

March 2013

A MONTHLY CALENDAR OF EVENTS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Lawmen Turned Horse Thieves

It could be the plot for a classic Old Western TV show. On September 8, 1890, a Western Union telegram was sent from Claremore, IT (Indian Territory), in what is today Oklahoma. The telegram went to W.H.H. Clayton, the prosecuting attorney in Fort Smith, Arkansas, to inform him that the lawmen-turned-outlaws, the Dalton Gang, were “stealing horses here by the drove.” One of the three men, Grat Dalton, was under arrest.

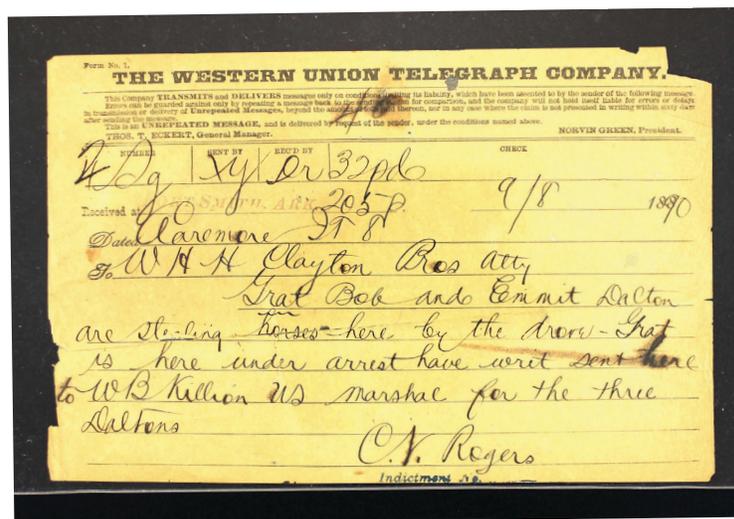
The telegram’s sender, Clement Vann Rogers, had recently moved to Claremore after the death of his wife, Mary. Rogers was active in local government as a member of the Cherokee Nation and had served as a judge and a senator for the Cooweescoowee District. A Civil War veteran, he had been a lieutenant in the Cherokee Mounted Volunteers, Confederate States Army. C.V. Rogers also happens to be the father of the famous cowboy, performer, humorist, and motion picture star Will Rogers (1879–1935).

In the telegram, Rogers requests a “writ” for the arrest of “the three Daltons” be sent to U.S. Marshal W.B. Killion. The law and the lawless often met in the courthouse at Fort Smith, the location of the U.S. Federal Court of the Western District of Arkansas, which had jurisdiction over western Arkansas and the Indian Territory. There, civil and criminal cases were heard and sentences handed down by the gavel of “Hanging” Judge Isaac Parker. Occasionally, the court saw the sides of the law reversed when famous lawmen like Bass Reeves and Wyatt Earp came before the court as defendants.

In this case, the alleged horse thieves were the brothers Grat, Bob, and Emmett Dalton from Kansas. Three years earlier, in 1887, their brother Frank

Dalton, a respected deputy U.S. marshal in Fort Smith, had been killed in the line of duty, trying to arrest whiskey peddlers. After Frank’s death, Grat and Bob also were appointed deputy marshals, adding to their reputation as fast riders and dangerous men. Now, they were the ones accused of stealing a herd of horses. An arrest warrant was issued for Grat, charging him with larceny, and a petition filed to hold him without bond until the arrest of his brothers. This was just the beginning of their banditry. The Dalton Gang, as the brothers and their friends became known, show up multiple times in the Fort Smith court records before the death of Grat and Bob in 1892 during an attempted bank robbery in Coffeyville, KS. This telegram comes from Grat Dalton’s defendant jacket. It and other records from the Western District of Arkansas are part of RG 21 at the National Archives in Fort Worth. The case files, also called jackets, are available on Ancestry.

— By Stephanie Stegman



Right: Telegram from C.V. Rogers to prosecuting attorney W.H.H. Clayton about the arrest of Grat Dalton, 09/08/1890 from the defendant jacket number 55, the file of Grat Dalton, Textual Records from the U.S. District Court for the Fort Smith Division of the Western District of Arkansas, Record Group 21, National Archives at Fort Worth.

NARA WestCoast March 2013

4,000-Unit Housing Project, Richmond, California
Children sliding down a slide, 1943
 Records of the U.S. Maritime Commission, 1917-1950
 RG 178
 National Archives at San Francisco



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
		Exhibit: Seattle, WA "Faces of the Pacific Northwest" Ongoing			Broomfield, CO Beginning Genealogy Workshop 9 A.M. Workshop and Tour General Public 303-604-4749	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Seattle, WA NARA Records Online (Fold 3) 10 A.M.-NOON Workshop Genealogists 206-336-5115	Broomfield, CO Denver Museum of History Volunteer Visit 10 A.M. Workshop and Tour Archival and Allied Professionals 303-604-4749	Seattle, WA SCCC All Faculty Presentation 1-3 P.M. Lecture College Staff 206-336-5115		Broomfield, CO Sons of Norway Beginning Genealogy Workshop 9:30 A.M. Workshop and Tour Genealogists 303-604-4749	Seattle, WA Genealogy for School Teachers All Day Workshop K-12 Teachers 206-336-5115
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
					San Bruno, CA Census Records Workshop (1790-1940) 10 A.M. Workshop General Public 650-238-3488	Auburn, WA Military Records at NARA All Day Workshop Genealogists 206-336-5115 <hr/> Auburn, WA Land Records at NARA All Day Workshop Genealogists 206-336-5115
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

The National Archives at

Riverside
951-956-2000
riverside.archives@nara.gov

San Francisco
650-238-3501
sanbruno.archives@nara.gov

Denver
303-407-5740
denver.archives@nara.gov

Seattle
206-336-5115
seattle.archives@nara.gov

Anchorage
907-261-7800
alaska.archives@nara.gov

NARA EastCoast March 2013

Laying keel of U.S.S. Battleship Number 39, arrival of Assistant Secretary of the Navy Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and others, March 15, 1910
Records of Naval Districts and Shore Establishments, 1784-2000, RG 118
National Archives at New York City



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					<p>Morrow, GA First Friday Freebies: Maritime Records Noon General Public Lecture 770-968-2100</p> <p>Philadelphia, PA First Friday Roundtable Noon Open House Genealogists 215-606-0100</p>	1 2
3						9
			<p>Philadelphia, PA United Methodist Church Archives Noon Open House Genealogists 215-606-0100</p>	<p>Waltham, MA The Caning: The Assault that Drove America to Civil War 6 P.M. Lecture General Public 866-406-2379</p>		
10		11	12	13	14	16
	<p>Morrow, GA Naturalization Ceremony 8:30 A.M. General Public Open House 770-968-2555</p>	<p>New York, NY Introduction to Census Records Noon-1 P.M. Workshop Genealogists 866-840-1752</p> <p>Abington, PA Genealogy on the Internet 7 P.M. Workshop Genealogists 215-606-0100</p>				
17		18	19	20	21	23
			<p>New York, NY Home School History 10 A.M. Workshop K-12 Students 770-968-2530</p>	<p>Waltham, MA Glory: 54th MA Colored Troops 6 P.M. Lecture General Public 866-406-2379</p>	<p>Richmond, VA Oh Freedom! They Emancipated Themselves 1:30 P.M. Workshop K-12 Teachers 866-406-2379</p>	
24		25	26	27	28	30
31	<p>Morrow, GA Naturalization Ceremony 8:30 A.M. General Public Open House 770-968-2555</p>					

The National Archives at

Boston
866-406-2379
boston.archives@nara.gov

New York City
866-840-1752
newyork.archives@nara.gov

Philadelphia
215-606-0100
philadelphia.archives@nara.gov

Atlanta
770-968-2100
atlanta.archives@nara.gov

