

Ouachita Baptist University

Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita

Press Releases

Office of Communication

8-16-2022

Behind the names: O.C. Bailey

Madison Cresswell

Ouachita Baptist University

Ouachita News Bureau

Ouachita Baptist University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/press_releases



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#), [Organizational Communication Commons](#), and the [Public Relations and Advertising Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Cresswell, Madison and Ouachita News Bureau, "Behind the names: O.C. Bailey" (2022). *Press Releases*. 1141.

https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/press_releases/1141

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of Communication at Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. It has been accepted for inclusion in Press Releases by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. For more information, please contact mortensona@obu.edu.

Behind the names: O.C. Bailey



By Madison Cresswell

August 16, 2022

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or (870) 245-5208.

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. – More than a century ago, in 1911, a Ouachita freshman was falsely accused of trespassing on a farmer's land across the Ouachita River. Since the university lacked men's dormitories, the student was served a warrant of arrest on the front porch of his rooming house. Luckily, his Latin professor, Mr. Gaines, dismissed his classes the day of the student's trial and went to the courthouse to testify on behalf of this student, resulting in the charges being dropped.

This story is about Olin Cavanaugh Bailey, the namesake of the Ouachita men's residence hall O.C. Bailey Hall. In a speech presented at the building's opening in 1956, Bailey told this story, saying, "I mention this just to show that the faculty of Ouachita did take a personal interest in every student.

"Although I have long forgotten the lessons contained in the textbooks," he added, "I received from my instructors at Ouachita a philosophy of life and a code of conduct that has sustained me throughout the years."

Originally from Hempstead County, Ark., Bailey graduated from Ouachita Baptist College in 1914. Afterward, he worked as the clerk for Hempstead County before moving to El Dorado, Ark., where he

entered the oil business in 1923 with J.D. Trimble to form the Bailey and Trimble oil firm, which operated in both Arkansas and Texas.

In a "Distinguished Alumnus" award from Ouachita, Bailey was said to have distinguished himself "in business, civic affairs and in church work in Arkansas and beyond."

Bailey served as a member and chairman of the Arkansas Oil and Gas Commission from the time of its formation in 1939 until his death in 1967. During that time, he was appointed by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior as Arkansas' representative to the National Conference of Petroleum Regulatory Authorities during World War II, and he served six years on the executive committee of the Independent Petroleum Association of America.

Because of his Ouachita experience and his belief in the mission of Christian colleges, Bailey donated significant funding to both Ouachita and Hendrix College in Conway, Ark. Ouachita used the funds to build the long-awaited men's residence hall, while Hendrix built Bailey Library, an innovative underground library building.

"If our American way of life is to survive, our Christian colleges must continue to grow and prosper," Bailey said at the opening of the residence hall. "Ouachita has honored me by permitting me to make a contribution to this building. I regard my contribution to this dormitory as the best investment that I have ever made, and one that will pay dividends to the youth of Arkansas long after I have passed from the scene."

Bailey's wife, Marjorie Hedrick, a public school teacher from Newport, Tenn., continued to donate generously to the university following her husband's death.

Over the years, O.C. Bailey Hall has served as a men's residence hall, a residence hall for upperclassman women and, most recently, as a residence hall primarily for male student-athletes. It remains standing alongside other campus buildings constructed during Ouachita President Dr. Ralph Phelps' leadership, including Berry Chapel, Berry(-Peeples) Bible Building, Riley(-Hickingbotham) Library and Verser Theatre.