





The Oklahoma Folklore Collection
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Metropolitan Library System
in the late 1940's and early 1950's
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memories, and songs that make up
Oklahoma's rich folk tradition.

One of the most popular destinations on your Metropolitan Library System's website, www. metrolibrary.org, is the Oklahoma Images section. This is where we get the photos that inspire Larry Johnson's monthly "Oklahoma Images" articles.

But there's another area on our website that is of interest to readers of "Oklahoma Images," and that's the Oklahoma Folklore Collection. There, hundreds of Oklahoma memories are available.

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MLS Researcher Stuart Williamson worked with the Folklore Collection as his contribution to Oklahoma's centennial celebration.

"Clarence Paine, who was an avid historian and director of the library system in the late 1940s, contacted Bob Duncan, a radio folk singer and song writer, and they collected folklore from around the state," Williamson said.

"In the early 1980s," Williamson added, "the Inasmuch Foundation looked for a special project with which they could help the library and it was decided to try to get the collection online by Oklahoma's centennial year. Librarian Larry Johnson, who has since published the book 'Historic Photos of Oklahoma City,' cataloged the photo collection, which had never been done before, and put everyone online at our website."

Some of the most interesting pieces in the collection are the cowboy songs that were written by range riders and homesteaders and have never been professionally printed or recorded.

"Right after our wedding we started homesteading,
And raising the golden grain,
But then this young lassie got wicked and sassy
And traded our sunshine for rain.
Now I'm an old father with children to bother,
And still I sing this refrain.
The years they keep dragging and the missus keeps nagging
And I wish I was back on the range."

The person who submitted this lyric said of it that it "was written in Texas by a cowpoke who seemed to be in trouble with the law, and that's about the only history I know of."

And how can anyone fail to heed good old Oklahoma country advice like this:

"I'm a good old honest farmer and I just came to town—
Raised three bales of cotton that I saved the whole year round.
Oh, I put my team in the wagon yard, went out to get same gin,
Went out to see them electric lights and to watch them cars come inAnd it's listen to me Farmers, I'm here to talk you sense,
If you want to see them electric lights, look right over the fence.
Don't you monkey with those City Ducks for they are slick as lardIt's best go out in the day time, but at night stay in the yard."

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Out in western Texas, where the Clear Fork's waters flow, the cattle are a-browsin' and That old the spanish ponties grow; the porthers come a That wait that strip; beyond the prairie down

as the trainer dogs are sneezing as the the prairie dogs are sneezing as the they had the grip; here the coyotes come x-howing the round the ranches after dock, the lovely medder lark; and the possum and the badger the monstrous at the monstrou