

**ANNA
CATHARINE
TRAINOR
1872-1939**



**A WOMAN
OF BEAUTY
AND
CHARM**

Oklahoma Statehood started at nine o'clock Eastern Time on November 16, 1907 when President Theodore Roosevelt signed the proclamation announcing "Oklahoma is a state." Roosevelt was disappointed with the September 16th election results in which Charles Haskell defeated his friend, Territorial Governor Frank Frantz.

The inauguration celebration began on a warm sunny day on the Carnegie Library steps in Guthrie, the capital of the new state. Citizens of the Twin Territories traveled for days to be on hand for the birth of the 46th state. The newspapers reported that the crowd of 35,000 was good-natured and happy. When the telegram arrived from Washington at the local newspaper office, the news was announced with a gunshot. The crowd erupted in cheers, bands began to play, bells rang, whistles blew and the party was underway.

At ten o'clock, Governor-elect Charles Haskell of Muskogee took the oath of office. Following the declaration of statehood, a mock wedding began. Oklahoma City businessman and former mayor Charles Gashman Jones, dressed in formal, striped trousers and black waist coat with a high collar tie, portrayed Mr. Oklahoma Territory. Anna Trainor Bennett of Muskogee, wearing a stylish, floor-length lavender satin dress featuring long sleeves and a high collar, a large picture hat, and gloves, portrayed Miss Indian Territory.

Anna Catharine Trainor was born in 1872 in Tahlequah. Her Irish father was an adopted Cherokee Nation citizen and her Cherokee mother was a Confederate courier during the Civil War. Anna attended Tahlequah's Cherokee Female Seminary, Muskogee's Harrell Institute and taught school before she married Albert Pike Stidham, son of the Creek Nation Chief Justice, in 1891. In 1894, he was committed to a Missouri state hospital.

In 1895, Anna married Dr. Leo Bennett, founder of the Muskogee Phoenix in 1888, who served as Indian Agent and later United States Marshal as well as mayor of Muskogee. During their marriage, the couple often traveled to Washington where they visited President McKinley, who greatly admired Anna for her beauty, amiable disposition and charming manner. Bennett died in May 1917 on a short visit to Texas.

In 1919 Anna married Warren Butz, chief deputy clerk of the Federal Courts in Muskogee. Butz died in 1930 at age 59. In 1932, Trainor returned to Guthrie, to again play Miss Indian Territory at the 25th anniversary statehood celebration. She married for the last time in 1935 to childhood sweetheart Mark Matheson, who died a year later.

In August 1939, Anna Trainor, a descendant of prominent Cherokees and a graduate of elite Indian Territory schools, died unexpectedly in Muskogee. Local historian Carolyn Foreman wrote, "A devoted wife and home-maker, she also possessed great executive ability. The orphan children she cared for and her war work testify to her humanitarian interests. In addition to her beauty she had unusual charm and she was never heard to make unkind remarks of other people. She met life with a smile in spite of troubles that would have overcome most people."