

## Lloyd Noble

His daughter, Anne Noble Brown, speaks of his generosity and love for Oklahoma and its people.

### Chapter 1 - 1:18

#### Introduction

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**Announcer:** Lloyd Noble was only 53 years old when he died, but in that short life span he accomplished so much. He left behind the Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation to carry out his mission. Lloyd Noble attended but never graduated from Oklahoma University, yet he served 15 years on OU's Board of Regents. He felt a strong football program would be a good public relations tool for the school and he was instrumental in the hiring of coach Bud Wilkinson. The Lloyd Noble Center in Norman is well known for basketball and other popular events. Lloyd Noble's first love was land, its management and preservation. He offered assistance to farmers and ranchers through The Noble Foundation. As part of this interview, you will hear Mr. Noble talk about his respect for the rural people of Oklahoma. You will also hear the former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, Oklahoman Carl Albert, speak about the work of The Noble Foundation. Listen now to the daughter of Lloyd Noble, Ann Noble Brown as she shares her memories of her father. His influence on our state is enormous. VoicesofOklahoma.com is happy to share the story of Lloyd Noble thanks to the generous support of our sponsors, preserving Oklahoma's legacy one voice at a time.

### Chapter 2 - 4:43

#### Nobles Come to Oklahoma

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**John Erling:** My name is John Erling and today's date is August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

**Ann Noble Brown:** My name is Ann Elizabeth Noble Brown. My birth date is March 29, 1930.

**JE:** That makes your present age?

**ANB:** 81.

**JE:** Where were you born?

**ANB:** In Oklahoma City at St. Anthony's Hospital.

**JE:** Joining us in this interview is Mike Cawley who is president and chief executive officer of The Noble Foundation. Mike, tell us a little it about you. You've been with the Foundation for a number of years?

**MC:** I've been with the Foundation as the CEO since 1992 and I've been on the Board in 1997. I have actually been involved with the family for four years with legal work and board work and things like that.

**JE:** That voice of yours, you were never in radio were you?

**MC:** Yes, (Laughter) that's my second life, to have a Rush Limbaugh Show in Ardmore called the Cawley Show. (Laughter)

**JE:** Mike is here to participate in this interview. Ann, where are we recording this interview?

**ANB:** We're in Gunnison, Colorado.

**JE:** We are here to tell the story of the Nobles. Lloyd Noble was your father. Let's start with your great-grandfather John Noble and his two sons Sam and Ed when they came out to Texas.

**ANB:** Actually, Sam came first. I can't remember whether it was Abilene or where, but he came to work on the railroad. Then Ed came and I guess that dad got curious and he decided that he'd come out too.

**JE:** John Noble?

**ANB:** Yes, John Noble. They were in Teas, but they moved north though, close to Gainesville and Sherman in a little town called Pottsboro. There, the two men opened a store. They ran a ferry. They had a little acreage of some sort. I guess they stayed there until Ed went back home. He had a lady that I think he was in love with, so he went back to New York. The Nobles were from western New York, the Finger Lakes area. Anyway, Ed went back home and married Eva Skinner and took her back to Pottsboro, Texas. Two years after that, when Eva was expecting their first child, my grandmother Hattie, who was Eva's sister came to Pottsboro to stay with Eva and help her with the little baby. Probably during that time was when she fell in love with Sam. She taught school there for a year and then she went back to New York because she had several sisters and a mother and dad still in New York. So she went back to New York, but I guess Sam had asked her to marry him, so she consented. I have copies of some pages from her diary. The day before they got married she was in love with Sam, but she just doesn't know what it would be like to leave her family out East. But for the two girls and the two men—the sisters married brothers—and they, for a lot of years, shared the same house and the same bank account. They shared everything—that was their arrangement.

**JE:** How unusual for that to happen.

**ANB:** It wouldn't happen I don't think in this day and time. (Laughter)

**JE:** No.

**ANB:** Maybe there weren't as many things women wanted. I think mainly it was their furniture and things like that. If they bought one chair they bought one for the other. If they bought one bed they bought another and they were all just alike. Whatever they bought, they bought in twos.

**JE:** Sam married Hattie Edith Skinner?

**ANB:** Yes. She never really admitted to the name Edith I don't think—I never heard it very often.

**JE:** Then what were their children's names?

**ANB:** Willie was their first-born son. He died when he was five months old I think. Then Lloyd was born and then Mary Eva. We called her Aunt Eva.

**JE:** Lloyd would be your father?

**ANB:** Yes, my dad.

**JE:** Ed married Skinner, the sister of Hattie.

**ANB:** They were married first.

**JE:** And they had children?

**ANB:** They had children first. They had the one boy Everett. He died in his early 20s I think. He apparently was a very accomplished violinist.

### Chapter 3 - 3:16

#### Land Run

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**John Erling:** John, the father of Sam and Ed, they participated in the Cherokee Outlet Land Run on September 16th of 1893. Are there any stories that have been handed down about that?

**Ann Noble Brown:** There is a letter that the father wrote about his trip. David and I spent one weekend trying to decipher the letter. We got most of it. The gist of it was that they made the run. He talked about every little farmhouse where they would stop and who lived there and all of that. Then they finally got to where they were going to start and the Sooners had gotten there first. Oh, and somebody also had burned the land, so it really wasn't too enticing for them, but they did put their flag down. There were restrictions. They found out they had to stay six months and make some improvements and then they could have the land. Staying six months didn't appeal to them, so they went back home.

**JE:** Did they move on to Ardmore then? Is that where they moved?

**ANB:** I'm not sure just exactly. I know that after they left Pottsboro they moved someplace close to Madill and then they moved to Ardmore, which was still Indian Territory. I think it was a fairly new town actually.

**JE:** It probably was about six years old at the time. What did they do then? What was their business?

**ANB:** They opened a hardware store and then there was a fire.

**Mike Cawley:** I think they opened a grocery store first.

**ANB:** Was that it?

**MC:** And then the fire happened, which was I think in 1895. The fire destroyed a lot of Ardmore and certainly a lot of the downtown area. Then as I understand it, they opened a hardware store on Main Street.

**JE:** They opened a hardware store and they were working with the farmers. The crops were poor in those days and I understand the farmers would give the Noble brothers land to pay their hardware store bill?

**ANB:** All I know is what I heard daddy say that that's how they did it. They always paid the taxes on it though, so eventually they ended up with quite a bit of land.

**JE:** They call that becoming land poor where you have all of this land but you end up paying taxes on it all.

**ANB:** Yes, but it happened to be a good deal for them as it turned out.

**MC:** There was a point back then when the agricultural business was very prosperous in Ardmore and southern Oklahoma with cotton. It was a very lucrative cotton-producing area and at one time Ardmore was the largest inland cotton-ginning center in the world. But the way they farmed the cotton, so intensively until all of the nutrients were gone from the soil, probably led to some very difficult times because the land started suffering in quality.

**JE:** Which led to our Dust Bowl days I would imagine?

**MC:** In some respects yes. I think some of the poor farming practices were the same throughout the state and the region, not just in cotton, but also in all aspects of farming.

## Chapter 4 - 3:58

### Lloyd's Education

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**John Erling:** Your father as a young boy was quite a reader?

**Ann Noble Brown:** He did like to read. He kind of marched to his own drum I think.

**JE:** Was he a nonconformist maybe?

**ANB:** In a way—he was 21 when his dad died. I think my grandmother probably got a little exasperated with him sometimes because he didn't seem to know what he wanted to do. He went to the farm for a while and then he decided that he didn't like that. He went to school and got a teaching certificate and he taught school for a while. He went to OU once or twice. (Chuckle) He loved education. I think when he went to OU it just wasn't a good fit for him at that time. I don't really have too many stories about him. The only one I remember that my aunt used to like to tell...daddy was I think seven years older than my aunt. Apparently when she was born, my grandmother said, "Oh, you have a little sister." He said, "I would have rather had a dog." (Laughter)

**JE:** That's cute.

**ANB:** My aunt Mary loved to tell that story.

**JE:** In 1913 oil was discovered in Carter County in southern Oklahoma. Ardmore then became the center for oil companies. It was about that time that your father Lloyd was 17 and in his junior year of high school.

**ANB:** Yes. He was a debater too. I guess he graduated from high school—I don't know. Back then, you could do what you wanted to and go to the university and you didn't have to take tests to get in. You just walked in and said, "I want to go to school." That was it.

**JE:** Isn't it true that when he lived alone on the ranch that he decided to—

**ANB:** That's when he went to a normal college—that's what they called junior colleges back then and got his teaching certificate.

**JE:** He went to Southeastern Normal College in Durant. That's where he obtained his third grade teacher's certificate. He clearly was a book person and enjoyed reading and enjoyed teaching apparently.

**ANB:** He liked people too. He had a very diverse group of friends. Some of them were characters. He liked interesting people.

**JE:** Do you have memories of him inviting them in for dinners and parties?

**ANB:** Oh yes. Well, he didn't have parties, but he liked to bring people home for lunch because that way, he said, "They have to go back to the office—and I have to go back to the office." (Chuckle) But we had Jenny and she cooked and she was a character too. Her instructions were to always have enough food for 10 people at lunchtime. If he was visiting with you he would say, "Come on home and have lunch with us." I usually did go home for lunch. Sometimes I went to my grandmother's, because she lived a little closer to school. But I was supposed to be the hostess and when they would get into long discussions I would kind of put my head down. I wasn't much of a hostess, but that was where I was supposed to sit. You would have been about how old then?

**ANB:** About 15 or 16 years old—I was high school age.

**JE:** So you were taught early on to prepare dinners. Were Saturday night dinners a big thing?

**ANB:** Yes. I could fix a good hamburger. Finally daddy said, "I think you need to branch out a little bit." (Chuckle) So I did learn to cook some other things. But I still like a good hamburger. They are hard to beat.

**MC:** I do too.

## Chapter 5 - 5:19

### Lloyd Meets Margaret

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**John Erling:** How was it that your father met your mother? What was your mother's name?

**Ann Noble Brown:** Margaret Vivian Bilby

**JE:** What was the story behind their meeting?

**ANB:** Mother was in Alpha Chi, a sorority and so was daddy's sister Mary. So one time when he was visiting Aunt Mary, he met mother. He thought she was pretty and he liked her. Her family lived out in Holdenville in this little town called Bilby. My grandfather had a store where he traded with the Indians some. There was a little schoolhouse too and that was about all there was to Bilby, except the train stopped there. So anyway, daddy called mother. They did have a telephone. I think it was one of those that you cranked. He said that he wanted to come see her. She said, "I think that would be nice, but I think I would like for you to come another time." He said, "Well, I'm here. I can come today." She said, "Well, the tracks are out. I don't think you can get here." He said, "Oh, I can get there." He was persistent and she said, "Okay." Daddy's story was that he drove as far as he could go. He had some fancy car I think at that stage in his life. I think it was called a Morgan or something like that. Anyway, I imagine it was pretty spiffy. But he had to stop and walk part of the way. He said, "It was the funniest thing. I met this old boy coming down the tracks." Apparently it was mother's boyfriend that she had sent on his way. (Laughter) So that's how they got together. I guess she decided that if he was willing to walk that far that she thought he was worth at least having a second look. Her dad Nick my grandfather Bilby, was a real character. He was a jolly Irishman, but he had an Irish temper. Apparently, the story is that he liked to go to town on Saturday night and usually could find a good fight. (Laughter) I don't know. I never saw that side of him, but he was always jolly and had something funny to say.

**JE:** Were they out of Nebraska?

**ANB:** That's where she was born, but they came to Oklahoma soon after that.

**JE:** Your father then was about 25 I think when he was married?

**ANB:** She was 19.

**JE:** They had three children. The oldest was?

**ANB:** Samuel Russell. He was born August 12th, 1925. Then Edward Everett was born March 19th, 1928. Ann Elizabeth was born March 29th, 1930.

**JE:** Didn't he have nicknames for you kids?

**ANB:** The one I remember the most was my brother Eddie. Daddy would get down on the floor and Eddie would ride on his back like a horse. Eddie wouldn't fall off. He would stay right with him. Daddy would call him "Horsefly" because he couldn't get rid of him. (Chuckle) Then Sam, I called him Buddy for a long time and then he wanted to be called Bud or Sam. One of my friends asked me one time because I kept saying "my brother Sam" and "my brother Bud"—she said, "Is his name Bud Sam?" (Laughter) I said, "No, I guess it isn't." I don't know what daddy called me. I guess honey or something like that.

**JE:** Was he outgoing or gregarious? You talked about him being a loner, but yet it sounds like he could be—

**ANB:** I think he could be either way. He loved people and they had a lot of company parties and that sort of thing. We had the place north of town. It's still there. He built a cabin out there or he had it built. It had one bedroom and it had a porch with a couple of couches that made into beds. But the one thing that he refused to have was a telephone out there. It did not have a telephone until long after he was gone. It was just his retreat. He loved to fish.

**JE:** So today's cell phones would not have worked well with him then?

**ANB:** Oh, he would have lost that instantly. Or he would have had Ben Scott carry it for him and then he would use it.

**JE:** Was he one to sit at the table and tell everyone to listen to what he had to say?

**ANB:** No, not really, but he did like conversation at the table. We did talk at the table and we still do. Everybody tries to speak at the same time sometimes.

**JE:** Did he talk politics at the table?

**ANB:** Actually, I don't really remember him talking politics to us, but he had a lot of friends who were politically inclined and he was. He would run for office when he was young. He wanted to be behind the scenes where the action was. He wanted to be there.

**JE:** Let somebody else be on stage and he could be the power behind it?

**ANB:** Yes.

**Chapter 6 – 6:16****Navy & OU**

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**John Erling:** He did enlist in the Navy near the end of World War I?

**Ann Noble Brown:** Yes, it was. Again, there was a letter from his dad, written in pencil. His dad was dying at the time and he wrote this letter to his son, my daddy. He told him he was so concerned that he might have to go to war. He even suggested that he might have to join the Navy. He thought that was where he ought to be. Then daddy went to West Virginia or someplace. Then they shipped him to California. He was close to San Francisco—I think they call it Goat Island? But anyway, there's a Navy base there. That's where he was sent and daddy loved it. He loved San Francisco from then on. He said, "I never felt better than when I was out there close to the ocean." So he might have made a good Navy man if he would have ever had the opportunity.

**JE:** By the way, 91,000 Oklahomans died in WWI.

**ANB:** I couldn't believe that.

**JE:** Your father was a short man wasn't he?

**ANB:** He wasn't very tall. He was 5'7".

**JE:** Five foot seven and 150 pounds?

**ANB:** Yes, I think some of them called him the little man, but he could be pretty powerful.

**JE:** After the war, when he left the Navy, he goes to school I believe in 1919?

**ANB:** He goes to OU again.

**JE:** What was his mission to go to OU?

**ANB:** I think at one time he thought about studying law because there were some law books around our house.

**Mike Cawley:** That's my recollection was that he had an interest in the law.

**JE:** So in 1919 he would have been 23 years old. Did he find himself kind of out of place? He was not of the so-called wealthy class of students.

**ANB:** No, he was in Acacia Fraternity.

**MC:** He was one of the founders.

**ANB:** I think he was too. I think these were people that weren't on the fraternity list and they just formed their own.

**MC:** You know, I could see Lloyd Noble not being interested in fraternity people. He was more serious than that. I just have the sense that he was thinking about what the future had in store and what he was going to be doing and what role college was going to play in his life. You know, a normal college kid who is young and wanting to play...I don't think Lloyd Noble would have had time for that.

**ANB:** Well, and I got a little of this too—of course I went to a girls school first...but daddy didn't think that sororities were all that. He thought that it was sort of a snobbish thing and that they were leaving out a lot of people. So I didn't pledge a sorority until I was a junior I think.

**JE:** What school was that?

**ANB:** That was at OU. I did it because the first semester there I lived at a boarding house with seven girls. But, there were 20 or so boys who ate lunch and dinner there every day. I thought it was not a bad place to live. Then my cousin and some of my close friends were Pi Phi, so I did pledge Pi Phi, but I had to kind of apologize and say, "Daddy I am doing this. (Laughter)

**JE:** Was he okay with it?

**ANB:** Well, this was after he died. I had to sort of convince myself that it was okay. It was a great experience. I met a lot of nice people and I still see a lot of them.

**JE:** So you graduated then from OU?

**ANB:** No, I didn't graduate, I got married in 1951.

**JE:** Whom did you marry?

**ANB:** David Randolph Brown.

**JE:** How did you meet him?

**ANB:** Actually we think we met when I went with daddy one time. A lot of times he would come home and he was going out to the field or something. He would say, "Do you want to ride out there with me?" Of course I would always say, "yes." You know, it was something to do in Ardmore. So we went out and he wanted to stop by and see the superintendent or somebody. We stopped and there were three little boys playing put in the yard—they were about my age, one of them was younger. Daddy said, "You all can play." That's what I remember is these three little boys. David and I talked later because he had two brothers and I said, "Do you think that was you that I was playing with that day?" He said, "I remember your dad brought you out there. All I knew is that you were the boss's daughter. (Laughter) He likes to say that he married the boss's daughter. That's how I think we met. Then David's brother who was my age, we were in the same class in high school. One night Harry and I had been to the picture show. It was when Pretty's was in downtown Ardmore. Pretty's where you met and had coffee or Cokes or whatever. He said, "Oh, there's my brother." I said, "He doesn't look much like you." He said, "Well, he's just finished his finals. He's in med school." I thought he looked kind of sickly myself. (Laughter) You wouldn't know that today would you? So then one night a girlfriend of mine wanted to meet one of my brother's friends. I said, I can fix that up for you because I know him pretty well." At that time, she was dating David, but not really, they were just neighbors I think. Anyway, I got her a date

with Kenneth. She said something like, "Well, maybe David will go." I said, "I don't even know him." It just sort of evolved. Then we went square dancing and we had fun. We've been together 60 years almost.

**JE:** When did you get married?

**ANB:** In 1951.

**JE:** And you had children?

**ANB:** We have three kids. We have a son named David Randolph who lives in Oklahoma City. Susan Elizabeth lives in Dallas and Marianne Rooney lives in Oklahoma City.

**JE:** You must have several grandchildren by now.

**ANB:** I have nine grandkids, seven boys and two girls.

## Chapter 7 - 4:10

### Noble Drilling

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**John Erling:** Back to your father, when he was at OU, despite the fact that he seemed to be a retiring sort of person, he became a member of the debate team? He had a good friend there with Dow Hamm?

**Ann Noble Brown:** Dow Hamm.

**JE:** Did you ever know him?

**ANB:** They lived in Dallas when I met him, but I only met him once or twice. I think they may have lived in Ardmore at one time. A lot of people in Oklahoma that were in the oil business moved to Texas because there was no state income tax, like Boone Pickens and the Cox family, the Goddards and the Hammonds.

**JE:** Then oil was discovered on family land?

**ANB:** I think it was some of that family land that they took for payment. (Chuckle) Daddy was in business with Art Olson at that time. They were partners, but not for too long.

**JE:** The oil discovery on that land then became an interest point for Lloyd, your father? He became interested in the oil business?

**Mike Cawley:** I heard one story where he talked about his time at OU. There were lease hounds just bugging him to death to lease his mother's land. Apparently, there were several pieces of land. That really got him interested as he was kind of appraising the value of this land for oil and gas leasing purposes and so on.

**JE:** So he would have formed the Noble Drilling Company along in here?

**ANB:** First it was Noble-Olson.

**MC:** Yes. He first started out with a loan from his mother that probably helped him out with his contribution to the Noble- Olson effort.

**ANB:** Yes, probably so.

**MC:** He and Art Olson were in a partnership and then they dissolved that a few years later and it became solely Noble Drilling Corporation.

**JE:** Their main purpose was contract drilling and not necessarily exploration?

**MC:** He started out drilling for commission.

**JE:** Then it became a drilling company so he would drill not only for himself but—

**MC:** Well, what happened was, in the drilling business there came a time in order to get a rig on a location the driller had to participate in the drilling and take part in the action. So as a result, he became an exploration guy too. So he was wearing two hats when he got his rig on location. He was not only drilling the well, but he had some interest in the lease himself. He got into the exploration business as an offshoot of the drilling business. They say his real love was the drilling business, but he became very successful in the exploration business too. The exploration business was a sideline to the drilling business. Samedan Oil Corporation was the exploration business named for his three children, Sam, Ed and Ann.

**ANB:** Thanks to Myrtle Moore (Laughter) She was his first secretary.

**JE:** She helped name that?

**ANB:** She named it.

**JE:** So he dropped out of OU and then he comes back to OU again and enrolls in law school in fall 1921 when he was 25 years old. He went to OU twice and dropped out both times?

**ANB:** Yes.

**JE:** But then he devoted himself fulltime to the Noble Drilling Company and contract drilling. Then he got into the hauling business?

**MC:** He was in the oilfield hauling business, primarily up here (Colorado) in the Rockies. The name of the company was BF Walker.

**ANB:** That was later.

**MC:** It was later, yes.

**ANB:** It was quite a bit later. In fact, I think it was shortly before he died.

**JE:** Did you hear a lot of talk around the dinner table about drilling and the oil business and that type of thing?

**ANB:** It depends on who was there. Sometimes he would invite people so he could talk to them a little bit more than maybe he could at the office. I have no idea what he was thinking when he would bring somebody home. It might be a janitor or something.

**JE:** It could have been the roughnecks and people from all walks of life that he wanted to learn from.

**ANB:** Yes.

**Chapter 8 - 3:54****Bud Wilkinson**

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**Ann Noble Brown:** One time he did bring home this young man—actually, there were two men there. It must have been a Saturday or something because I was home. He said, “I think this is going to be our new football coach.” It was Bud Wilkinson. I guess he was maybe 30 years old when he became coach.

**Mike Cawley:** I think that’s about right.

**ANB:** I thought—oh my gosh—he is going to be the football coach?

**John Erling:** So you remember seeing Bud then?

**ANB:** Yes. I don’t know who the other man was. I wondered if it was Jim Tatum. I think that’s probably who the other man was, because I think Jim Tatum thought he was going to take Bud with him when he went to Maryland or wherever he went.

**JE:** Yes, he went to the University of Maryland. What are your first memories of your first house?

**ANB:** Actually, the first house we lived in, we lived across from where Mike lived at one time. But I was too little to remember that. Then we moved on Bixby Street and then after mother died we moved to D Street.

**JE:** How old were you when your mother died?

**ANB:** I was barely six years old. My birthday was in March and she died in April.

**JE:** Then your father remarried didn’t he?

**ANB:** Yes, he did. He married Eloise. Then they divorced, but they had a son Richard. Before daddy died, Eloise had taken Dick to tour the country. Dick was 10 or 11 t the time. Then they went to Europe. He was always very bright. He stayed out of school that year and just traveled. Daddy wanted me to go with them when they went to Europe. He said, “I’ll meet you in London.” So that was our plan and that’s when I left Mills and got be out of school for a semester. He was going to meet us in England. Of course, he died. But Eloise did go on to Europe and she asked me if I wanted to come. I knew that that was what daddy wanted me to do, so I said, “Yes, I would really like to.” Even though my grandmother and my aunts and everybody said, “You don’t need to go.” I said, “I really think I do.” So I did. It was great. It was a good trip. I mean it was sad, but I do think that Richard—after he got older and went to college, he kind of left the family—but he and I always had a little closer relationship than he had with the two boys because of that trip. So I was glad that I went on it.

**JE:** Is Richard living today?

**ANB:** No, he’s deceased.

**JE:** Going back to elementary school, do you have any first memories of school?

**ANB:** I had the same first grade teacher that my daddy did. (Laughter)

**MC:** No kidding?

**ANB:** I thought that was kind of fun.

**MC:** That's a great story.

**JE:** What was her name?

**ANB:** Mrs. Morgan. I had a good friend named Joyce. Joyce and I liked to visit. Mrs. Morgan got after us one day because finally she had had it. (Chuckle) And she wasn't a spring chicken, but she got that desk and pulled it out and put me in the back of the classroom and put Joyce on the front row. We couldn't talk. (Laughter) I went to Franklin Elementary School.

**JE:** In Ardmore?

**ANB:** Yes.

**JE:** Then you went on the junior high and senior high at Ardmore High School? Where did you go after that?

**ANB:** I went to the Mills.

**JE:** Okay, the Mills and then on out to OU.

## Chapter 9 - 7:15

### OU Football

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**John Erling:** Your father, in 1926, wanted to become a state senator. Do you have any memories of that?

**Ann Noble Brown:** I have a poster that has his picture on it, but that was his first attempt at getting into politics I think.

**JE:** He lost in that race to a Democrat.

**ANB:** That would be a year after my brother was born.

**JE:** Can we move to where Lloyd became involved with OU, which is an interesting story because he was appointed by "Alfalfa Bill" Murray who was one of our colorful governors of the state. Were you ever around Governor Murray at all?

**ANB:** Probably. I knew who he was. He was a character. I do know that he came to daddy's funeral. I think his son brought him. He was quite old then.

**JE:** Your father had dropped out of OU twice and yet he gets appointed as a Regent at OU, which is remarkable. He must have impressed "Alfalfa Bill" Murray in a major way for him to appoint him as a Regent.

**ANB:** Well, it was kind of an unusual appointment I guess, but Alfalfa Bill was rather unusual, so I guess that figures.

**JE:** Then your father was not quiet and retiring as a regent—he had a great influence on the University right from the beginning including the football program.

**ANB:** Yes, that was one of his things. He thought that would enhance the university as well if we had a good football team. He knew that Biff Jones had coached at West Point and he was now coaching at LSU. Apparently, the school didn't have much control of anything as long as Huey Long was the governor. So daddy knew that Biff Jones was looking for another job. That's when he hired him and he was at OU for two years. He kind of got the team going and then he moved to Nebraska. Then they hired—

**Mike Cawley:** Dewey “Snorter” Luster.

**ANB:** Because he had been daddy's roommate.

**MC:** Snorter Luster was alive when I was at OU. I can remember him out on the intramural fields and this was in the mid-1960s. He had terrible eyesight.

**MC:** Oh gosh.

**JE:** What was his name?

**MC:** Snorter Luster. He came after Biff Jones and before Jim Tatum.

**JE:** Okay.

**ANB:** He and daddy were roommates.

**JE:** During this time, WWII was over. I think it was your father's idea to recruit athletes from the Armed Forces?

**ANB:** Yes.

**MC:** Let me interject because I was interviewed by Jake a couple of weeks ago on this.

**ANB:** Sure.

**MC:** You know I can just envision what the situation was when Lloyd Noble joined the Board of Regents and OU's football program was terrible. We were in the Dust Bowl.

**ANB:** I remember going by Snorter's house after the games and everybody would be so down.

**MC:** He just was a visionary in this area too. He said, “We've got to create a football program that gives this university and its alumni, students and this state something to be proud of. He pursued hiring Biff Jones with a passion. He had just won the Sugar Bowl at LSU and LSU wasn't in the mood to let him go. Ann was right when she mentioned that Huey Long was a problem. But there's something about how he still had some relationship with the Army and Lloyd Noble had a great relationship with the congressmen. There's something that would suggest that Biff Jones got some orders to move to Oklahoma.

**ANB:** Oh, I see.

**MC:** Clearly Lloyd was involved in that. But the other thing is...everything was a mess. They didn't have showers. They didn't have medical people. They didn't have trainers.

They didn't have the proper uniforms. It was all a mess. I wasn't there and I can't prove it, but I am going to bet you that Lloyd Noble took care of all of it. I am going to bet you that he got it in shape for a new coach and a new program to start—that's what started OU Football.

**JE:** All right, so then they recruit the athletes and then he brings in Jim Tatum. Is that true? And then Tatum brings on Bud Wilkinson as his assistant?

**ANB:** There's another coach before Jim Tatum.

**MC:** There is, Tom Stidham.

**MC:** I think that Lloyd Noble mandated that Bud Wilkinson should be the assistant coach. I think it was very strong that he wanted Bud as the assistant to Jim Tatum.

**JE:** Yes, that is a fact that Lloyd wanted Bud to be the assistant coach.

**MC:** Yes, he was not going to hire Tatum without Bud Wilkinson as the assistant.

**ANB:** Then, he was going to take Bud with him. He tried and I think Lloyd Noble kind of circled the wagon and realized that was a possibility and called the Regents and the President together and said, "We need to make an offer to Bud right quick before Jim Tatum takes him. They did make him an offer and we (OU) kept him.

**JE:** They could have named a main coach, one that was already out there coaching as a head coach, but Lloyd said no to that.

**MC:** He saw what Bud Wilkinson could do.

**ANB:** I think he saw that actually Bud was doing most of the coaching and not Tatum. Tatum died really right after he left. I think he had a massive heart attack.

**MC:** In 1998, I was appointed to a search committee to search for a new athletic director. That resulted in Joe Castiglione. One of the members of the search committee was Billy Vessels, who was the first Heisman trophy winner at OU. I didn't know Billy Vessels—I had never met him. I'm walking to the administration building on the north oval for the first meeting of this committee. As I walk up I see man standing out on the front porch—I don't know who he is, but I walk up and we introduce ourselves. It's Billy Vessels. He says, "Mike, are you at The Noble Foundation?" I said, "Yes sir." He pointed at my chest and said, "If it wasn't for Lloyd Noble, you and I wouldn't be here today." So there's a guy who would have played for the university when Lloyd was still alive.

**ANB:** Yes.

**MC:** Yes, because he was the Heisman trophy winner in 1950 and he would have played several years before that. But those guys knew why OU Football had achieved so much and they attributed it to Lloyd Noble.

**JE:** That's part of the story here is to make sure people know that. Noble Drilling would buy large blocks of tickets for the games—he wasn't just a Regent sitting on the sideline, he was also very involved.

**ANB:** A lot of the buying of tickets was to help the finances because there really weren't that many people that went to the games then. It wasn't like it is now where you have to get in line and move up and all of that. Actually, we still have those same seats that we had when daddy was alive.

**JE:** On the 50 yard line?

**ANB:** it's slightly off—when they re-did the stadium.

**MC:** It's close enough. (Chuckle)

## Chapter 10 - 4:10

### Education Reformer

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**John Erling:** The annual Texas/OU game was a big event for the company and for the employees?

**Ann Noble Brown:** It was and I was not allowed to go. I did get to go one time. You know, it was kind of rowdy in Dallas. I guess it still is. We haven't been to that game in a long time. But daddy just didn't think that that was an environment that I needed to be in—but we went to every other football game in Norman. They always had a big breakfast and I don't know whether they had dinners.

**Mike Cawley:** I am sure they did.

**ANB:** It was a big deal.

**JE:** He also found a faculty that was underpaid, so it wasn't just the sports department that he helped.

**ANB:** Yes. He thought that the professors weren't paid enough, so I think he helped that situation. He also started the University College because he was aware of the fact that a lot of people go to college and they are really not prepared. These are kind of core classes I would assume.

**JE:** The liberal arts were required for two years.

**ANB:** He was sort of the instigator of that.

**JE:** He made sure that salary increases for the faculty were attached to promotions.

**MC:** When he left after two terms, I think it was actually Roy Turner who got some pressure and did not reappoint him, but in any event, he left a letter addressed to the Regents. It was a long, beautifully written letter.

**ANB:** Oh, it was a book.

**MC:** That was the point he made, is that the University really needed to spend more time putting quality professors in the classroom. He was a big believer in education.

I mean, he had a passion, not only for OU Athletics, but he had a passion for OU as an educational institution. He started the George Lynn Cross Research Professor Program—he paid for it. He helped the David Ross Boyd Professor Program. He just saw all aspects of the University as important.

**JE:** There was a surplus of cash in the program when he left.

**MC:** Yes, in the athletic program.

**JE:** He had served two seven-year terms and there was that surplus. They then approved the \$1.2 million in bonds for the expansion of Owen Field while he was there. They also changed the Board rules so that Presidents and the Board of Regents would rotate serving in their last year of their term, so you didn't have one person controlling it all of the time.

**ANB:** The story is too—you know a lot of times—you know where the practice field is now? If daddy was running late, he would land on the practice field. Of course now you couldn't do that because it's not big enough.

**JE:** Because he was flying in from someplace?

**ANB:** Yes. He very seldom missed a meeting. I think he was very dedicated to what he was doing.

**JE:** This connection to OU, while we are talking about that...his Foundation has contributed \$40 million to Oklahoma University. They contributed \$1 million to build the Lloyd Noble Center.

**MC:** Correct. That was the first million-dollar gift that The Noble Foundation ever made.

**ANB:** That was the first thing that ever had daddy's name on it. I remember when Eddie said, "I may have to answer to this in the hereafter." You know, when they named it The Lloyd Noble Center because daddy never wanted his name on anything.

**JE:** This was named after he passed away obviously?

**ANB:** Right.

**MC:** The largest grant that the Foundation has made to OU was The Sam Noble Museum of Natural History. Then there was a substantial grant made for the addition to The Lloyd Noble Center for the Mary Jane Noble Practice Facility for the ladies basketball team. Then the Foundation has been active in support of OU at the Health Sciences Center and the Cancer Center, so OU has been a major recipient of The Noble Foundation.

**JE:** A few million was also given to The College of Business Administration?

**MC:** Correct. That was when Sam was Chairman of the Board of Regents. Then Sam's wife Mary Jane was chairman of the Board of Regents. So there's been a long line of Noble family involvement in the University of Oklahoma.

**Chapter 11 - 4:40****Politics**

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**John Erling:** Back to your dad—your father was a casual dresser, much like Will Rogers was whom he admired?

**Ann Noble Brown:** I don't think he dressed like Will Rogers, but he did like pinks. They were wool trousers and he liked to wear a shirt that matched. He did like to get spiffed up too. He bought clothes from Mr. Brenner.

**JE:** Sam Brenner in Tulsa. Your dad, some of his clients back then when he was in the drilling business were Standard Oil of Indiana and Standard Oil of California and Shell Oil Company.

**ANB:** He was a good friend of Gage Lund who was with Standard of California. I remember meeting him when I was in school out there. Daddy would find an excuse to come out and see me to see if I was behaving I guess.

**JE:** Your father's staff was very loyal to him. It seemed like he could attract and keep good people?

**ANB:** One of his secretaries wrote a really cute letter. She said that when she came to work for daddy she had just graduated from school and thought she knew just exactly what she was supposed to be doing as a secretary. She would try to straighten the files and do all of these things that she had learned, but it just all fell apart when she got to daddy's office because that isn't how he wanted it done. (Chuckle.) Anyway, it's a really cute letter that I read not too long ago. Everybody that was a secretary that worked for him, all of their names started with an M. He was not afraid to tell them if they made a mistake. He would correct them. I guess he was pretty hard on people, but he was also very kind and good to them too.

**JE:** He would travel thousands of miles to pay respects when a friend or a company employee died. He was generally at their funerals. He maintained an interest in politics. He supported Wendell Willkie for President in 1940.

**ANB:** I was the only person in Franklin School that had a Willkie pen. (Laughter) I think I still have it actually.

**JE:** That's when Willkie was running against the third term of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. You were about 10 years old then. Everybody else was for FDR and you were the only one for Willkie?

**ANB:** Oh yes. That was Ardmore in Little Dixie. That was what they called that part of the country then.

**JE:** Do you really still have that pin today?

**ANB:** Yes, I really do. I haven't looked at it in a while but I am pretty sure I do.

**JE:** Were you ever around when he was a friend of Harold Stassen from Minnesota who ran for president many times. He lost out to Thomas Dewey who represented the Republican. Did you ever see any of these people when they spoke to your father?

**ANB:** Well, I remember meeting Stassen. Then I went to the Convention in 1948. I think that was Dewey and Truman.

**JE:** It was. That was when Dewey lost to Harry Truman. What is your recollection from attending that Convention?

**ANB:** I had a really good time. I met some cute guys. I was 18. I stayed with Pearl Sayer, the committeewoman at the time. She lived in Ardmore. She was the one that set all of this up. She had an apartment, so it was very proper that I stay with Mrs. Sayer. Of course, daddy was busy in a room smoking cigars back then. He usually chewed on them, but sometimes he smoked one.

**JE:** At the convention, do you remember Thomas Dewey?

**ANB:** I do kind of remember what he looked like.

**JE:** Of course everybody knows in 1948—that was the famous newspaper headline that declared Dewey the winner when Harry Truman actually had won the election. Do you remember any fallout from that with your father?

**ANB:** No, I think he thought Dewey was going to win. I think most of us Republicans thought that when Truman became president that it was going to be the end of the world, but you know he was really a pretty good president.

**JE:** Also, after that the Republican Party wanted your father to run for governor?

**ANB:** I heard rumblings of that.

**JE:** But he declined.

## **Chapter 12 - 10:00**

### **Samuel Noble Foundation**

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**John Erling:** So then your father invests in farm property because he thought that if everything else went awry he could always live on the land. That led to what The Noble Foundation has been so active in, because he watched farmers mismanage their farms.

**ANB:** They just weren't educated enough to know that if you just keep lining crops up that you end up depleting the soil. He could see that when he flew places. Today, we could not see that, but he saw it. Today we can see nice places where they irrigate the soil, but he was seeing the erosion.

**Mike Cawley:** You know, one of the things that really impressed Lloyd Noble too was not only the importance of the land and the soil for the future, but he knew that after the oil was gone that we were going to need the land for food and fiber. He was a big believer in the people who came from a farm environment. He hired a lot of those people to work in his business and it said that he trusted them. They had strong moral character and values and he thought it was really important for our country to support them.

**ANB:** He said something to the effect that it was the best defense against tyranny.

**MC:** Yes. He talked about the ownership of a piece of land, no matter how big or how small was the greatest defense there was against tyranny. His point was that owning land is independence and independence is power. He saw agriculture as critically important, not just to food and fiber but he saw it as the bedrock to the ethos of the country. So he had a passion for helping farmers and ranchers, but he also saw a lot more outside of that. So it was really important to him.

**JE:** The Noble Foundation was formed in what year?

**MC:** 1945.

**JE:** He named The Noble Foundation after his father. Do you remember what it was he said about his father when he named it?

**ANB:** He said he was the most charitable man he ever knew.

**JE:** What was the mission of The Foundation?

**MC:** In general, it was to benefit mankind, but the way the initial investment of the money was for the land and for stewardship of the land and conservation.

**ANB:** Yes, it was strictly agriculture with a little office not as big as this room. They tested soil. You could bring in samples of your soil and they would tell you what you needed for this and that. They did garden contests to see who had the best garden with the biggest vegetables. That's how it started.

**JE:** So he encouraged the farmers and the ranchers in the area to practice good stewardship of the land. I believe the mission of The Foundation was to assist the primary goal of scientific research with major emphasis on soil conservation and improvement.

**ANB:** I guess they left it open so we could do other things.

**JE:** Today, The Noble Foundation has grown to include three divisions, can you tell us what they are?

**MC:** Agriculture, Plant Biology and Forage Improvement.

**JE:** How is The Foundation involved in these three areas?

**MC:** I think the Board has tried to be sensitive to the desires of their founder, Lloyd Noble. I think they have seen his interest in enhancing agriculture and the opportunity for farmers and ranchers to benefit themselves and their families. So, the agriculture side

is really a practical consultation and demonstration and education, free of charge to area farmers and ranchers. In the late 1970s, The Foundation provided the initial startup grant to the Salk Institute in La Jolla, California for a plant biology research program. In the mid-1980s, the Salk encouraged us to start a plant biology program at The Noble Foundation. As Fred Hoffman would say, “Why wouldn’t you do a plant biology program in Ardmore because that’s where the passion for agriculture is?” You’ve got all of the land availability there and that’s one of the missions of the organization, which is incredibly courageous by the Board to make the decision to start a plant biology program on their own, which they did. Today it’s one of the leading programs in the world. Then in the mid-1990s, we saw the need for enhanced forages for the cattle industry, which is the dominant agricultural enterprise in our part of the world. We saw how that would dovetail between the agricultural division and the plant division and maybe even provide some interaction between the two, so the Board once again agreed to initiate that division. They work well together today. The scientists who come in and review our work say that The Noble Foundation is the only institution of its kind in the world today that does these kinds of things that are in a very seamless, transparent way on a campus in Ardmore, Oklahoma.

**JE:** So that seed was planted with Lloyd Noble?

**MC:** Lloyd Noble was the seed. It was his idea. He believed first of all in the power and importance of the land. How the land would empower someone who had ownership or management of it—how it would allow a person to be free because they could take care of themselves without government intervention and government support.

**JE:** Then that led to management of the soil?

**MC:** Correct. It led to staffing the foundation to provide expertise to farmers who had questions on how to do it.

**JE:** So there he was reaching out telling them if they wanted answers that he would try to find them. I think his idea was, I am not going to tell them what to do—I am going to empower them to do what they want to do. There’s a big distinction there.

**JE:** We have extension services of universities.

**MC:** The Noble Foundation’s Agriculture Division is an extension service on steroids.

**JE:** It’s much bigger?

**ANB:** There really aren’t too many of those extension services anymore are there?

**MC:** They are highly underfunded, so they can barely work.

**JE:** So there’s a huge gap and that’s where The Noble Foundation fills that gap?

**MC:** Right.

**JE:** The scientific research is an influence throughout our state, but also must be an influence throughout our country and the world?

**MC:** The influence is worldwide. One of the challenges we have going forward is just what role are we going to play on a more international basis. Yes, the influence of The Noble Foundation is worldwide today.

**JE:** It's the largest private foundation I believe in Oklahoma.

**MC:** Yes.

**JE:** In fact, it's in the top 50 in the United States. How did the Foundation grow to this extent?

**MC:** Well, good stewardship from the Board and I would say the financial markets of the 1990s treated us very well. Our endowment has grown in the early 1990s from 300 to April 1 of 2000 when it hit \$1 billion. But the markets from 2000 to 2010 have been pretty choppy—so we were about the same. But you have to also understand that we are spending \$50 million dollars a year. I stand back today and I say okay, we are still about where we are—but look at what we've done in that same period of time and the stewardship from our investment committee and our consultants and managers has been outstanding. We've been fortunate.

**JE:** Here we are in 2011. The states of Oklahoma and Texas are facing a severe drought. I noticed a news release about a drought meeting that was going to cover vital topics for farmers and ranchers. How fortunate all these farmers have to be to that here is The Noble Foundation working with them as a team as they struggle through what at this very moment is a serious drought.

**MC:** It's a very, very difficult time right now. I was asking Billy Cook who directs our agriculture division how he would compare this point in history to the Dust Bowl. He said, "It's different. The primary reason for the difference is the farming is much more sophisticated today than it was back then. But if you want to compare weather trends, it's as bad now as it was back then."

**JE:** If the land hadn't have been managed properly we would still be seeing these dark plumes of clouds over our head.

**MC:** We would.

**JE:** Which floated all the way to New York City by the way.

**MC:** People putting their chairs on top of their cars and moving to Bakersfield. Another thing that strikes me as you think about The Foundation—this wasn't the first foundation that he created. I actually think The Vivian Bilby Foundation was created before The Noble Foundation.

**ANB:** It was.

**MC:** This was a man who in 1945 when he created The Noble Foundation was 45 years old. I can think about what I was thinking about at age—but he was thinking about the future. He was thinking about mankind. It's incredible that his vision was what it was at a young age. He thought about this back when he was a Regent. He was already starting to think

about funding the University. He was already starting to think about a vehicle by which he shared his resources with the future. He was really unique in my opinion as I think about what he did and the way he went about things. He was remarkably unique.

**JE:** And remarkable to accomplish all of that because he died of a heart attack at age 53. Fifty-three years old—think of how young that is and to have accomplished all of this by that age.

**ANB:** I've got children that are older than that. (Chuckle)

**MC:** Yes, it's a remarkable story.

**JE:** Because of his great service to the University of Oklahoma he was to receive the Distinguished Service Citation, which was the highest award the University could bestow. However, he was not there to accept that. That would have been April 19th and he died on February 14th on Valentine's Day. But that shows you in what high esteem he was held.

**MC:** Oh, I can't imagine anybody more deserving as you look of the history of the University from the 1930s to the 1940s, Lloyd Noble played a critical role in their success.

**JE:** Yes.

## Chapter 13 - 3:34

### Ann & Her Father

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**John Erling:** If somebody said to you, "Tell me about your dad." How would you sum him up? What would you say about him?

**Ann Noble Brown:** Nobody would sum him up, really—he was a great dad I will say that.

After my mother died, he had three little children. He tried to always be home on the weekends. He didn't always make it, but he certainly tried to have a presence as much as possible. He was very, very busy obviously. His mother, my grandmother, had been Presbyterian. I guess daddy was raised a Presbyterian. I don't know how much he went to church before he married, but he did love to go to church when he was home. Of course we went every Sunday because my grandmother made sure that we did that. Sometimes daddy would even fly home if he was not very far away, like Tulsa or someplace, he would fly home and take us to church every Sunday. The Presbyterian minister in his last years lived across the street from us, so most often on Sunday we would always have fried chicken and gravy or mashed potatoes and roast or something. Jenny would cook and he would have the preacher and his wife come over for lunch,

because they didn't have any children at that point. Then we reviewed the sermon. If he thought it was a really good sermon he would tell him, and if he thought it wasn't, he would tell him. (Chuckle) So he had a really close relationship with Dr. Glenn McGee the minister. But to sum daddy up, I don't know how to do that.

**JE:** He was a family man obviously.

**ANB:** Yes, he certainly wanted to be.

**JE:** And he worked to be one even though his business took him on travels, but it certainly seems like he worked to be a family man, isn't that true?

**ANB:** Yes. We had what you would call a nanny now. She came to live with my mother and dad when they lived in Oklahoma City. She was supposed to stay six weeks and she ended up staying about 20 some years. When daddy was gone, we certainly had plenty of looking after, maybe more than we wanted. My grandmother and her housekeeper and aunts and you know everybody was trying to see that we walked the straight and narrow hopefully.

**JE:** You dedicated much of your time to the community yourself?

**ANB:** I didn't do a whole lot. I was on the board of OCU for a while and then I was on the Omniplex board. I was also in the Junior League. But I caught on pretty quick with three little children that I needed to be home.

**JE:** Your husband David is known as Dr. Brown. What was his profession?

**ANB:** Orthopedics.

**JE:** I want to thank you for our time here. I really appreciate it very much. You must be terribly proud of your father Lloyd.

**ANB:** Yes, of course.

**JE:** We talked about him being such a visionary for himself and for the Foundation and for The University of Oklahoma. That must bring tremendous pride to you.

**ANB:** Yes. You know the older I become, I certainly appreciate more what he did than I did at the time. I just thought everybody's dad was gone someplace working. (Chuckle) But like I said, I certainly appreciate it more that he did spend time with us.

## **Chapter 14 - 11:56**

### **Lloyd Noble Speech**

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**John Erling:** Now you are about to hear the voice of Lloyd Noble. He spoke at The Third Annual Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation Prize Awards Luncheon on November 19th, 1949 in the First United Methodist Church in Ardmore, Oklahoma. More than 400

people were in attendance, including Congressman Carl Albert, who went on to become a Speaker in the United States House of Representatives. Carl Albert also spoke—but first, here is Lloyd Noble, just three months before his death from a heart attack February 14th, 1950. He was 53 years old.

*Editor's note: The speech is not transcribed in its entirety. Please listen to Chapter 14 starting at time code 0:29.*

**Lloyd Noble:** ...Lest I go further into my remarks and as the boy says, forget to remember, I want to tell these folks here from the rural areas how happy I am that you are with us today. There is something about rural people that makes me feel at home. As near as I can put it into language, if you find a man or a woman who is interested in growing something, whether it's plants, whether it's vegetables, whether it's a major crop, or whether it's over in the field of animal life—I'll show you someone who has an interest in something besides themselves. To say it conversely, if you find a man or a woman who isn't interested in growing living things, then you find a man or a woman who is totally selfish, who has no interest in anybody except themselves. That's one of the reasons that I feel so much at home when I am among rural people. Plenty of things have transpired since as a boy I used to run over the streets and across the lots that constituted the town of Ardmore in Pickens County, Indian Territory. Many improvements have been made. The muddy streets are gone. We have pavement. The trails are now sidewalks. We have hard surface roads in our rural areas and bridges. We have many modern conveniences that have not only come into our towns, but have become practical necessities in our rural homes as well. Despite these things that have taken place, despite these magnificent improvements that have been made, we are still disturbed, even more disturbed than we were when I was a youngster. At that time, we heard no discussion of foreign affairs. There was practically never an article on foreign affairs. The only place we heard foreign affairs discussed was in our churches when they called attention to our duties to go on foreign missions. Everyone was more or less content. Now we have fought two World Wars. Blood of members of families here have been spilled on foreign battlefields—blood of your neighbor's family. A much different picture than it was when I grew up as a boy. When we consider the fact that our rural areas have the lowest divorce rate and consequently reflect the highest degree of happiness percentagewise in our nation, if we agree with that further, that all of the things that we do that are worthwhile must start in the hearts and souls of individuals. If we agree with the premise that all of the rights that we have primarily belong to the individual, to the private citizen—if we further agree that everything that's good in government,

whether it's in the local community, or the state, or in the nation must spring from the home. If we likewise recognize that no civilization has outlived the usefulness of its soil. When the soil is destroyed, then the nation is gone. Isn't it then very appropriate that a meeting of this kind should be held in a building that's dedicated to good conduct and understanding between men? This Foundation has only been in existence for three years. We've had many problems. We started it immediately after the war. We found a shortage of equipment and personnel. We are now just about like a boy who has learned to walk. We can feel that we are just about ready to run, but we can't run alone. The only degree to which we can make real progress, is the degree to which that when we have ideas, that we can get those ideas motivated into action by you people who are here today and your neighbors and friends. You are the people that have actually got to be able to carry the ball—we may be able to call a few signals, we may be able to be of help, but the real burden, the real responsibility is on you. It's nice to have agency people here with us today that we are working with. They have a tremendous job. They have made tremendous progress despite the fact that at times we feel that it's slow. If we can all realize within ourselves that there is no place in the world where men and women can be as happy and independent as a kid on the farm in the rural areas. Areas where a man as he goes out to work—his wife can say to herself—that guy understands our land and what to do with it. The result of what he does, can take care of me, and our youngsters. In turn, as he is out there working in the field, he can say to himself—that girl back there at the house understands what to do with the things I make. She knows how to husband the result of my labor. Together, we can rear a family that will be not only a credit to us—but to our community and to our nation. As they get that realization, they can accumulate a degree of independence that they can say to our public servants, fine men like Carl Albert, others when they start to waiver, "We are going to hold you strictly accountable for the result," because they will have that independence and courage. If we can make a small contribution to our Foundation and we are working with you agency people to that end, then we can feel that degree, each one of you as you contribute your part and we are. We will feel that we have helped make this community, this state and the nation and shall have made our individual contribution—coming back to that fundamental belief that the individual is responsible, not the community, the state and the nation. We will have made our individual contribution toward making the world a better place in which to live.

**Chapter 15 - 4:43****Carl Albert Speech**

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**John Erling:** Now we will listen to some remarks from the same event, The Third Annual Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation Prize Awards Luncheon, November 19th, 1949. We hear Oklahoma Congressman Carl Albert as he spoke in support of The Noble Foundation.

**Carl Albert:** Ladies and Gentlemen, I didn't come here to make a speech—I came here to see the folks that are rebuilding these fine counties in southern Oklahoma. I have been impressed by what the preceding speaker said. I have heard the gentleman with whom he's associated several times. Mr. Bromfield and if you ever want to hear a fine soil conservation speech, I hope someday you'll get him down here if you haven't already done it, because he's one of the best. I also appreciated the remarks that Mr. Noble made and the fact that he had outlined to you what The Noble Foundation is trying to do. Looking over this audience, seeing a lot of farmers and businessmen, we are really looking over a very small part of America. There are lots of people all over this country that feel that the federal government, or the state and county government, through a few government agencies can work out all of the problems of America. My friends, I don't care if we double the size of all of our government and double the appropriations, for all of our government, local, state and federal. I don't care how much money we spend on it, unless the people of the United States are willing to build up their country and build up their soil, the job will never be done, because the job is too big for government. We hear a lot about government in Russia. We hear a lot about the government getting big here. My friends the size of a country as large as the United States—it's so big that it's beyond the comprehension of a human being as to how big it is. We can fly over it in a few hours now, but it still is as big as it was when it took six months or a year to cross. It's an enormous thing. You and you alone can make it great. I think our government agencies in the field of agriculture are doing a fine job. But I would like to see more and more private initiatives in this work, such organizations as The Noble Foundation. Above all, I would like to see more and more of the farmers and the businessmen and particularly the boys and girls get behind this job of rebuilding the soil of America. I want to close with just this one thought. I heard one of the great soil experts of this country make this statement not long ago. He said, "We still have in this country about 500 million acres of soil. We've lost about 100 million acres of good soil that probably can never be redeemed. But these 500 million acres that we have can double its productive power in a few years if the people will do the things on it that they

ought to do. We think about Columbus and his great discovery of America. My friends, if the people of his country did that, they would be rediscovering a new continent right here in our own country. Thank you. (Applause)

**Lloyd Noble:** We thank you for those very profound statements Mr. Albert.

## Chapter 16 - 0:36

### Conclusion

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**Announcer:** You have just heard the voices of Carl Albert, Lloyd Noble and his daughter, Ann Noble Brown. Hopefully, you will want to know more about the life of Lloyd Noble. Please consult our Bookstore for further reading on his life. To learn more about The Noble Foundation, visit their website at [Noble.org](http://Noble.org). Thank you for listening to another Oklahoma story on [VoicesofOklahoma.com](http://VoicesofOklahoma.com). We would like to thank our sponsors who make this oral history website possible. Preserving Oklahoma's legacy one voice at a time—[VoicesofOklahoma.com](http://VoicesofOklahoma.com).