

OKLAHOMA
TERRITORY

TERRITORIAL TALES

Bits of
History
Before
Statehood

INDIAN
TERRITORY

JUL 3 1982

Explorers' Imprint On State Evident

In an address to a historical society in 1923, University of Oklahoma history professor E.E. Dale declared that the history of Oklahoma paralleled the story of civilization.

Dale said that in the preceding 30 years Oklahoma had recorded six distinct steps in social evolution: hunting, herding, primitive agriculture, improved agriculture, manufacturing and commerce.

In an article published in *The Daily Oklahoman* in 1957, another eminent OU professor, Dr. M.L. Wardell, pointed to the influence of early explorers on the later state of Oklahoma.

"The Spanish from New Mexico and the French from Louisiana regarded Oklahoma as a borderland and neither permanently occupied it, but the influence of each is evident.

"In the eastern part of the state are French place names — Poteau, Salina, Verdigris, Chouteau and San Bois. In the western part the Spanish left their imprint — Black Mesa, Cimarron and Aqua Frio. Such terms as canyon and arroyo are applied to physical features in the western half. Bayou and slough are understood only in the southeastern part of Oklahoma.

"When Louisiana was purchased no one knew the boundaries. From 1803 until 1819, the Spanish and the Americans dared each other to cross the Red River. Finally, John Adams settled the problem by helping to make a treaty that established the Red River and the 100th meridian as part of the boundary.

"This is doubtless the most influence New England has ever had on Oklahoma," Wardell said.