

IN MEMORIAM

William E. Baker
(1877-1957)

William E. Baker was born near Sheridan, Indiana, on August 6, 1877. His family migrated to Wichita, Kansas, in the fall of 1880, making the trip in a covered wagon. In the spring of 1890, when he was twelve years old, the family moved to Oklahoma where they homesteaded near Guthrie. On the evening of September 22, 1957, he died of a heart attack at his home in Boise City.

An education when he was young was difficult to obtain. He attended grade school from four to seven months each of the years between 1884 and 1896, and high school two months in 1896. In order to be near Oklahoma A. and M. College (now Oklahoma State University) where high school preparatory courses were available, he moved to a farm near Perkins. In addition to his high school work he attended many short courses in animal husbandry.

He was married on April 6, 1898, to Delcy R. Cox whom he credited with being responsible for his many accomplishments. He derived great satisfaction from rearing, with the help of his wife, six children and providing each one with a college education. In addition to his children he is survived by his wife, fourteen grandchildren, and thirteen great-grandchildren.

Mr. Baker was the author of many articles published in various magazines and papers. At the time of his death, a book which he had written was being published and another of which he was senior author was nearing completion.

Among the many awards he received during the latter years of his life was the Epsilon Sigma Phi honorary extension fraternity award, 1954, in recognition of his long service to the State of Oklahoma. In 1952 he received the Distinguished Service Citation for Achievement which is the highest honor that is bestowed by the University of Oklahoma.

His greatest hobby was archaeology. He was particularly interested in the early Indian habitation of the Great Plains area. His collecting and studies, which extended over a period of twenty-five years, resulted in the classification and cataloguing of over one thousand select flint artifacts and the accumulating of over nine thousand more. He was always willing to contribute his time both in conducting field trips and giving talks on his studies and explorations. Much of his time after his retirement was devoted to classifying the artifacts he had obtained by extensive field work earlier in his life.

Uncle Bill, as he was known in his community and to the archaeologists of Oklahoma, will long be remembered for the many public services rendered to the people of Cimarron County and for his contributions to Oklahoma archaeology.

A. N. Murray