

**Volume 2**

**Number 102**

**Annie Oakley - I**

**Lead: As a girl Annie Oakley helped feed her destitute family with her keen marksmanship. In later years she made good use of those talents.**

**Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.**

**Content: At the Woman's Building at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 the progress of the women's movement being led by suffragists such as Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton was chronicled. A short distance away, a thoroughly liberated woman was**

**mesmerizing large crowds, doing man's work better than most men. Born Phoebe Ann Moses in the year before the Civil War began , Annie Oakley, the principle performer of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, was practicing what the women's movement was preaching.**

**When Annie was five, her father died, leaving the widow Moses with a house full of hungry kids and 40 inch Kentucky rifle. Sometime in the next three years the girl began to display an extraordinary natural talent. She could shoot straight and with a consistent accuracy that put her contemporaries to shame and meat on the family table. Soon she was supplying quail and pheasant to hotels**

**in Cincinnati 100 miles from her home in Drake County, Ohio.**

**In an era when sharpshooting was a highly considered skill if not essential to survival, Annie Oakley began to build a reputation for excellence in a field dominated by men. In 1875 one of the hotel owners who regularly bought her game arranged a trapshooting match with a celebrated traveling exhibition shooter, and Irish immigrant Frank Butler. Annie beat him, badly. He said later that he had never shot better in his life, but never did a person make more impossible shots than that little girl. A year later, Phoebe Anne became Mrs. Frank Butler.**

**They soon became stage partners as well. Frank taught his new wife to read and write as well as the fine arts of stagecraft and stunt-shooting. Butler would hold an ace-of-hearts in his hand and to the astonishment and absolute delight of audiences around the country, Annie would cleanly slice away the heart leaving only hole in the card. Their popularity grew until 1885 when they joined forces with one of the greatest showmen of his era, Buffalo Bill Coty. Next time: Annie shoots for the Queen.**

**At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.**

**Resources**

**Kasper, Shirl. *Annie Oakley*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992.**

**Sayer, Isabelle S. *Annie Oakley and Buffalo Bill's Wild West*. New York, NY: Dover Publishing Company, 1981.**

**Riley, Glenda. *The Life and Legacy of Annie Oakley*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994.**

**Vonada, Damaine. "Annie Oakley Was More Than a 'Crack Shot in Petticoats,' " *Smithsonian* 21(6, September 1990), 131-148.**

**Copyright by Dan Roberts Enterprises, Inc.**