

OLIVER P. POE

OLIVER P. POE, representing business interests of Denton as an insurance agent, has likewise and has rendered signal service to the city while acting as mayor and as a member of the city council. He gave tangible support to many measures for the general good during his connection with the offices and his administration received the loyal support of the great majority of citizens, who recognized his worth and public-spirited devotion. His life record began in Fayette county, Alabama, on the 14th of November, 1849, his parents being **Thomas** and **Miriam R. (Reynolds) Poe**. The father was born in Arkansas, in the '50s, spending his remaining days there, his death occurring in 1861. His wife, who was also a native of Alabama, continued to live in Saline county until her death in 1874.

Oliver P. Poe was a young lad at the time of the removal of the family to Arkansas and maintained his residence in Saline county until 1876, when he came to Texas, settling on a farm in Denton county, where he devoted his attention to agricultural pursuits for five years. On the expiration of that period he took up his abode in the city of Denton and gave his attention to merchandising, while later he embarked in the hotel business. In 1891 he established his fire insurance agency and to the building up of a clientage has since given his attention. He represents sixteen of the leading fire insurance companies of the county and does the principal insurance business in Denton and the county, this work claiming his entire time and attention, save for the public-spirited support and active part which which [sic] takes in furthering measures for the general welfare.

For many years Mr. Poe has been prominently identified with civic affairs in Denton. He was called by his fellow townsmen to the office of city alderman, and while a member of the council as a staunch advocate of free public schools he aided in securing the establishment of the Central Public School. In April, 1884, he was elected mayor, in which office he remained for four years. Again he was chosen to that position in 1891 to fill out the unexpired term of Judge Carroll and at the next regular election was once more chosen by popular suffrage, serving until 1894. Then after an interval of two years he was elected in 1896 and at each biennial election was the popular choice for the office until 1904, when he declined to make the race again. No other incumbent has been so long retained at the head of the city government as has Mr. Poe, and he gave to the city a business like and progressive administration, bringing to the city's affairs the same promptness, dispatch and accuracy that characterizes his private business interests. Many of the beneficial public improvements that have made Denton a beautiful home city were inaugurated during his administration, including the building of the North Texas State Normal School in 1891 at a cost of thirty thousand dollars. It was also while he was mayor that ten acres of land were deeded to the state for the present building, which was completed in 1900.

Mr. Poe was united in marriage to **Miss Lizzie Owens**, who died on the 9th of April, 1899, while only a few months previous their son, **Richard B. Poe**, had passed away, his death occurring on the 2nd of January of that year. There were now three living children: **Ross E.**, **Eva C.** and **Oliver P. Poe**. Mr. Poe is a valued member of several fraternal organizations, being a Knight Templar, a Knight of Pythias, an Elk and an Odd Fellow. He is thoroughly in sympathy with the benevolent spirit which constitutes the basic element of all these organizations and he is likewise a faithful member of the Baptist church.

B. B. Paddock, *History and Biographical Record of North and West Texas* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1906), Vol. II, pp. 123-124.
