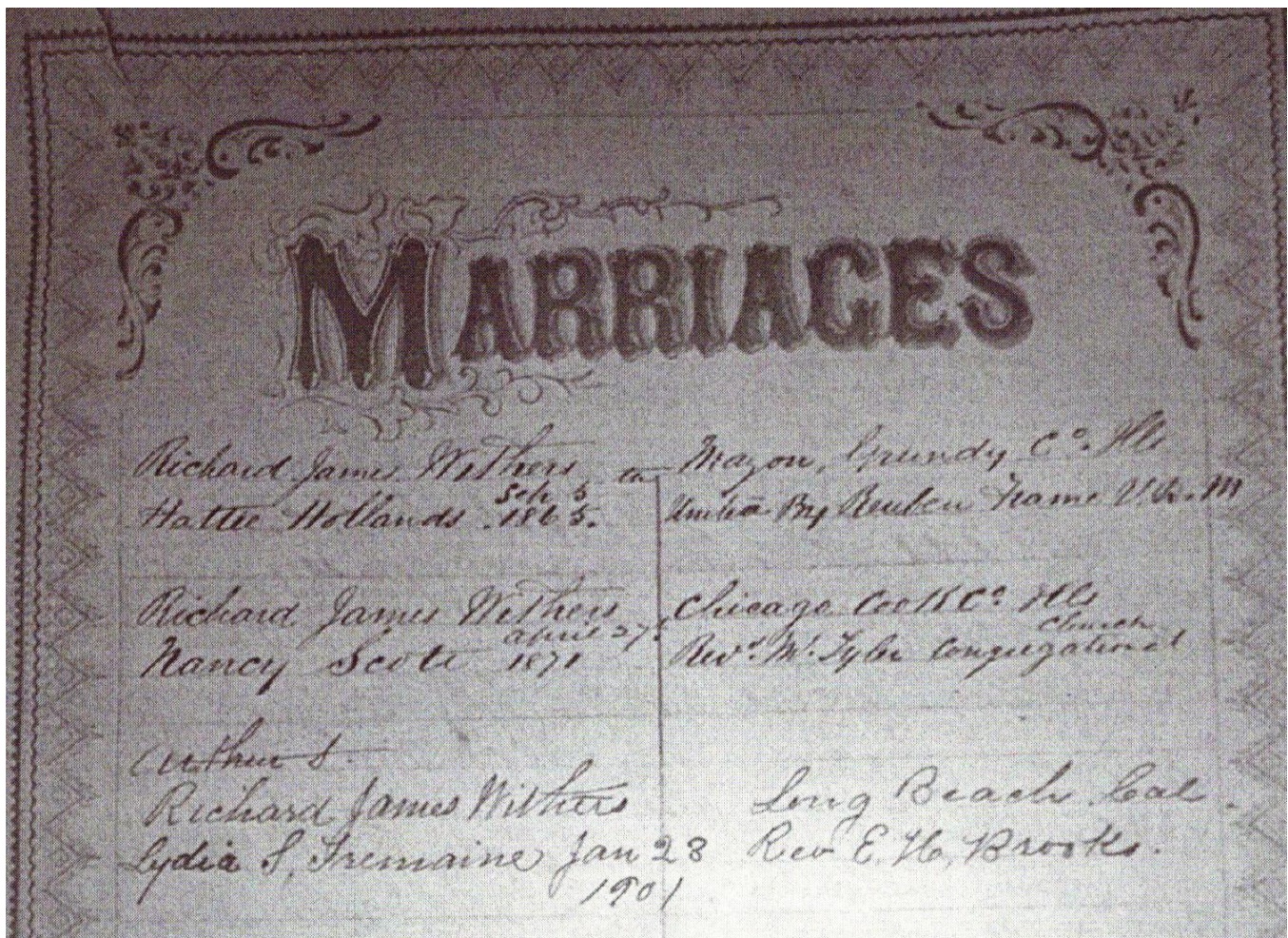
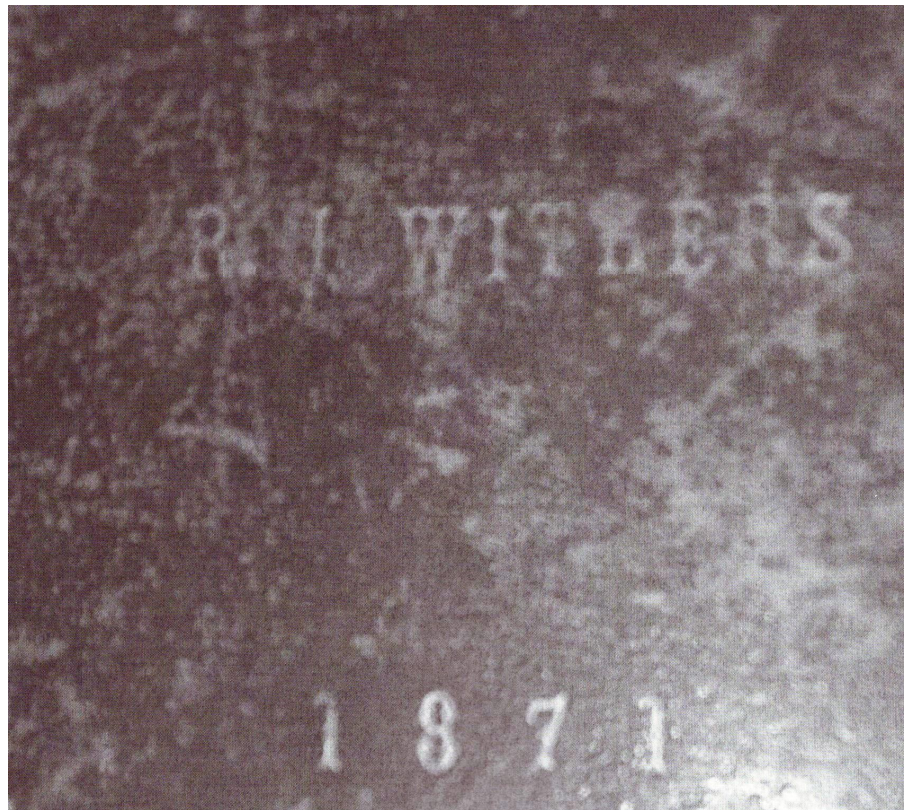
Recently a couple came into the library with this old Bible they had received from a relative who rescued it from items being thrown out of a home somewhere in Muskogee. They have asked our help in finding a family member to give this Bible to.

Shown here is the cover and pages that list deaths and marriages. The page that lists births did not photograph well and will be submitted at a later date.

If you have any information as to the whereabouts of any of this family, please contact the History and Genealogy Department at the Muskogee Public Library at 801 W. Okmulgee, Muskogee 74401 or email us at

muskogeehistory@eodls.org

Nancy Lasater, Editor



DEATHS

Hattie Hollands Withers
July 11th 1866. 11³⁰ p.m.

Aaron Withers

January 5th 1878

Lyndhurst England

Buried in Romsey Cemetery

aged 66 years.

Sarah Francis Withers
(Saunders)

Luzbon Romsey

Buried in the Fat & C

September 27th 1879

aged 73 years

Calla Scott Withers

May 2nd 1880

aged 6 weeks 5 days

Richard Scott Withers

Oct 12th 1883. 2 a.m.

aged 1 year.

William Ludlow

Scott June 9th 1879

aged 81 years 16 days

Boonville

Richard Melrose Withers

born at Luzborough July 9th 1855

Died at Woodbury July 27 1881

aged 26 years 8 days

Interred in family vault

in Romsey Church

Hancy Scott Withers March

2nd 1897 body cremated

Richard James Withers Junr.

Son of Arthur Withers Jan 13/01

William Aaron Withers Oct

14th 1901 died near Orleans bound at

Champaign Ill.

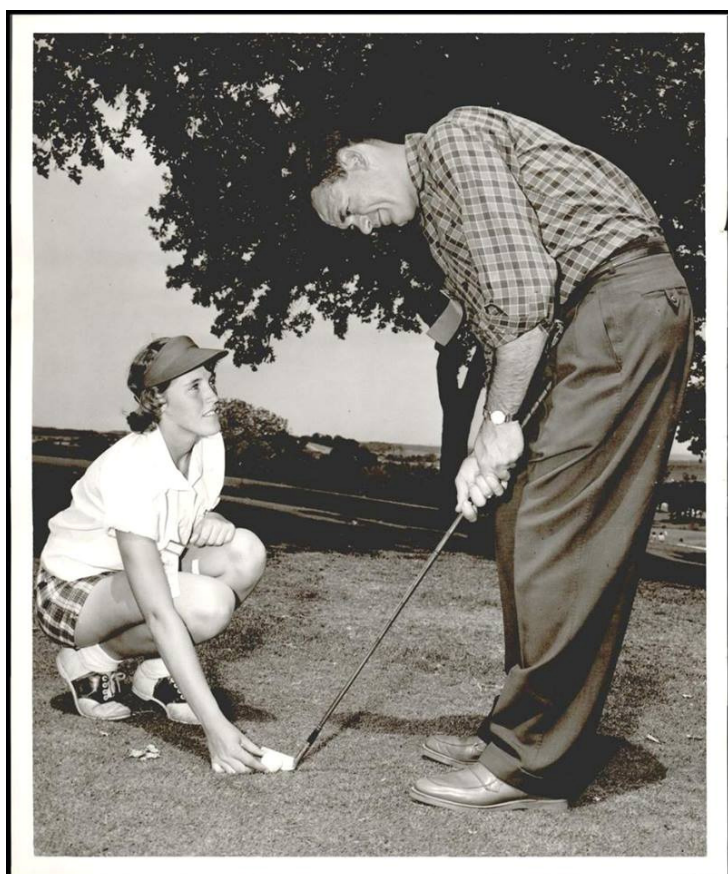
Wife of Arthur S Sep 9th 09

Richard James Withers

May 13th 1904 Los Angeles Cal

Cremated

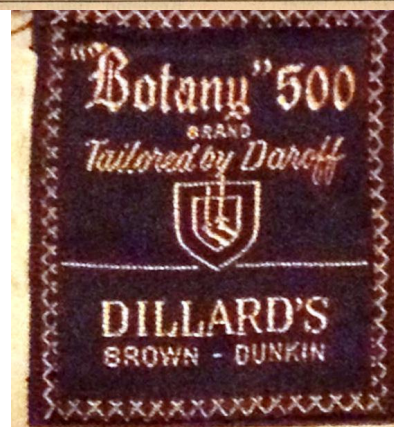
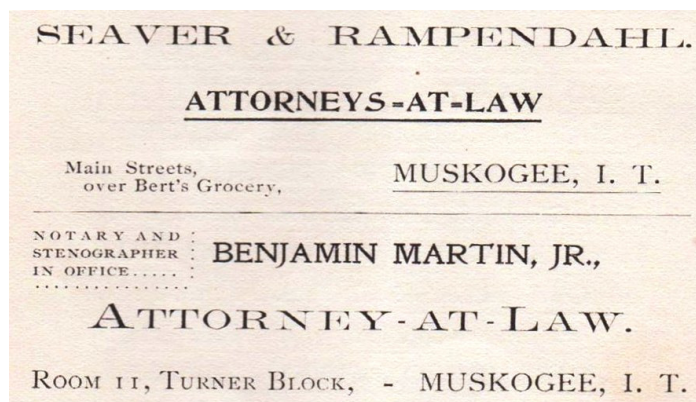
Muskogee People and Places



Beth Stone MCHS Class of 1958 with Johnny Everitt giving her some Golf Tips. This was in 1954 Muskogee Phoenix Paper



TEACHERS HONORED—Three Pershing Elementary School teachers who are retiring this year were honored by the school's Parent-Teachers Association unit at a tea in the school cafeteria. The teachers are, from left, Mrs. Gordon Mooney, retiring after 34 years; Mrs. Martha Lazenby, retiring after 42 years, and Mrs. Pearl Trippard, retiring after 43 years. (Staff Photo)



Muskogee County Genealogical Society meetings are held at 6:00 PM on the fourth Thursday of each month (except July and August) in the Grant Foreman room at the **Muskogee Public Library**, 801 West Okmulgee, Muskogee, OK. . The Board of Directors meetings are held the third Monday at 5:30 PM in the library's Genealogy and Local History department. All members are invited to attend the Board meetings. Our **Research, Membership Policy** and **Publication** information is outlined on our website www.muskogeecountygenealogicalsociety.org or you may write to us at: **Muskogee County Genealogical Society**, c/o Muskogee Public Library, 801 West Okmulgee, Muskogee, OK 74401. Email us at: mucogeso@yahoo.com