

**SERIES 1 - TRAVEL  
JOURNAL ENTRIES,**

**BOX 1 FOLDER 18**

**“TEXAS AND THE  
GULF.  
HOT SPRINGS AND  
PLATT NATIONAL  
PARK”  
1923**

Nov. 22. The day of days again. We  
start for Texas and the Gulf. It  
was gray and frosty when we started  
from home this morning at seven o'  
clock. We were out of the city limits  
and going east towards Nebraska City  
when the sun came up tinting and  
yellow. We had perfect roads to Nebr.  
Nebraska City, not so well graded to  
St. Matthews, Kans. Here we had our  
noon day lunch and it was cold  
eating out. But we are a hundred  
miles from home, over the state  
line, and game! Grayen and more  
gray all the afternoon as we  
motored along towards Topeka. So  
the south more and more rainy as  
evening came. But we made  
Camp No. 1 on the out skirts of  
Topeka, under an amusement pavilion  
at Garfield Park. It was wading in  
dust, but out of the wind and in  
case of rain dry. We are 200  
miles en route. And we feel smart  
defying the cold and camping!

Nov. 23. En route. Kansas.

We have had a good day  
motoring in spite of the gloomy  
out look this morning. It was  
raining when we drove down  
into Topeka, but by the  
time we were ready to go on our  
way at ten o'clock, after seeing a

little of Kansas' state capital, the sun was out and skies clear. And the sunshine made the day so much warmer. The topography of the country did not differ from Nebraska greatly until mid-afternoon when we came to scattered oil wells and open prairie cut up by criss-cross roads. We drove until six o'clock making our camp No. 2 at a school house grounds near Eril, Kans. about 50 miles from the Oklahoma line. A pleasant camp, not so cold, and a glorious full moon.

Nov. 24. En route. Oklahoma.

motoring along. Oklahoma, and some welcome signs of the South: more and more colored folk in all these shabby villages, fields of cotton, and a soft warm wind. We ate our noon day lunch in a little tourist kitchen and could not make our selves believe that the wind whistling thru the screen wasn't cold! We had very poor roads all the afternoon, and made such poor time that we gave up the hope of reaching Muskogee by night. We made camp No. 3 at the farm of Waggoner, some twenty miles from Muskogee.

Nov. 25. Sunday: En route.

Awoke at 5:30 and enjoyed the lovely reds of a cloudy sunrise! We were off early for a long and difficult day of motoring. For the high hopes of the morning vanished some times for the motorist! Hardly out of the village we were in a big mud hole and were two hours getting out. The rest of the morning we were de-touring around so that we did not reach Muskogee, Okla. until noon, and the day had turned gray and rainy. But our troubles had hardly begun. We were to need the good dinner we got in Muskogee to help bear the trials of the afternoon, for leaving the pavement twenty miles out of Muskogee, we fought mud-holes for 4 miles to Ft. Smith, Arkansas, on the Okl.-Ark. boundary line. "Bride" and I would walk while Edward ploughed the car thru great bottomless mud-holes, floundering and the mud flying. Then all on a sudden a stretch of rutted road and another mud-hole. Never have we made a longer stretch of impassable roads. The day gray, misty, and threatening rain did not help our dejected spirits. But there was



We had long miles of rutted roads and stretches of pavement alternately all the way to Little Rock. We arrived late afternoon and made Camp (No. 6) at once at the City Park. The evening papers promise colder weather. Well, there are compensations in such a rugged, winter jaunt: we are saved from becoming the "Average Person", that most commonplace individual.

Nov. 24. Little Rock, Ark.

Little Rock is the capital and the largest city in Arkansas. It has a population of less than 50,000, but plenty of life and go. It is an education of center and an important commercial market. A large part of its trade is in connection with the cotton industry. It derived its name from certain points of rock on the river. We spent the day "seeing" the town. Had our luncheon down town. Bought a beautiful piece of Wilcox pottery. It has leaked like rain all day, and was just beginning to sprinkle when we reached camp at five o'clock. We are going to have a cold evening and must go to bed early to keep warm.

Nov. 29. Shanks giving way: And here in our camp at the city park here in Little Rock. A gray and rainy day. Had a good breakfast. Then I wrote all the forenoon, while Edward read. We had our dinner down town - not at 2444 Park Ave. dinner - but it must do. Then we went for a drive. Came back to our camp and wrote a letter home and to Sarah and John. - - - - So the gray Shanks giving way has gone, en route, off trail, at Little Rock, Arkansas.

Nov. 30. Stat Springs National Park. We had but a day for Stat Springs. But the stars that were shining last night before we went to bed fulfilled their promise of clear weather, and gave us a golden day, warm as summer. We left for Stat Springs, a ride of nearly 60 miles, by seven o'clock, a winding wooded road thru the Ozarks, and arrived in time for a full day seeing our 9th national park. The city of Stat Springs has a regular population of less than 14,000 but boasts more than 250,000 visitors annually. Balcony hotels line one side of its long, winding main street. The reservation which comprises the village constitutes Stat Springs National

Gate and is our oldest national park. Forty years before the wonders of the Yellowstone first inspired Congress with the idea that scenery was a national asset deserving of preservation, our government appreciated the creative power of the waters of this region, and in 1832 set aside a reservation which included three mountains, a lake, and enclosed all the 46 hot springs. - - - - - We first visited Fountain Lake and Arbordale Springs about which has been built a pretty amusement park. After luncheon we made the drive up Stat Spring Mountain to the tower where there is a wide panoramic view of the city lying in a valley and straggling off into the wooded slopes of the Ozarks. It is a pretty country and reminded us of the mountains of the East: gentle slopes, hard wood trees and the green cedars. There are 15 miles of wooded drive thru these hills. - - - - - In a day one may gain a fairly comprehensive idea of Stat Springs but it would be pleasant to stay much longer, not to see more of the place, but rather more of the visitors - the multitude of folks here to take the waters! - - - - - The drive back to Little Rock seemed long, we were so tired, but it was nice to make camp No 7 at our old camp site in the City Gate.

Dec. 1. En route.

We start South in dead earnest. A long day's motoring brought us to camp (No. 4) some 15 or 20 miles from the Arkansas - Louisiana State line. This is our very first really warm out-door life. I will sit outside our tent door. Equally is stretched before a camp fire. The frogs are singing. We had miles of pavement all the afternoon and made up time lost this morning over worn and rutted roads. We are getting into the South land for villages swarm with colored folks and pickaninnies roll their eyes at us from every door way. We are less than a 100 miles from Vicksburg, Mississippi. So we dream and talk about a camp fire on a December evening, while it snows and blows in Nebraska - may be.

Dec. 2. Sunday: En route.

Waiting for the ferry to take us across the Mississippi at Vicksburg. (2 P. M.) A long detour off newly panned roads took a lot of time this morning, so we have rambled along not stopping for dinner. It is spitting rain again, after a rather rainy night. But here on hard-surfaced roads one does not mind rain. So we are to eat our dinner in Vicksburg, Mississippi.



Evening: Camp No. 9. called a "Private Soviet Camp" in a corner of the Vicksburg National Cemetery, is proving too cosmopolitan. We like best a camp by ourselves away from all these "jerk falls". But the time we got across the wide gray waters of the Mississippi, had dinner at a cafe, saw a bit of Vicksburg main street lying at a steep elevation parallel with the river, the rain was bringing an early twilight and we were off to find a camp. This camp seemed the thing off hand. Anyway are only camps one in the Vicksburg National Cemetery. And we reach a little camp in the East, not far from Bell'sburg! And it was late summer. So - night it rains softly. We would call it a "warm spring rain".

Dec. 3. Vicksburg and Jackson, Miss.  
"So this is Sander" - Mississippi - it does not matter: the true traveller is supposed to be astonished, if he is not, he misses all the joy of the unfamiliar. This is Mississippi to-day in a gray drizzling rain, a thick fog hiding its wooded landscape and winding, yellow roads, and a warm balmy air. We crowded the day full to the very bursting point, for perhaps we shall not pass this way again:

Saw a bit of Vicksburg National Cemetery, but only a glimpse for it covers 1322 acres with more than 32 miles of winding road thru deep wooded rivers and rugged bluffs along the Mississippi River. It is a beautiful park, but quite unkept, for cattle graze everywhere among its beautiful monuments and tablets. - - - - - Leaving Vicksburg we had 50 miles of sandy road to Jackson, a relief after all the evil prophecies abroad last night. (One of the numerous curses attending all "Soviet camps" is a tale of horror prophesied for the roads the next day.) One must learn not to listen. - - - - - The old city of Jackson - still a very small city of 32,000, straggles out a long main street and meets at one end the old capital of 1839 in which three famous assemblies have been held - the Secession, the Black and Tan, and the Constitutional Convention. There also Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederacy, made his last speech. We had our dinner and traversed its commercial center, saw the new capital building, and left town late afternoon. Some 35 miles brought us to Camp No. 10, a quiet camp behind a church well off the high way. It still rains softly.



Dec. 4. En route.

A rainy day following yellow winding roads thru the forests of southern Mississippi, a gray, wet day. We made a late start not knowing for a while whether we could go at all. But between showers we pulled camp and were off. We had sanded roads and but one mud hole over a short detour. Dinner in a most impossible little village. I shall remember nothing about it but a crowd of dirty, idle men teasing a helpless opessum. These country towns of the South! Skies seem to be clearing this afternoon while it grows colder. We want to make the Louisiana line.

Evening: Camp No. 11. Kentwood, La.

"Whether we were shot at or not shot at, that is the question."

We had had supper and stood about our little table, Edward wiping the dishes as I washed them, when a shot shattered the wind shield to pieces. In the darkness we could only determine that we were in hurt and let it go at that. I suppose one who sets out to camp over the entire A. S. A. should be willing to be shot at once. So this straggling village in Louisiana claims the distinction. It will be a fine story to tell but no body will believe it, really and truly.

Dec. 5. Camp on the shore of Lake Bonchartrain in the village of Madisonville, Louisiana. Camp No. 12. Out of Kentwood late after getting a tire fixed, we followed a good highway to Stammond where we had dinner, then on to Madisonville where we must await the ferry for New Orleans until tomorrow at 2:30. We are in the South: Before our camp door are several mammoth trees - gray beards, I call them - Spanish moss streaming from their great bows. Gardens are growing. There are white shell roads. Wild palms and every-where logs and trees growing in swamps. A new December world.

Dec. 6. On board Auto ferry "Ozone" crossing Lake Bonchartrain.

The wide expanse of water and the "chug", "chug" of the boat as I write. We have a three hour trip, will not reach New Orleans until after six o'clock. We spent the morning getting civilized enough to enter a big city, dressed up, and the dirt of five states washed off the car. A fine bright morning for the clean up. Then a little wait for the ferry. So we are getting near to New Orleans as evening is coming and the sun going down in the west across the water.

Later: Some where in New Orleans.  
The little gods must have led us  
to Camp No. 13. in a far corner  
in Audubon Park, where a derisive  
night watchman said we might pitch  
our camp. I am not quite sure  
how we found it after dark follow-  
ing strange city streets, but we did  
and set our tent under a shelter roof.

### Dec. 7. New Orleans, Louisiana.

Was the day to be as fair as the  
morning light lifting a fog from huge  
trees hung with Spanish moss? ---  
New Orleans has a population of nearly  
400,000, and is the largest city of  
Louisiana. It is situated on the banks  
of the Mississippi, 110 miles from its  
mouth. It has a harbor frontage of  
41 miles and is a sort of world com-  
merce. The city lies but eight feet  
above the level of the Gulf of Mexico.  
~~It is protected from overflows of the~~  
~~Mississippi by levees.~~ It derives its  
name "Crescent City" from the curve  
of the river along which it first built.  
Canal Street, 200 feet wide, is the  
great business thoroughfare and is the  
dividing line between the old French  
or Creole quarter and the new American  
section. We visited the old French  
quarter first. This part of the city  
lies below Canal Street and is much  
more interesting and picturesque than the

new and more modern American section.  
Old New Orleans is the embryo city  
of the old French and Spanish days.  
There are building more than two  
centuries old and an atmosphere quite  
unlike the bustle above Canal Street.  
Stores stand well to the front with  
closed courtyards. We stopped first  
at Jackson Square which was once  
the exact center of the river front of  
old New Orleans. On the center stands  
the hero's statue. It is faced by  
the Cathedral, ~~Cathedral of Baseline of~~  
~~Spanish domination.~~ The old square,  
surveyed in 1716 has been the scene  
of countless public gatherings of historic  
interest, from the days of Spanish  
occupation, from the cession back to  
France by Spain, and from France to  
the United States. The Jackson was  
crowned with laurels, the Lafayette  
was welcomed to the Crescent City,  
and here the American flag of 15  
stars was unfurled in 1803. Across  
the street is the old St. Louis cathedral,  
one of the most widely known churches  
in the United States. ~~The Cathedral now~~  
~~contains the Louisiana state museum.~~  
~~The Baseline is used as a museum~~  
~~of natural history.~~ We will next  
take then the old French market,  
where one can scarcely realize he  
is in an American city. Then followed  
many miles of old streets, lined with

old historic building: convents of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, fort ancient fortifications, and old plantations, and cemeteries where the dead lie in vaults, ~~crypts~~, and ~~altars~~. So the tourist finally forces from the old world to the new: up St. Charles avenue with its palatial homes, its old and new aristocracy. Passed Tulane University and Loyola university, a Jesuit school and the Audubon Park. New Orleans boasts of 906 acres in public parks. Audubon claims 249 acres. ~~Finally found the beautiful Metairie Cemetery, again on W. St. Charles Avenue~~, around the Lee Circle, and we were on Canal Street, and our tour of the old city was over. We were ready for our luncheon. The afternoon we spent in the shopping district, gay with Christmas colors. - - - - - We returned to our old camp site, dead tired, got the tent up when along came a motor car and sent us out of Camp No. 13. Argument availed not, we pulled camp and left New Orleans in a hurry. Ferried across the river, drove some 16 miles out, where a kindly dis- faced family let us camp in their drive way. Night was upon us soon. Our heads spin with all the varied excitement of the day, sudden expulsion from the city and the search for Camp No. 14. Good-bye New Orleans.

Dec. 8. En route. Louisiana.

An interesting route following the Old Spanish Trail westward from New Orleans. Sanded roads and so warm as summer. And everywhere new and interesting sights: Sugar plantations, with their numerous cabins and stately manor houses, great sugar refineries. For miles we followed canals up which barges were carrying the cane to these refineries. Hundreds of negroes, both men and women, were at work in the fields with their long knives, stripping the cane. Every person we met carried a stick or two and sucked the sweet sugar from the stalk. Plantation life is vastly interesting to the northerner who misses no rights around "the open cabin door". The scenery along the deep-water Bayous and rivers is most foreign. Semi-tropical trees hang with Spanish moss and water-lily acanthus grow so profusely that they clog the streams. One shuts his eyes and half believes he is in Iceland. We made good time over sanded roads and made Camp No. 15 in a park at Lafayette, its long thick grass an excellent rendezvous for snakes.

Dec. 9. Sunday: En route. Old Spanish Trail.

The motorist after comes to his evening camp after a long day of

such varied experiences and complexity of emotion, that it is some times difficult to recall the place he started from in the morning. The "Blue Book" says we are traversing a rich and well cultivated country - the southern oil, rice and lumber belt, but to us the day's trail lacked all the romantic environment of yesterday. It is a flat uninteresting country. From Granville, thru Jennings - where we had luncheon - Wells, Lake Charles - a little more pretentious village - we thought of the "Loggitt Plan". Perhaps the gray day added to the unimpressing appearance of the country. Late in the afternoon we began to worry about the swamps ahead and a seven mile detour where the highway is under construction. We arrived at 3:30. A government tractor was taking cars thru but the last tractor for the day had gone. We finally hired a man to direct us and started out. For three miles one zig zagged thru the swamps - either avoids or ploughs the great bogs - for the whole place is an oil swamp in a forest. But we got thru some how, and arrived at a ferry landing about six o'clock. The day had been long, very so any farther? The place seemed not such an undesirable camp site, when a family of Stilian began to reveal local color.

the dog had been bitten that morning by a rattlesnake "as big as your arm"; the bogs are full of alligators, one was killed last summer seven feet long "after eating up all the figs"; water moccasins fill the streams! That settled it: we could scarcely afford to miss camping at a place that offered these unusual features. Looking over the gray twilight landscape we sensed none of these terrors, none at least but a big black bull going about making a low menacing noise. I immediately concentrated on the bull, the bull was real, immediate, less foreign than water moccasins and alligators. We would keep an eye on the bull! So we set up camp No. 16 to await the ferry in the morning to carry us across the Sabine river and out of the state of Louisiana.

#### Dec. 10. En route towards Houston.

We were very much alive this morning and none the worse for semi-tropical terrors that infest these swamps. From the ferry that carried us four or five miles down a canal thru the swamps, we again ferried, across the Sabine River, and were over the boundary line into Texas, and set off for a long day's motoring, hoping it would bring us to an evening's camp on the out-



skirts of Stouster, Texas. But badly rutted highway over old worn out shell roads made the destination out of the question, and we camp to-night at Liberty, a small Texas village, still nearly 50 miles from Stouster. This is Camp No. 17 here in the village square. Texas papers report colder weather.

Dec. 11. In and out of Stouster and to Salveston, Texas.

A day full of interest: these new cities that we see "en route" always mean a day crammed to the bursting point. We arrived in Stouster in a drizzle of rain, exactly noon. We had our dinner and enjoyed the down town section for a couple of hours - there was nothing I was particularly interested in in Stouster. A growing town of 160,000, chiefly a rail road and a manufacturing center, the call to Salveston on the Gulf was much more urgent. We left at three for a fifty mile drive straight south to the Gulf. We arrived in a dense fog, the city lights glimmering in a wet mist from a high running sea. We found our way to the City Camp, where we rented a nice cabin away from a wind we could not believe was not cold, and rejoiced at the "in-door" feeling, while we listened all evening to the sea pounding at the Sea Wall less

than a quarter of a block away. Stou 9000 is a house!

Dec. 12. Seeing Salveston all morning was interesting but not to be compared to the thrill one experiences when he sees his car sinking in the surf and the tide coming in! We will remember our ride on Salveston Beach, when this afternoon we foolishly stopped for a minute to take a picture and the car began to sink. We worked wildly, frantically but the tide was coming in so fast! I ran about for drift wood, while "Steve" "jacked up", and the water drew in each time higher, leaving the wheels deeper in. Five miles out and still not a car coming! Each time we tried to start, the wheels would spin and sink lower, until now the front wheels had to be lifted, too. I was running way up on the beach for more drift - anything! When I saw a car in the distance. I began to wave a handkerchief. So we were given a lift and hauled up onto the beach. It only gets to show that we are born-fed Nebraskans, and any indulgence in water sport is hazardous. We are children of the prairie, we keep our water in a bath tub. - - - - Salveston has a population of less

than 60,000. It is situated on an island in the Gulf of Mexico, its principal characteristics are port facilities and pleasure resort features. Its streets are broad and lined with magnolias, ~~alibonias~~, and sub-tropical plants. Boulevards are in full and gardens growing. But one corner to see the Gulf - even though he may mire down on the "straightaway beach" - and the famous sea wall, which protects the city of Galveston from a repetition of the disaster of 1900.

Dec. 13. A day in doors while it rains. I wrote all day - got off some 40 cards wishing every body "A very Christmas." We have been on the trail three weeks to-day. Our little cabin is damp and cold. These Texas folks look for a "nother".

Dec. 14. En route Texas.

With clear skies this morning we determined to go on our way. It took until after ten to repack the car, but a better highway back to Houston brought us there in time for dinner. We then sought the Auto Club for routing us farther and found that recent rains made a trip to San Antonio and Corpus Christi impossible at present. We had best hold north towards Dallas. That means

we are starting home! We rode 40 miles out, where as I mile Edward is setting up Camp No. 16. I am too disappointed to put it down in black and white to-night!

Dec. 15. En route Texas. Meridian Road. We have come to this pretty winter woods off the highway to make Camp No. 19, and a colored gentle man assured us not only that we are welcome but that the community is respectable. We did but 75 miles to-day of rutted roads, barely passable in many places. The recent rains <sup>have</sup> made fearful holes and deep ~~clashes~~ <sup>clashes</sup>. Many such places merely a matter of neglect. And so far Texas is wooded and rolling and not in the least like the Texas of my imagination. But the villages are far apart, and are sufficiently abominable to meet every demand of the most fertile imagination. And it is cold. Froze a thin ice last night and to-night it is windy and pretty cold for southern Texas.

Dec. 16. Sunday: End of day. I find it very convenient to write up my diary in the car while Edward puts up the tent. We have arrived at Waco, Texas, a cotton city of 50,000 or less. We will try to see a bit of it before we go on in the morning.



We had a fair day to-day our roads that a few days ago would have been impassable. We are setting up Camp No. 20 on the banks of the Brazos River, in a tiny tourist camp.

Later: This is an ideal tourist camp: train rumble by, street car clang, automobiles break, dogs bark and fight, babies cry, small boys yell, women chatter, new stake tents, and little Ford cars shivering in and full to gills. . . . . When the fire department went by, I felt the situation was congested. Nothing but a riot could have broken our camp at Waco, Texas.

Dec. 17. From Waco to Ft. Worth, Texas: 93 miles of hard-surfaced road, with one detour such as only this country can furnish, was the day's program. We had a glimpse of Ft. Worth before we found the tourist camp and set up No. 21. We found Ft. Worth a wide awake city. From a military post in 1849 it has grown to a city of a hundred thousand, an important rail road and commercial center. There are big towns here in the South West. . . . . This is a very pleasant park, big trees, and plenty room. When shall I sit out doors at a camp while reading again on a Waco night?

Dec. 18. A day in Dallas.

I have wanted to "spend a day in Dallas" for a long time, very hardly know! There is nothing particularly new or striking in these Texas cities of a hundred thousand. They boast skyscrapers, some excellent parks, avenues of new bungalows, mansions of the new rich (oil kings) and of the older wealth of the great cattle days now passing in the Southwest. In tradition they lack the color and romanticism that surrounds places like San Antonio. From military or trading post in the pioneer days they have grown from village to city. The recent oil development added to the growth in the cotton industry has brought them a permanent prosperity, and both Dallas and Ft. Worth bid fair to be real cities while our home village still sleeps surrounded by fair Nebraska fields. . . . . So the gods gave me a day in Dallas. We fastidiously shopped. Bought a few gifts. Finally strayed into an art shop where we picked up a tiny canvas of "Texas blue-bonnet" an only picture so far on this trail. We had lots of fun in Dallas! Left in a gray drizzle of rain, rode 33 miles out our hard surfaced roads, and made Camp No. 22 at a wooded tourist camp

of Mr. Kinney, where the keeper "hoped I would say something nice about him" when I registered!

Dec. 19. En route.

We set out from a flooded camp this morning towards the Texas state line. Welcome sunshine over water soaked cotton fields, but the bright day made 50 miles of rutted, slippery roads easier. We had to have a tire fixed at Wesson, so decided to turn in early to make our last Texas camp (No 23.) here on the boundary line.

Dec. 20. En route. Oklahoma.

The big question: Oklahoma roads? We knew this morning that a good beginning was a bad end. We had 50 miles of good roads before lunch. At Sisemang the tinors of the roads began. For 36 miles we fought mud holes all the way to Sulphur. Our when we arrived and set up camp No. 24 in Blatt National Park, I was too happy to care. One must expect to pay to see all the national parks in the U.S. A. Little Blatt National was long ago an ancient sitting place of the Indian. It contains 846 acres of wooded, hilly country, a number of mineral springs, and boasts as yet of but meager improvement. In summer

it must be a pretty place. This evening I shut my eyes to roads and rejoice in an 10<sup>th</sup> national park!

Dec. 21. En route. Oklahoma. Oklahoma-Texas. Sulphur Highway.

A year of motor-camping over the U.S. must bring black days. 30-day was a black day. We came 30 miles over the worst roads we ever saw. We fought mud holes, we stuck and barely got out again and again, we worked like slaves. It was awful! I walked most of the day, miring in mud to my shoe tops, while Edward ploughed the car thru. It was a record day for both car and driver. We were not pulled out! But the strain and worry: one never knew when he simply could go no farther. We saw cars stuck everywhere and had to wait for them to get out. Added to all the misery of the road was a gay, rainy day, and to cap the climax a wet camp here at Bault Valley - really no camp at all. But we must make the best of No. 25. It rains and rains! How are we going to get out of this country? If we can get to Oklahoma City and back on the Meriden Road: last miles are very very long in Oklahoma.

Dec. 22. En route. Oklahoma.

The day began with a drizzle, but we were out of a wet camp and on to the slippery roads, early. Sliding roads, my greatest terror, and neither of us had much reserve this morning. The worst place of the morning was a hole where a bridge was under construction - an awful place. The big car mired - I knew it would - and Edward walked like an Oklahoma mule for more than an hour, while I stood by shivering, and cursing the Oklahoma population, and praying to Christ, to Mohammed, Mrs. Eddy, Confucius, Buddha - to get us out of this accursed state. By the time we got out I was good dead of a week and shed a few silent tears. - - - We were revived by a good dinner at Burrell. All things however bad must come to an end - we had had more than 90 miles of absolutely impassable roads - the highway must improve, too. Better roads followed in the afternoon. We could scarcely believe it but we arrived in Oklahoma City at four o'clock. When has civilization seemed better? I wonder if Oklahoma City did not seem better than it is? A capital town of 110,000, clean, and substantially built. We had no word of criticism of Oklahoma City. We

had a glimpse of the dam town section, suffered at a hotel, decided to go on - to make the Indian Highway yet tonight. We were off, a new experience for us, for El Reno, 29 miles. Made it over paved roads in good time, and made camp 26 in the driest camp we have had for many days. Long dry grass for our tired feet and a fine bed for the beloved dog. Well, the day is over: perhaps those prayers did help, for the God of All is so much nearer us than we think.

Dec. 23. Sunday: En route.

A long day of making over good roads from El Reno, Okla. to Wichita, Kans., 190 miles. We enjoyed the day: bright sunshine and such pleasure to again travel well graded dry roads, boulevards. These Kansas highways seem to us, after the impassable trails over which we have come. And how good to see real farm houses, wood piles, fat horses, after all the hovels, mules, mangers along the wet trail thru the soggy South. We are back to old Kansas and Nebraska and their solid prosperity and to the clear winter sunshine of the Middle West. We camped (No. 27) at Wichita. Clear and cold, an "Christmas Camp" in Kansas!

Dec. 24. En route.

The last day out - we did not dream it would be when we left our frosty December camp this morning very early. Our excellent roads and speeding along made a 300 mile drive possible, and we arrived home some after nine o'clock. Mid-afternoon the day turned gray and as usual we ran into a fine rain at Friend, Nev., which gave us slippery roads for the last end of the trail, a trying experience of every trip we take. Stone to a cold house, suffering, and tired, but home.

Dec. 25. Stone. Christmas Day.

We spent the day in packing and getting things straightened about, so Christmas did not begin until evening, when the Ball. Gulch family exchanged gifts. And better than our gifts was our happy reunion and relating of all our varied experiences of the "Six weeks trail thru the South."

Dec. 26. Stone. Many gifts. I devoted myself to the kitchen. I scoured the camp-kitchen and wondered where and when we would go again. - - - - -  
So - night we are reading our mail. Such a pile of it. Countless "season's greetings" to look at.