

## NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

MEMBERS OF  
BOY SCOUT TROOP 13 OF ADA, OKLAHOMA, HAVE WON  
THEIR "TRAIL AWARDS"

Members of Boy Scout Troop 13 of Ada have completed a three-year program for their "Trail Awards" and achieved outstanding field research that has pointed up the study of the actual route of the "Texas Cattle Trail," carried on in the Editorial Office of the Oklahoma Historical Society for a number of years.

The "Texas Cattle Trail" is shown on post-Civil War maps of Indian Territory, particularly U.S. Map of 1876 (Interior Dept., General Land Office). The evidences of this old Trail are seen from the crossing of the main Canadian River below the mouth of Little River in present Hughes County, and southwest and south through present Pontotoc, Johnston and Bryan counties to the mouth of the Washita on Red River. The Trail was originally the "Big Osage Hunting Trail" from Claremore Mound (1802) up the Arkansas to a crossing a few miles below the mouth of the Cimarron (once called the Red Fork River), thence south on the east side of the "Cross Timbers" through present Tulsa, Creek, Okfuskee and Hughes counties to the crossing of the Canadian and thence southwest and south as given above. This same "Big Osage Hunting Trail" from the crossing of the Canadian to the mouth of the Washita was traveled by the famous Dragoon Expedition under the command of General Henry Leavenworth, out of Fort Gibson in 1834, and is indeed noted in the history of Oklahoma.

Boy Scout Troop 13 is sponsored by the First Methodist Church of Ada, Pontotoc, County, under the direction of Scoutmaster Bill Tinsley and Assistant Scoutmasters, W. O. Kirby and Harrell Crawford. The evidences of the old Trail north and east of Ada were found in many places and some of the outstanding historic sites visited by the Boy Scouts, particularly the region of "Buffalo Valley" pointed out personally to them by Judge Orel Busby of Ada. Judge Busby's fine account of beautiful "Buffalo Valley" was published in *The Chronicles* for Spring, 1962 (Vol. XL).

From Ada south to the Pontotoc-Johnston County line, the Boy Scouts truly pioneered the search and discovery of

the evidences and ruts of this old Texas Trail, under the direction of Scoutmaster Tinsley who consulted with the Editor in regard to her studies for a number of years, of the route on U.S. topographical maps as well as her field trips on the highways and country roads in Pontotoc and Johnston counties. Important historic sites and the route of the "Texas Trail" now have been determined in this region, including the beautiful "Canyon Spring" best known and now temporarily marked as "Dead Man's Spring," a few miles southwest of Jesse in Pontotoc County. This spring is reported the site of one of the old-time Chickasaw court house grounds in old Pontotoc County, Chickasaw nation (original county organized in 1856). The Editor is particularly gratified that her own studies of the Texas Cattle Trail (route of the Dragoon Regiment) marked on maps were corroborated by the findings of the Boy Scouts of Troop 13 under the direction of their Scoutmasters. She had the pleasure and the experience of walking along evidences of this Trail and visiting historic sites that she had long sought, one day in September (1964) with Mr. and Mrs. Tinsley and Mr. Bob Wallace. The Editor has in preparation a manuscript on the interesting history of this old "Texas Trail" for *The Chronicles*, on which the Boy Scouts of Troop 13 and their dedicated Scoutmasters have contributed and gathered valuable data.

(MHW)

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NEW HOPE BAPTIST MISSION, CHEROKEE NATION  
1832

A letter dated September 19, 1964, from the Reverend H. D. Ragland, Minister of the First Methodist Church of Cherokee, Oklahoma is accompanied by his notes on the site of New Hope Baptist Mission old Cherokee Nation. His letter is accompanied by a plat of the area showing the site of this early Mission and the location of the grave of Reverend Duncan O'Bryant its founder. *The Chronicles* presents the notes by Mr. Ragland who is a former contributor to the magazine, of articles on early missions in Oklahoma and researcher on the location of historic sites in this region.

Mr. Ragland asks in his letter to the Editor: "Which, in your opinion, is the oldest Baptist Mission in Oklahoma? Was it New Hope or Ebenezer mission or church established among the Creeks?" (Parenthetically, it should be pointed out to avoid confusion among those interested in early mission history that this "New Hope Baptist Mission" is not the same institution as the noted "New Hope Academy"

[sometimes referred to as "New Hope Mission"] operated by the Methodist missionaries near old Skullyville in the Choctaw Nation, which was established by the Choctaw General Council as a "Seminary" for Choctaw girls in 1842.)

The Editor here gives historical notes in reply to Mr. Ragland's questions; New Hope Mission among the Cherokees was established by the Reverend Duncan O'Bryant soon after his arrival in May, 1832, at a site near the Barren Fork River in the Cherokee Nation, about two miles west of the Arkansas boundary.

The Baptist General Convention had appointed the Reverend Humphrey Posey as missionary to the Cherokees in 1817. He commenced the well known Valley Towns Baptist Mission in 1820, on the Hiwassee River within the western boundary of North Carolina. In 1821, a mission station consisting of a school house and a dwelling house was in operation by Mr. and Mrs. Duncan O'Bryant at Tinsawatee, some sixty miles southeast of Valley Towns Mission. Tinsawatee was a day school which had 65 pupils in attendance in 1823—40 pupils regularly.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. and Mrs. O'Bryant with the consent of the Board of the General Convention left the Baptist Church work at Tinsawatee in 1830 and came west with some eighty Cherokee families from Georgia. They arrived in the Indian Territory in 1831, and were quick and industrious in providing comfortable living quarters in their new location. Mr. O'Bryant held church in his own log dwelling on Sunday before it was finished, with fifteen members of the Baptist mission work back in Georgia among those in attendance. A church building was completed before the end of 1832, and school was opened here with 20 pupils. In the meantime, a gristmill and sawmill were opened about one-half mile southwest of the church, on Barren Fork River, a fine spring-fed stream.

The Board of Managers of the Baptist General Convention in its meeting on May 6, 1820, appointed the Reverend Francis Flourney of Georgia to establish a mission among the Creek people. This mission was undertaken by the Georgia, Ocmulgee and Ebenezer Associations. These three Associations in their meeting in 1822 appointed the Reverend Lee Compere of the Charleston Association (South Carolina) as a missionary to the Creeks. He began a

<sup>1</sup>These notes are based on the Editor's previous research from several sources, including, Solomon Peck, *History of the Missions of the Baptist General Convention*, in the volume on American Missions published by Spooner & Howland (Worcester, 1849).

mission station at the Creek tribal "town" or community of Tukabatchi on the Chatahoochee River in Alabama, and reported within four years that his school had twenty-seven pupils, among them John Davis, one of his oldest pupils employed as his interpreter—"an intelligent and sober-minded youth."

John Davis was converted to the Baptist ministry, and was appointed missionary in 1830, to that portion of the Creeks who had moved to the Indian Territory, living in settlements mostly within the limits of present Wagoner County, Oklahoma, north of the Arkansas River. He did not organize a church but preached regularly at four different places, taught school three days a week, and visited and talked with the people in their homes for three years.

Mr. David Lewis, ordained in New York as a missionary to the Creeks in May, 1833, came west to the Indian Territory and joined John Davis. The missionaries united their plans, and on September 9, 1833, formed a church under the name of the "Muscogee Baptist Church." Before the end of the year, there were some sixty members of this church, among them the daughter of the noted "Gen. McIntosh." There were 74 pupils in the Sunday school, with a congregation of 300 usually in attendance at church. A meeting house, also used for the school, and other buildings were erected in 1833, and the mission station was named "Ebenezer." This station was located 3 miles north of the Arkansas River and 15 miles west of Fort Gibson, in the vicinity of present Tallahassee in Wagoner County.

Mr. H. D. Ragland's notes follow here:

#### LOCATION OF NEW HOPE BAPTIST MISSION

On October 10, 1955 the writer made a trip to the area of north-eastern Adair county for the purpose of locating the site of New Hope Baptist Mission which was established among the Cherokee Indians in 1832. The following interviews were taken of early settlers in the neighborhood:<sup>2</sup>

Alexander D. Wright who lived at Barren, Oklahoma accompanied me to the mission site and helped secure some of the information. He said that his father was Jesse V. Wright and his mother was Frances Wright (same name but not related). His grandfather on his father's side was Eli Wright and his grandfather on his mother's side was Cornelius Wright who married one of Rev. Duncan O'Bryant's daughters. He reported:

"I was born May 28, 1878 on my father's allotment [in NE 22, 17N, 26E]. The place was once in the possession of Eli Wright who

<sup>2</sup>This trip was made as the result of a request of Muriel H. Wright, Editor of the *Chronicle of Oklahoma*, in a letter dated January 12, 1955.

owned an old mill on Barran Fork Creek just below where Evansville Creek runs into the same [S1, 17N, 26E]. He secured the mill, I believe, from a person by the name of Beck who later operated a mill at Flint.

"On Barran Fork Creek, near the mouth of Evansville Creek, was a famous Baptist camp grounds. Religious services were held there in my lifetime.

"The old mill on Barran Fork Creek was abandoned in the 1890's. The buildings were torn down and the material was used in the construction of a little Baptist Church which stood upon the side of a hill near the old chimney place about one fourth mile northeast of the mill site. After the church was discontinued, the building was used for a barn.

"My brother and I visited the old court house located (in SE 18, 17N, 25E) near Christie, in the early day. It was a little log building but not in use. There were a number of bullet holes in the logs which were made at the time of the Proctor affair. The new court-house was located north of Strawberry Springs at a place called Going Snake Post Office. I have been there (SW 33, 18N, 25E)."

Eliz C. Wright, a brother of Alexander, lived on the Jesse V. Wright place. He was born March 11, 1850. He gave this information:

"I own a place in Section 5, 16N, 26E. I have heard early settlers say that there was an Indian village just south of my place. There are a number of graves still visible. The remains of a number of buildings were visible a number of years ago. This village site was about two tens south of my place."

Julius K. Adair, son of Virgil B. Adair, lived on the old Virgil B. Adair allotment situated in 10, 16N, 26E. He was born in 1831 at the present home. The house he lived in was built by Cornelius Wright in 1858. The frame material used in its construction was sawed at a mill on Pigeon Branch located about one and one half mile south of the house. He gave the following:

"I attended the old Piney School located at a site about a quarter of a mile north of the Frank Adair place. This school was housed in a little building, part frame and part log, built possibly in the 1870's

"I have heard my father say that the mission of Duncan O'Bryant was located about 150 yards from the home of Lee Akine."

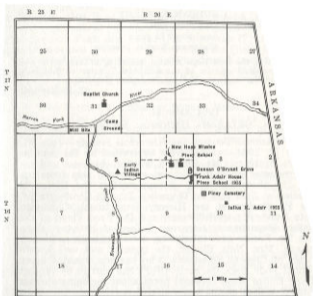
Lee Akine was born in 1880 near the old mission site. He stated:

"I have heard the early settlers say that part of the old Frank Adair house was built by Rev. Duncan O'Bryant. The chimneys are made of brick which is rare for this section of the country, especially in old buildings.

"I attended the old Piney School located near the mission site when only a child. At that time, there were two large piles of rocks back of the school house where we played during recess. We called the rock piles the old mission. They were the remains of the chimneys of the old buildings.

"When I was a little boy, Caleb Wright lived in the old Frank Adair house. Aunt Nancy Collins, his mother-in-law, lived with him."

<sup>3</sup>Nannie Angelina Cordery, daughter of Early and Charlottee (Berryhill) Cordery, married Joseph Collins and had a daughter, Ruth Ann who married Caleb Powell Wright. — Emmet Starr, *History of the Cherokee*, pp. 392, 398).



Plat showing site of New Hope Baptist Mission, 1812, and other historic sites in the old Cherokee Nation near the Broken Park River, in present Adair County, Oklahoma.

Site of New Hope Baptist Mission, Cherokee Nation

We used to visit them often and hear Aunt Nancy tell of the early days. She said she lived in the Adair house during the Civil War. The old mission building was standing at the time but not in use. It was a large building with chimneys at each end and stood on the hill just northwest of the Adair place. She said that during the war, the Pias often camped in the mission building. She had seen the light of fires in the chimneys many times. During the latter part of the war the woods caught fire and the building burned."

A few hundred yards north of the Adair house is the grave of Rev. O'Bryant. The tombstone was still there but not erect. The inscription on it read:

✓ DUNCAN O'BRYANT  
Died Aug. 1834  
Aged about 59 years  
Missionary Baptist Preacher

The site of the New Hope Mission, according to these interviews is in the northwest corner of the southeast Quarter of Section 4, Township 16 North, Range 26 E. of the Indian Meridian.

H. D. Ragland

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#### 1964 ANNUAL TOUR OKLAHOMA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Annual Tour of the Historical Society—June 11, 12 and 13, 1964—was entirely supervised by the Administrative Secretary, Mr. Elmer L. Fraker, this year, and has been reported an enjoyable and successful trip from the time the three bus-loads of tourists left the Historical Building at 7:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 11. Professor Leroy H. Fischer of the History Department, Oklahoma State University at Stillwater, and Dr. Fred Floyd of the History Department, Nazarene College at Bethany, along with Mr. Fraker gave interesting notes and talks on history enroute. Mrs. Nola Rigdon, the popular and well known citizen of Crescent, Oklahoma, who has accompanied every Annual Tour since the early 1950's has sent in by request of the Editor some personal notes about incidents and the "Stops" visited as the buses circled north from Oklahoma City, westwardly through the Cherokee Strip (northern counties of the state) and then south visiting historic places in some counties of Western Oklahoma, arriving back at the Historical Building at 5:30 p.m. the following Saturday.

Guthrie was the first stop Thursday morning. The tourists gathered at the site of the old City Hall where the State Constitutional Convention met in November, 1906 through the spring of 1907. Here Dr. Fischer gave an excellent, brief talk on the history of Guthrie as the former Oklahoma territorial capitol and first capital of the State (1907-1910). Mrs. Rigdon was the only person present in the crowd who had attended a session of the Constitutional

Convention here when she came with her class in civics as a student in Noble County High School. The first Oklahoma State capitol at Guthrie, now a part of the Masonic Temple with many beautiful rooms, was also visited.

Other stops during the morning included the remains of the one-time Mulhall Ranch. The site was pointed out of the one-time famous "101 Ranch" where the Miller Brothers operated their wide farm and ranch business in early Oklahoma days, which was the base where they organized their fabulous "101 Wild West Show" that toured the world. A stop was made at "Cowboy Hill" (located on the south bank of the Salt Fork River near U.S. Highway 77), a memorial plot presented to the care of the Oklahoma Historical Society by the old Cherokee Strip Cow Punchers Association where are the graves of Zack Miller, one of the Miller Brothers, and of Jack Webb, a one-time "trick shot" with the "101 Ranch Show."

The Ponca City "Pioneer Woman Museum" was visited at noon. The Continental Oil Company plant was toured after luncheon, and Vice President Bosworth of the Company gave a talk with an imposing array of figures of Conoco's far flung business enterprise.

The buses then traveled southwest into Noble County and to the home of Governor Henry Bellmon near Billings, during a short visit receiving a warm welcome by the Governor's relatives and young friends. The night was spent at Enid. The speaker at the evening dinner was President George H. Shirk of the Historical Society, on the subject "The importance of the Cherokee Strip in the settlement of Oklahoma."

Friday morning time was spent watching the operation of grain elevators at some of the world's largest flour mills at Enid. Mrs. Rigdon comments in her notes that this is "an old story to her in Oklahoma" but the visiting tourists were fascinated watching the emptying of carloads of wheat—2,000 bushels of grain dumped by great trucks in five minutes.

The highlight of the day, was the visit to the old sod house standing in Alfalfa County—the world's only original sod house remaining out of the hundreds of thousands of this type of pioneer dwelling that dotted the Southern Plains region in America. The Oklahoma Historical Society now owns this rare relic in history. The sod house stands on the quarter section claim staked by Marshall McCully who made the "run" into the Cherokee Strip on September 16, 1893. He built the two-room sod house in the summer of 1894, and it remained his family home until 1909 when



he erected a two-story frame dwelling in the yard just west of it. The two-story house and a huge elm tree in the yard have protected the old sod house, and now the Oklahoma Historical Society is arranging for its perpetual care and preservation.

Lunch was served at Alva, County Seat of Woods County and the home city of Oklahoma's Northwestern State College. The buses rolled west through the County to Freedom, crossed the Cimarron River bridge on State Highway 50 into Woodward County, and east of this highway visited the Alabaster Cavern State Park. A long walk was made through the interesting cavern which someday may be one of Oklahoma's main featured attractions. Mrs. Rigdon specially notes the pleasure in seeing Boiling Springs State Park near Woodward. Friday night was spent at Woodward. This City was once "home town" of Temple Houston, known as a lawyer with talent as an orator, who made the "run" at the opening of the Cherokee Strip in 1893. He was the son of the noted Sam Houston, pre-Civil War governor of Texas, who had a place in the early history of the Cherokees in Oklahoma.

Early travel on Saturday morning was southwest from Woodward via State Highway 16 to Gage where the U.S. Weather Station was visited. Travel continued south into Ellis County, the west line of which is the noted 100th Meridian, West Longitude, the western boundary of Oklahoma from the south line of the Panhandle, extending on south to Red River.

The next stop about five and a half miles southwest of Arnett, Ellis County, was at the "ghost town" site of old Grand, the County Seat of old Day County which was first designated as County "E" at the opening of the Cheyenne-Arapaho Country to white settlement, by "run" on April 19, 1892. The water supply at Ioland, the first County Seat was very bad—hard and "gyppy." The frame court house here was burned to the ground from unknown causes on the night of November 18, 1893, and the next day, the County Seat was established at Grand more than fifteen miles west of Ioland. Day County was prominent in Territorial affairs until it was named Ellis County in the State Constitution in 1907, with part of the old county incorporated in present Roger Mills County. The site of old Grand with its fine spring is today the annual meeting place of the Old Settlers Association of the region which delayed its annual picnic this year to meet the Annual Tour of the Historical Society on Saturday, June 13. Mrs. Rigdon expresses her pleasure with this meeting, and says that she

"would have liked to have spent the day there visiting with those old timers."

It was a long drive from old Grand to Southard in the northern part of Blaine County. The buses arrived two hours late to find there could be no visit to the Southard gypsum mines which were closed for the noon hour.

Luncheon was served after traveling on to Roman Nose State Park north of Watonga, in Blaine County. Here Dr. Fred Floyd gave an interesting talk on the coming of the railroads to Western Oklahoma, especially that built in old Day County. Mrs. Rigdon expresses her pleasure that young Curtin, son of "Cowboy" Curtin of Watonga is in a very good, group picture that she took at the Park after luncheon.

Rains had made it impossible to visit the grave of Jesse Chisholm near the North Canadian River in Blaine County, so only a short stop was made at the roadside, Historical Marker for "Jesse Chisholm" at Greenfield on U.S. Highway 281 ( & 270), the marker indicating the grave site about 5 or 6 miles east.

The buses traveled on to the old Darlington Agency established about two miles north of present El Reno, for the Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians in 1870, by the Quaker Agent, Brinton Darlington. This place is the location of the State Game Farm, only one of the old agency buildings left standing here.

The three buses arrived Saturday afternoon at the Historical Building on the scheduled time shown in the 1964 "Annual Tour" leaflet with its fine copies of old photos, which had been prepared by Mr. Fraker and given the tourists as a memento of the good trip that they had this year to some of the historic sites and natural feature attractions in Western Oklahoma.

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#### FIRST PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN KAY COUNTY

The first school in Kay County was the Kaw Indian Boarding school opened in 1874 at a site on Beaver Creek near the Kaw Agency near Washunga. The Kaw (or Kansa) tribe had purchased 100,000 acres in the north-western corner of the Osage Reservation (Indian Territory), and had moved from Kansas to their new home in June, 1873. When the Cherokee Outlet was opened to white settlement on September 16, 1893, the region along the border of Kansas included in present Kay County was

designated as "County K" by the Presidential Proclamation of August 19, 1893, opening the "Outlet" to white settlement by a "run" for land claims. The Kaw tribal members had taken allotments of land in severalty (405 acres) by agreement with the United States in 1902, and the former Kaw reservation area was attached to Kay County, Oklahoma Territory, by a Congressional Act of 1904.

Mr. Clarence S. Bassler, active member of the Payne County Historical Society, has contributed a brief account of the building of the first schoolhouse in 1894 as a public school in Kay County. Mr. Bassler is the last survivor of persons mentioned in the "Report" accompanying his account which follows:

#### FIRST PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN KAY COUNTY

When the Cherokee Outlet was opened to settlement on September 16, 1893, there was one of the greatest scrambles for homes that has ever been seen. Families were brought together from all parts of the country in hope of getting a new start in life, and there were children to be educated.

The first schoolhouse in Kay County was about 8 by 10 feet in size, and was erected in 1894 at Enterprise, six miles east of Ponca City. It was on the highest point of District 74, two miles west of the Godance Soldani ranch, and two miles north of the Sylvester Soldani ranch. The ranches were across the Arkansas River in the Osage Nation.

Some of the fathers in the district met in the dugout of Jim Harkelroad and decided who would be board members and where the schoolhouse would be, and then went to work to build it. The floor was dug about two feet below the surface of the ground and then sod was ploughed and laid up like a stone wall. There were four half-windows set in the north, south and west sides and a wide homemade door in the east. Poles were laid across the top and then wide boards bent over the poles, and these were covered with tarred paper. A few benches were provided.

The first teacher was Annie Poffenbarger who had just finished the 8th grade in Cowley County, Kansas. Some of the folks thought Annie could teach the school, so she went to Kildare, and the county superintendent, Prof. Sullen, gave her an examination. She received a third grade certificate. She had about fifteen pupils.

School began on March 4, 1894, and was for three months. The salary was \$25.00 per month, payable in script. That summer Annie went to normal school, and at the close did not receive a certificate because she, like several others, was too young. A teacher must be 18 years old and she was only 18.

The first schoolhouse was too small, so the men of the district in the summer of 1894 built another sod house, but above ground. It had regular sized windows, and a shingle roof with good desks. This was the first school that I attended. The building lasted about three years, until the walls had settled enough that there was danger of the wind blowing them in on the pupils. Ed. Galvin taught the school three years.



A cry went up that the district must have a good frame building. The patrons formed a special committee to raise money by subscription, because the district had no money with which to build. W. S. Shreckengaust was president of the committee, and Thomas Bassler was secretary. Annie Stewart was the first teacher in the new building.

Following is the report of the builders of the Enterprise school-house, as written by the secretary:

Batchelder, O. T.<sup>1</sup>

December 18, 1897

At a special meeting of the people of school district No. 74 held at the school house, this evening, it was decided by motion, that owing to the strained relations existing between the building committee and the school board that in order to maintain friendly relations the school building committee give up possession of the building; consequently their report was accepted and the committee discharged.

#### Report

Batchelder, O. T. July 3, 1897

At a meeting of the patrons of District No. 74 held this day— it was resolved to build a school house by popular subscription, a committee consisting of W. S. Shreckengaust, President, Thomas Bassler, Secretary and W. E. Shinn, Treasurer, were appointed to solicit subscriptions and build the house. The house is to be built of pine 24 feet by 36 feet by 10 feet.

If sufficient subscriptions are not received the amount collected was to be returned to the donors. In accordance with the above the following persons subscribed the amounts set opposite their names, said amounts to be paid by the 15th of August, 1897.

W. S. Shreckengaust	\$15.00	W. E. Sturdevant	\$10.00
T. A. Jordan	10.00	J. L. Benton	5.00
T. A. Paddock	10.00	Charles Lano	10.00
J. H. Ritchey	10.00	W. S. Kenyon	\$10.00
W. E. Shinn	10.00	J. B. Kygar	10.00
W. L. Shreckengaust	2.50	F. M. Broiles	10.00
Charles Crooks	10.00	Guy H. DeLane	10.00
J. T. Poteat	15.00	J. O. Clifford	5.00
H. F. Gopport	10.00	Thomas Bassler	10.00
B. L. Guinn	10.00		

August 15, a meeting was held—and discussions as to proposed house freely indulged in—it was decided to make the house 22 feet wide instead of 24 as it would be more economical in the seating arrangement. The parties pledging paid either in money or pledges excepting J. H. Ritchey \$10.00 and W. E. Sturdevant \$10.00 both of whom failed to pay anything. The committee secured additional pledges as follows: Bert Bendure \$5.00, M. H. Nash \$5.00, H. Summers \$5.00, Jake Shurtz \$10.00, Gus Poffenbarger \$8.00, Gilbert Stockton \$2.50, Robert Norris, \$5.00, E. R. Thompson 10.00, Nic Reimer \$10.00, Mr. [Jeremiah] Klopp \$5.00, Cal Klopp \$5.00, Mr. [W. H.] Bendure \$5.00, all of which was subsequently paid.

<sup>1</sup>The village of Batchelder is shown on early maps of Key County, O. T., about six miles northeast of Ponca City.

The committee appointed a day for the purpose of laying the foundation—prior to which time T. A. Jordan hauled out the lime for use and Frank Steining hauled sand. On the appointed day E. R. Thompson, Taylor Poteet, Cal Klopp, Thomas Baseler, W. S. Shreckengast, Hi Summers, Gilbert Stockton, Frank Steining reported for work—quarrying rock, trenching, hauling rock and water and laying foundation were the order of the day. The next day a few of the faithful on hand with the addition of Tom Paddleford and Floyd Summers and W. S. Kenyon. The next day all played out but Thomas Baseler who finished what mortar was left and quit. The following day, Saturday, the different neighbors hauled the lumber from Ponca. The following week the foundations were finished for the builders. Shreckengast, Kenyon, Poteet, and others doing the work. To whom thanks are due for said donation.

Bids had been advertised for in the *Ponca City Courier*, and were answered by W. E. Sturdevant, Keck and Collingsworth, and St. Clair and Short. After due consideration the bid of St. Clair and Short was found to be the most acceptable, and consequently the contract was let to them, they having placed a certified check for \$50.00 with the committee to secure the fulfillment of contract.

The committee gave notice of a supper and dance to be held in the school house on the evening of October 28th. The ladies responded heartily to the request for donations resulting in plenty for all. The supper and dance netted the sum of \$48.16 besides giving all an enjoyable time. A special meeting was called for the 13th, of November at which time the \$10.00 received from the sale of the old school house was donated to the use of the committee. There not being money enough to meet all the expenses, an additional contribution was solicited resulting as follows:—W. S. Shreckengast \$1.00, Charles Crooks \$1.00, Herman Goppert \$1.00, Jake Shurtz \$1.00, Cal Klopp \$2.00, Nic Reimer \$1.00, T. A. Jordan 1.00, H. Summers \$2.00, Thomas Baseler \$1.00, M. H. Nash \$1.00, M. A. Barnes \$1.00, J. W. Willard \$1.00. This proving sufficient the committee ordered the floor built and the building plastered and finished.

Charles Lane, Jake Shurtz, Ed Shinn, and Clarence Baseler hauled the sand and water for the plasterers. The building was finished and ready for occupancy by the first of November on which date school began.

The committee met the contractors at Ponca City on the 30th day of October and settled in full, giving their individual note for \$13.60 to the Foster Lumber Co. and received a receipt in full for labor and material from St. Clair and Short, the contractors.

Saturday the 20th of November was the day for leveling the grounds, planting posts, etc. On this day no one responded but Charles Lane, wife and son, Mrs. [W. H.] Bendure, J. T. Ritchey and J. O. Clifford. For smallness of numbers and the amount of work performed, this small band deserves the greatest of praise. The committee desires at this point to enlarge on the help given by Charles Lane at all times and to thus publicly thank him for so doing. In conclusion the committee desires to thank all who have given so generously both of time and money to the building of so commodious a house. While the committee feel proud of their accomplishment, their pleasure is marred by the little disagreements that may have arisen from time to time and hope that time will erase these and that we may become one people in the general good of the whole neighborhood.

## Recapitulation

Total amount collected .....		\$805.15
Expense—Building proper .....	\$237.50	
Plastering .....	45.00	
Lime and Locks .....	4.00	
Sheathing .....	7.00	
Flue .....	7.00	
Returning lumber .....	.50	
Lumber for outhouse .....	3.50	
Balance .....	.65	
	\$305.15	\$305.15

Respectfully submitted,

W. S. Shreckengast, President  
 Thomas Bassler, Secretary  
 —Clarence S. Bassler

NOTES ON THE CLOSING OF THE ROLLS OF THE FIVE CIVILIZED  
 TRIBES, ALLOTMENTS OF LANDS IN SEVERALTY AND  
 THE CLOSING OF EACH OF THEIR GOVERNMENTS

Recently, there has been much interest in the history of the Five Civilized Tribes, relating to the work of the Dawes Commission in settling the great estates of these five Indian nations and the end of their respective governments in the months before Oklahoma was admitted as the 46th State of the Federal Union November 16, 1907. Mrs. Rella Looney in the Indian Archives, Mrs. Dorothy Williams and Mrs. Manon B. Atkins in the Library as well as the Editor have had many, many requests by telephone and letter on the work of the Dawes Commission, particularly seeking data on those whose names appear—or *might or should appear*—on the final rolls of each of the Five Civilized Tribes. These questions have repeatedly and specifically asked for the *date of the closing of the rolls of the Five Civilized Tribes*, this date ending the period in which claimants of Indian citizenship and membership in these Five Tribes could be registered and receive their per capita allotments of land in the area of the old Indian government domain—an area which covers approximately 20,000,000 acres of land in the last *Indian Territory*, about one-half of the state of Oklahoma.

The Editor's letter to Mrs. Walter Wood, active member in the Sand Springs Historical Society of Tulsa County is given here since it may be an assistance to those who are interested in the history of the Dawes Commission. This letter is a brief resume on the subject.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>For a more extended review on the history of the closing of the governments of the Five Civilized Tribes before Oklahoma statehood and the work of the Dawes Commission see Chapter XLVI, "The Dawes Commission," (written by Muriel H. Wright) appearing in *Oklahoma: A History of the State and Its People* by the co-authors, the late Dr. Joseph B. Thoburn and Muriel H. Wright, Vol. II, pp. 807-824 (New York, 1929).

## Oklahoma Historical Society

Editorial Office

August 19, 1964

Mrs. Walter Wood  
1008 West Sixth Street  
Sand Springs, Oklahoma  
Dear Mrs. Wood:

A reply to your letter received early in July has been unavoidably delayed owing to the many duties at this Editor's desk without direct stenographic assistance in this Office. Many letters that come in the heavy correspondence here require careful checking in research and briefing of the data to give the answers as correctly as possible.

Your letter asked for the "final date of closing of the Rolls of the Five Civilized Tribes. You quoted the statement from my *Indian Tribes Book*, page 57: "When the rolls of the Five Civilized Tribes were closed on March 4, 1907, the Cherokees . . . , etc." This statement appears under the history of the "Cherokees."<sup>2</sup>

Your letter also states that you realize the many difficulties that arose in the work of the Dawes Commission in making the final rolls of each of the Five Civilized Tribes, which was preparatory to the closing of the five Indian governments to clear the way for Statehood.

Each of the five Indian governments made agreements with the U. S. Commissioners for this work, and different problems arose in the settlement of their vast estates. Many acts of Congress during the twelve year period of the work of the Dawes Commission were passed covering various angles that arose from time to time. The Five Tribes were slow in making their respective agreements for final enrollment and allotment of lands to their rightful members. The Cherokees held off and refused to approve a second draft of an agreement written in 1901, thereby causing problems in the work of the Dawes Commission which was originally created on November 1, 1898 and finally ended on March 3, 1906 by law of Congress. Tams Bixby who had served on the Commission since 1895 was appointed through the Secretary of the Interior as "Commissioner to the Five Civilized Tribes" (1906) to carry on the work yet unfinished in the settlement of the vast properties of the five tribal estates.

*Brief Listing:* Acts of Congress and Ruling by Secretary of the Interior, Relating to the Five Civilized Tribes for Enrollment, Allotment of Lands in Severalty and Close of the Five Tribal Governments.

- (1) Act of Congress June 28, 1898, known in history as the Curtis Act. This Act included many provisions of the earlier Act of June 10, 1896 which contained 1st arbitrary legislation passed by Congress over the Five Civilized Tribes. In the Curtis Act additional provisions relating to the Five Tribes were made, the important one providing that the five tribal governments should continue in "full force and effect" until March 4, 1906. This gave eight years to complete the tribal rolls, allotment of lands in severalty and other tribal business. The five Indian governments were to close on March 4, 1906.

<sup>2</sup>Marjell H. Wright, *A Guide to the Indian Tribes of Oklahoma* (University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1951. 2nd printing, 1957).



- (2) Act of Congress of March 3, 1901 (Indian Appropriation Act). Secretary of Interior authorized to set the date after which no more applications for enrollment would be taken in the Five Tribes. This was prompted by the delays in the work of the Dawes Commission among the Cherokees. The Secretary of the Interior set the date July 2, 1902. This is taken as the date the rolls were closed—July 2, 1902 (Any special enrollments were made after this date, under the provisions of the Curtis Act).
- (3) Act of Congress of March 5, 1906 (Indian Appropriation Act), Provided for enrollment of newborn children in the Five Tribes: Choctaws and Chickasaws born between Sept. 25, 1902 and March 4, 1906; Creeks born between May 25, 1901, and March 4, 1906; Seminoles born before March 4, 1906; Cherokees born before March 4, 1906, this work delayed, however, by the case of a Cherokee claimant (or claimants) that had been carried to the U. S. Supreme Court.
- (4) U. S. Senate Resolution (37), March 2, 1906. Extended the closing of the Five Tribal Governments to March 4, 1907. (24 hours before the date of March 4, 1906 this S. R. 37 was hurriedly passed extending the Indian governments to March 4, 1907, since many claims for allotments and millions of dollars in Indian tribal properties had not been settled—i.e. written down on the books as closed—thus, jeopardizing the Indian tribal title.
- (5) Act of April 26, 1906, the most important legislation after the Curtis Act. (8 weeks after the passage of S.R. 37, the Act of April 26, 1906 continued the tribal governments in limited form until the completion of all tribal business affairs.)
- (6) On March 4, 1907, the old governments of the Five Tribes closed at midnight. This ended any further enrollment, allotment of lands in severalty and regular election of officials. The elected, Indian officials serving the executive departments at the passage of the Act of April 26, 1906 were continued under the U. S. Indian office. At the death of these elected officials, their offices were discontinued, or if necessary, new men were appointed by the U. S. Executive Department (Sec. of Int.) to the positions. This has been the case in the chief executive ("Principal Chief" or "Governor"), the position an appointive one, through the years to 1964.

I have written you in reply to your letter, in the form of this brief as others have been asking for information on the closing of the tribal rolls of the Five Civilized Tribes which was on July 2, 1902 (Rolling of Sec. of Int.); the closing of the newborn rolls which was March 4, 1906; and the close of the five Indian governments, which was March 4, 1907 (date extended from March 4, 1906, by S. R. 37—March 2, 1906—and further activated by the Act of April 26, 1906.)

Taras Birzy was the sole Commissioner for the Five Civilized Tribes appointed by the Secretary of the Interior to March 4, 1907 (appointment made under Act of Congress of March 3, 1905), this position as the sole Commissioner ceasing at the same time with the close of the five Indian governments, March 4, 1907.

Sincerely,  
Muriel H. Wright, Editor  
*The Chronicles of Oklahoma*

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REPORT OF HISTORY DEPARTMENT, OKLAHOMA STATE  
UNIVERSITY OCTOBER, 1964

The History Department of Oklahoma State University announces the following activities and staff changes effective during the summer of 1964: Dave Warren of the University of New Mexico became instructor; Alfred Levin, professor, became visiting professor of Russian history at the University of Michigan; Theodore L. Agnew, professor, was visiting professor of history at Emory University during the summer; Sidney D. Brown, associate professor, was visiting professor of history at the University of Colorado during the summer; Sarabelle Bray, temporary instructor, became assistant professor of history at Southwestern State College, Weatherford, Oklahoma; Floyd R. Goodno, temporary instructor, became assistant professor of history at Central State College, Edmond, Oklahoma; A. Hunter Dupree, professor of history at the University of California at Berkeley, accepted the 1964 Summer Lectureship in History and spoke on the development of science in the United States; Eugene Hellstern, instructor, served as director of the Junior Seminar on Latin Civilization, sponsored by the History Department and the Development Foundation.

—Homer K. Knight, Head  
Department of History

*Oklahoma State University  
Stillwater, Oklahoma*

## RECENT ACCESSIONS TO THE LIBRARY

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