

## THE CHRISTIAN STEVES FAMILY

*Of Northeast Cleveland Count, O. T.*

*R. B. Steves*

Christian "Chris" Steves and Martha Perkins were married February 21, 1886, in Southwest City, Missouri. Although they lived in Siloam Springs, Arkansas, they wanted to go west to the "new country" just opened to white settlement. Chris drove out to Oklahoma Territory and found a man who was dissatisfied with his claim, in northeast Cleveland County--the Southwest 1/4 of Section 9--10 N and 1 East I-M. Chris and the claim owner made a trade, Chris was to get the claim and the man was given Chris' team of mules, the wagon and the harness. Chris was to keep the team and wagon for six months in order for him to clear the land. Chris began at once to cut the timber and hew the logs so he could build a house. He was able to build the house with the help of a few good neighbors and to plant a garden, go back to Arkansas and move his family to the new homestead by the end of the six months--around the 14th of July, 1892. The old log house is still standing, less the fire place chimney today--1972--eighty years after it was built.

Christian and Martha Steves were the parents of six children: Dennis, Carrie, Howard, Robert, Mabel and Grace. The Steves boys and girls (except Howard) married local men and women.

Dennis married Evva Williams; Carrie married Henry Maxey; Robert married Emma Fehrle; Mabel married Lucien Wilson; Grace married Arthur De-Graffenreid.

Of the six children Robert, Mabel and Grace are still living (1972) and all reside in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Chris and Martha Steves were always interested in the betterment of the community so the first school house in the district (No. 2) was built on the Northwest corner of the Steves farm. In 1900 a Baptist church house was built on an adjoining acre of the homestead place. In 1904 a new school house, Oak Grove, was built a half mile north of the first school house on the Southwest corner of a quarter section that Chris had bought in 1901 and deeded two acres to the district free of charge for school purposes.

When Chris traveled to Norman, the county seat, to pay his taxes he was never heard to say a complaining word about the taxes being too high. He walked four miles to Case Post Office to get the mail once a week and never said a word about the Government not getting the mail closer to his home. A couple of years later Slusher Post Office opened just one mile from Steves' home. Later a Star Mail Route came by the house and about 1904 R. F. D. brought mail to the home place.

All of the children of Chris and Martha Steves were active in all local programs for the advancement of their community. They have gone out into the world to make their contributions and through their children and grandchildren to make the world a better place, just like Chris and Martha Steves did in the pioneer days of Cleveland County.