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THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

A HISTORY OF BLAINE COUNTY

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

BY

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By

[Redacted Name]

[Redacted Title]

[Redacted Institution]

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<sup>1</sup>Castaneda, Pedro de, Narratives of Spanish Explorers p. 309

## History of Blaine County

### Chapter 1

#### Introduction

Oklahoma's part in the nation's history began in 1541 when Coronado, a Spanish explorer, marching northward from Mexico in search of the seven cities of Cibola crossed New Mexico and Arizona, thence after traveling southeast for many days turned due north crossing Oklahoma from the south to the north. Entering what is now Kansas, they traveled north to Quivera thence southwest across the Panhandle on their return to Mexico. Coronado is said to have been the first white man to set foot on Oklahoma soil and on this expedition Spain based her claim to this region.<sup>1</sup>

About this same time DeSoto, another Spanish explorer explored the southeastern portion of the country now known as the United States. He discovered the Mississippi River and crossing it sent expeditions into the interior. It is possible that they penetrated as far as what is now Oklahoma. DeSoto claimed all the land drained by the river for Spain and so strengthened the Spanish claim to Oklahoma.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Casteneda, Pedro de, Naratives of Spanish Explorers p. 329

<sup>2</sup>Ibid

LaSalle, a French explorer, in 1682 sailed down the Mississippi River to its mouth and planting the French flag at the point where the Father of Waters empties into the Gulf of Mexico, he claimed for France all the land drained by this river and its tributaries and called it Louisiana in honor of King Louis XIV. This included Oklahoma which had formerly been explored by Coronado and DeSoto in 1541.<sup>3</sup>

At the close of the French and Indian War in 1763, France ceded Louisiana to Spain. In a secret treaty of San Ildefonso October 1, 1800, Spain retroceded Louisiana to France. On April 30, 1803, President Jefferson, through our ministers at Paris, Livingston and Monroe, purchased the Louisiana Territory from Napoleon for \$15,000,000.00. What is now Oklahoma, except the Panhandle, was a part of this Louisiana Territory. This domain was formally delivered in 1803 at New Orleans and in 1804 at St. Louis but it was two years before any of the country which is now Oklahoma was visited by officials of the government. Within the twenty years following, however, Oklahoma was visited by several exploring expeditions and within its limits there were planted two military posts, Ft. Smith, 1817, and Ft. Gibson 1824, which remained garrisoned for nearly seventy years.

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<sup>3</sup>Gideon, D. C. History of the Indian Territory Vol. 2 p. 5

In 1802 the Choteau Brothers established the first trading post in Oklahoma. It was on Grand River where Salina in Mayes County is located today. In 1806 the Lieutenant James Wilkeson was detached from Zebulon M. Pike's expeditionary forces, at Great Bend on the Arkansas River in Kansas and with five enlisted men traveled down the Arkansas River through northeastern Oklahoma.<sup>4</sup>

George C. Sibley, United States Indian Agent at Ft. Osage on the Missouri River, visited the salt plains of the Cimarron and the Salt Fork which rises in what is now Blaine County and explored the surrounding country in 1811. It is possible that Sibley was the first Government official to visit Blaine County. In May, 1819 Major William Bradford with a company of soldiers, explored the valley of the Poteau and Kiamitia Rivers in southeastern Oklahoma, and in 1820 the exploring party under Major Stephen H. Long, returning from the Rocky Mountains, passed eastward across Oklahoma, the line of march being between the branches of the Canadian. As both branches of the Canadian pass through Blaine County it is almost certain that Major Long passed through Blaine County in 1820. As early as 1822 Thomas James, John McKnight and Robert McKnight started up the Canadian River with \$5500 worth of goods which they intended to trade to the Comanche Indians.

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<sup>4</sup>Wright M. H. History of Oklahoma p. 30

When the water became too shallow for navigation even with pirogues they stopped and built a fort, but before the fort was completed a heavy rain caused the river to rise and they abandoned the fort and with their pirogues and goods ascended the North Canadian until shallow water again stopped their progress. They encamped and built a fort and surrounded it with a stockade. This fort was known as James's Fort and was in what is now known as Blaine County, Oklahoma. It was located at the north end of the present Rock Island bridge at Watonga where a trading post was set up at which the Comanches traded. Here Thomas James formed a lasting friendship with one of the leaders of the Comanche tribe called the "One Eyed". Later they followed the warlike tribe of the Osage to the Salt Fork which is close to Ferguson, in Blaine County.

Washington Irving, in the autumn of 1832, accompanied an expedition of Rangers, as an interested witness of Wilderness sights and scenes and told of his experience in "The Tour of the Praries".

Two years later in 1834, an expedition, organized at Fort Gibson, was undertaken for the purpose of seeking to gain the friendship of the Comanche, Kiowa, Wichita and other tribes. It was organized under General Henry Leavenworth, It went far into the almost unexplored wilderness, visiting the villages of the Wichita Indians and of the other tribes.

Captain Nathan Boone, of the First United States Dragoons, in 1843 led an expedition which explored the valleys of the Arkansas, Cimarron, and Salt Fork Rivers in northern Oklahoma, and in 1845 James J. Albert<sup>5</sup> explored the valley of the Canadian and Washita Rivers in extreme western part of Oklahoma. In the spring of 1852 the Red River was explored by Captain Randolph Marcy.<sup>5</sup>

When the United States purchased the Louisiana Territory some of the southern statesmen saw a chance to rid their states of Indians who by this time had become a menace to the whites in the south. As a result of a series of treaties between 1817 and 1835 the Five Civilized Tribes were removed to Oklahoma where they were given lands and allowed tribal government. The Choctaws by the treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, 1830 were the first to receive lands in Oklahoma.<sup>6</sup> The Chickasaws agreed to move and settle with the Choctaws which they did but the two tribes were later divided. The Creeks by their treaty of 1832 were next to move and the Cherokees signed their treaty in 1835 and were removed to Oklahoma.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Marcy, Randolph, Exploration of the Red River 1852 p. 90

<sup>6</sup> Oklahoma Red Book

<sup>7</sup> Ibid



The Seminoles removed west from Florida in 1845 where they joined their relatives, the Creeks. In August 1856 the Creeks and Seminoles made a treaty with the government in which it was provided that a part of the Creek reservation should be set aside for the ownership and use of Seminoles alone.<sup>8</sup> Blaine county lay within this grant.

When the Civil War broke out the "Five Civilized Tribes" made treaties of alliance with the Southern Confederacy. When the war closed the United States as a punishment for their disloyalty compelled them to cede the western portion of the Indian Territory which was about equal in area to the eastern part, as a territory in the United States upon which to locate friendly Indians. This did not include the Cherokee Outlet. The Seminoles who were located between the two Canadian Rivers signed a treaty at Washington March 21, 1866 which provided that the Seminoles should cede to the United States their entire reservation which they received from the Creeks by treaty of August 7, 1856, for which they were to receive fifteen cents an acre thus all of Blaine County lying between the two rivers sold at one time for fifteen cents and for an acre.<sup>9?</sup>

<sup>8</sup> U. S. Statutes at Large Vol. XI p. 699

<sup>9</sup> U. S. Statutes at Large Vol. XLV, pp. 755-799

CHEYENNE-ARAPAHO

RESERVATION

1 Cherokee Outlet  
2 Cheyenne-Arapaho Reservation  
3 Blaine County  
4 Greer County  
5 Wichita Reservation

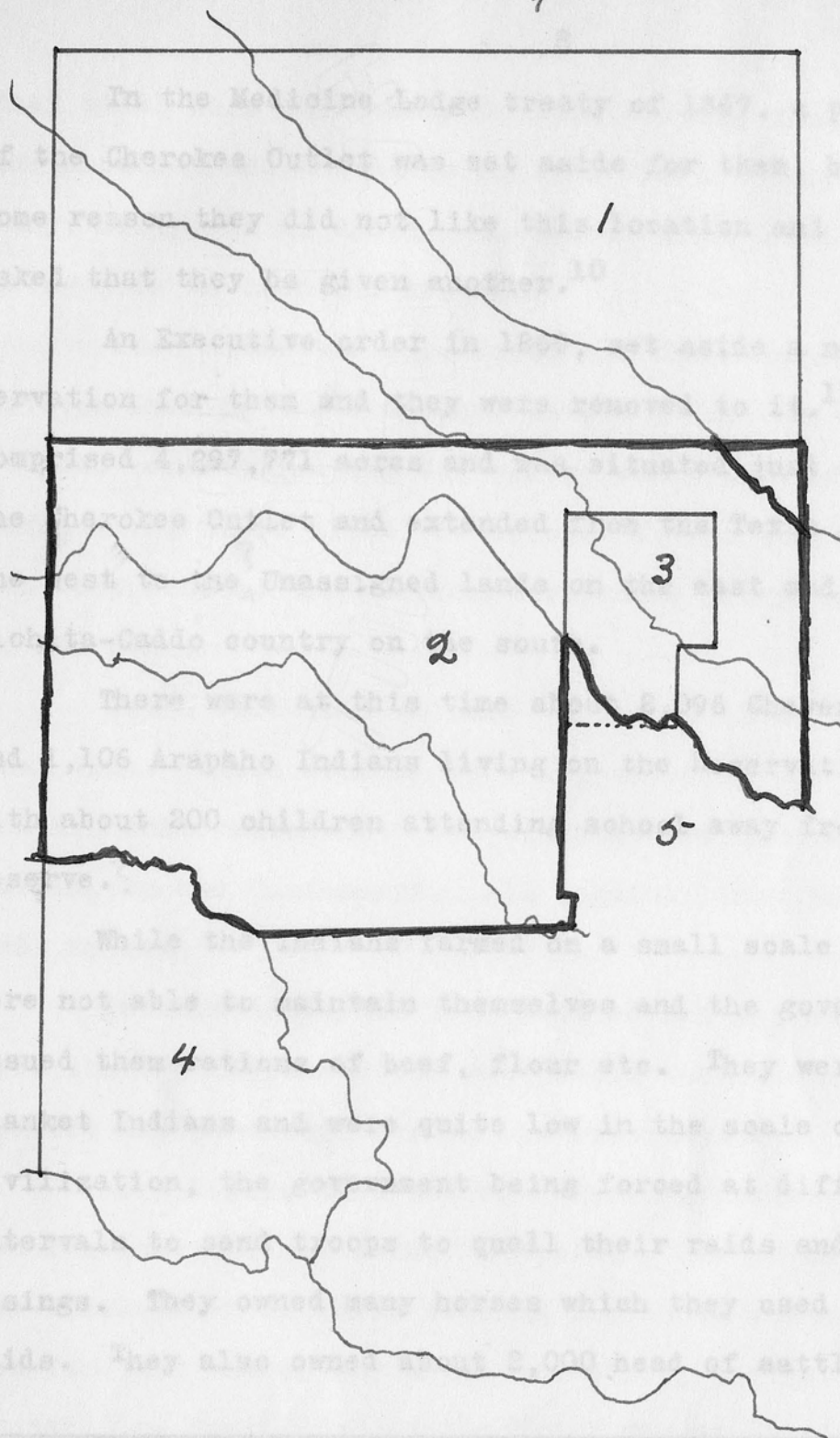
In the Medicine Lodge treaty of 1867, a portion of the Cherokee Outlet was set aside for them but for some reason they did not like this location and later asked that they be given another.<sup>10</sup>

An Executive order in 1869 set aside a new reservation for them and they were removed to it.<sup>11</sup> It

comprised 4,297,771 acres and was situated south of the Cherokee Outlet and extended to the Texas line on the west. The Unassigned lands on the east and to the Wichita-Comanche country on the south.

There were at this time about 5,000 Cheyennes and 1,106 Arapaho Indians living on the reservation with about 200 children attending schools away from the reserve.

While the Cheyennes on a small scale they were not able to maintain themselves and the government issued them rations of beef, flour etc. They were all blanket Indians and were quite low in the scale of civilization, the government being forced at different intervals to send troops to quell their raids and uprisings. They owned many horses which they used in their raids. They also owned about 2,000 head of cattle.



<sup>10</sup> U. S. Statutes Vol. 15 p. 595  
<sup>11</sup> Cheyenne-Arapaho 1869 Executive

# CHEYENNE-ARAPAHO RESERVATION

1 Cherokee Outlet
2 Cheyenne-Arapaho Reservation
3 Blaine County
4 Greer County
5 Wichita Reservation.

In the Medicine Lodge treaty of 1867, a portion of the Cherokee Outlet was set aside for them, but for some reason they did not like this location and later asked that they be given another.<sup>10</sup>

An Executive order in 1869, set aside a new reservation for them and they were removed to it.<sup>11</sup> It comprised 4,297,771 acres and was situated just south of the Cherokee Outlet and extended from the Texas line on the west to the Unassigned lands on the east and to the Wichita-Caddo country on the south.

There were at this time about 2,096 Cheyennes and 1,106 Arapaho Indians living on the Reservation with about 200 children attending school away from the reserve.<sup>?</sup>

While the Indians farmed on a small scale they were not able to maintain themselves and the government issued them rations of beef, flour etc. They were all blanket Indians and were quite low in the scale of civilization, the government being forced at different intervals to send troops to quell their raids and uprisings. They owned many horses which they used in their raids. They also owned about 2,000 head of cattle.

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<sup>10</sup>

U. S. Statutes Vol. 15 p. 593 Treaty of Medicine Lodge  
<sup>11</sup>Cheyenne-Arapaho 1869 Executive Order, Kappled, Vol. 1, p.839

They still wore their hair in long strands hanging over the shoulder and moccasins on their feet. They were lazy, dirty and at times sullen and unruly, the Cheyenne being more so than the Arapaho.

Indian Soon after the War,<sup>?</sup> President Grant appointed Brinton Darlington, a Quaker, as agent for the Cheyenne-Arapaho reservation and the agency was established at Darlington, named after the agent. It was located near the east line of the Cheyenne-Arapaho reservation close to Ft. Reno. There were four schools on the reservation at that time. These schools were supported by the government and Minnonite Missions. Two of them were located at Darlington and Cantonment. All together they had about 285 pupils.

Between 1880-1885 beef contractors who supplied beef for the Indians moved vast herds into the Indian country and pastured them on the reservation.<sup>?</sup>

Long before 1880 two well-defined trails crossed the reservation from Texas to Kansas. One of these was the Chisholm Trail which crosses the south eastern corner not far from the agency while the other, the western trail, crossed the South Fork of the Red River at Doan's Store thence northward across the western part of the reservation. Over these trails herds of cattle were driven annually to markets in Kansas.

Repeated efforts were made by these cattle men to lease the land from the government for grazing purposes, but the government refused to lease it to them. This caused the cattlemen to make private agreements with the Indians in leasing the land. John D. Miles who was the agent at that time heartily agreed in the leasing of the land, but this arrangement later proved very unsatisfactory.

"On December 12, 1882, the chiefs and warriors of the Cheyenne-Arapaho met in council and filed a written request to be permitted to lease some two million four hundred thousand acres of their land to ranchmen for grazing purposes at a price of not less than two cents an acre, One half of the money should be used in buying cattle for the Indians." <sup>13</sup>

John D. Miles who was agent at that time drew up the leases which were signed with seven cattlemen but were never sent to Washington. Others who had not been included in the leases brought the matter to an issue. As a result the Department of the Interior formulated a policy which recognized affirmatively any leases or objections to allowing the Indians to lease to cattlemen on fare and reasonable terms, and supervised by government. The government however, gave them no assurance of tenure or protection.

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<sup>13</sup> Sen. Ex. Doc. 17: 48th Congressional Record-2 Session.

This treatment only made matters worse. Trouble increased among the cattlemen and the Indians and in 1885 President Cleveland was forced to make a proclamation ordering all cattlemen to remove from the Cheyenne-Arapaho reservation.

In 1887 the Oklahoma Bill was introduced but failed to pass. In 1888 it occupied much time and attention. The final contest came during the session, in the winter 1888-89. After a hard fight the Oklahoma Bill passed the House early in February 1889. It was defeated in the Senate. Although the Boomers were defeated they were not discouraged. They promptly tacked a "rider" on the Indian Appropriation Bill which provided that the land of the so-called Oklahoma country should be opened to settlement.<sup>14</sup> The Senate was forced to accept the measure in that form.

Accordingly on March 23, Benjamin Harrison issued a proclamation in which he declared that the Oklahoma lands should be opened to settlement at noon April 23, 1889. This opening included the counties of Canadian, Cleveland, Kingfisher, Logan, Payne and Oklahoma.

In 1890 Beaver County was added by an act of Congress and in 1891, the Iowa, Sac and Fox, Potawatomi and Shawnee reservations were opened.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>OK. Red B. VI. p. 473 Oklahoma Vol. 2, p. 718

<sup>15</sup>Thoburn, History of Oklahoma Vol 2. p. 718

In 1892 the commission which had been appointed to meet with the Cherokees to induce them to sell their Outlet, had met the Indians of the Cheyenne and Arapaho and an agreement had at last been made by which each of these Indians was to take an allotment of 160 acres and the tribe was then to sell the remainder of the reservation to the United States for one and one half million dollars. Every Indian no matter how young, received a hundred sixty acres. Schools and school lands were reserved and by the spring of 1892 the land was ready for settlement.<sup>16</sup>

On April 12, President Harrison issued a proclamation that the land would be opened at noon April 19, and that any one entering before that time would forever forfeit all rights in it. This newly acquired country lay just west of Kingfisher and Canadian counties.<sup>17</sup>

The assembled multitude included people from practically every state in the Union, attracted there by the novelty of the situation. There were people of all classes and conditions posing as farmers, mechanics, laborers, and professional men composing the principle elements, though there was an unduly large proportion of adventurers, gamblers and sharpers. Peace and good order generally prevailed.

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<sup>16</sup> Thoburn, History of Oklahoma Vol. 2. p. 718.

<sup>17</sup> Oklahoma Red Book, Vol. 1 .

Most of the people were disposed to be civil and good natured, although there were many who came because of curiosity or who were actuated by a mercenary or speculative spirit. The vast majority were moved by an impulse to seek land and build homes.

As the waiting settlers increased in numbers in the camps scattered along the line some became so anxious that they disregarded the conditions set forth in the rules prescribed for the opening of the land to settlement, and eluding the vigilance of troops who patrolled the lines, slipped in and concealed themselves at points conveniently near to the best land so that they would not have to go far when the legal hour of opening arrived. These people were called Sooners and many were removed by the soldiers.

The one railroad in that part of the country was the Chicago Rock Island and Pacific Railroad. The first section of that road was completed to Hennessey in October 1889. In 1890 it reached as far south as Minco, just south of the Canadian River, where construction ceased until 1892.<sup>18</sup>

The train on this road brought many of the settlers to Kingfisher from where they intended to make the run into the Cheyenne-Arapaho country.

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<sup>18</sup>Bray, A. C. Thesis, M. A. History of Railroad building in Oklahoma. p. 69



On this train standing room was at a premium. Men rode on the roofs and steps of the coaches. The people who had encamped along the boundary of the promised land prepared for the noon day race. The day, so unlike the one of previous opening, was raw and chilly with a penetrating wind which swept across the vacant prairie chilling the people as they waited in line for the signal. Some were in wagons, others were in buggies, buckboards or road-carts. Many were on fleet horses or on mule back and some were even on foot. Rich and Poor, intellectual and ignorant jostled together and formed in line as far as the eye could see. As the hands of the clock moved slowly over the dial the invading host watched the sun approach the meridian. In these hours of weary waiting men felt something of the awe and excitement that is likened to the feeling of the soldier as he is about to go over the top.

Eagerness and impatience affected the driver and steed alike, while the patrolmen sat on their horses, waiting to give the signal which would start the race. At last the hour arrived, Every one took his place in line. A strange hush held the people in its thrall as they watched the trooper who was to fire the signals.

At last the thrilling tones of a bugle were heard and the troopers out in front fired their carbines.

Then shouts and screams rent the air and with one great leap the race was on in all of its intensity. Swift footed racers left the thrill in the very turf. Laboring oxen tugged at the prairie schooner loaded with all personal effects. People on foot ran until tired out then leaving the crowd struck a stake and called it home. But the land was not all level between the county seats. These county seats were the goal of many and between Kingfisher which was the starting place for many and the first county seat, which was Watonga, lay a strip of Gypsum Hills known as the Glass mountains.<sup>2</sup>

The rock studded hills and boggy streams deterred the progress of the settlers but like pioneers of old they forged ahead. As in all such races comical incidents occur so they occurred in this one.<sup>19</sup>

As it was thirty miles from the line to the first county seat, many horses and men had become exhausted and lay along the roadway. Many horses dropped dead along the way and men who had lost their horses either stopped there and staked a claim or trudged slowly on while the surging crowd rolled past them.

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"In the old buckboard were four men, two in the seat and two sitting in the back with their feet dangling out of the wagon. One of the back wheels smashed down, throwing the two men in the back out of the wagon onto the ground just at the corner stone of the section. When the men saw their position and the corner stone, one rolled over one side of it and drove a stake while the other rolled to the other side of the stone and drove a stake. The two in the seat rode to the nearest patch of timber and cutting a pole fastened it under the broken axle and went on with just three wheels."

It was late in the afternoon before the most successful reached the town site but before the morning sun arose a tented city graced the landscape. Churches, grocery stores, hardware stores, blacksmith shops, all in tents. The first frame building built in Watonga was a dwelling house owned by Rudolph Bernet. As fast as the lumber could be hauled, the nearest railroad being thirty miles away, buildings sprang up, a town government was established and the second day a board of commissioners met and the political history of Blaine County began.

Blaine County lay in the eastern portion of this reservation, bounded on the east by Kingfisher and Canadian counties, on the north by the Cherokee Strip and on the south by the Wichita-Caddo reservation and South Canadian River, and on the west by Custer and Dewey counties.

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<sup>20</sup> Report of W. A. Richards, Asst. Commissioner of General Land Office, Sen. Doc. Vol. 22, 57th Cong. 1st Session. 1901-1902

When the County was first formed, the South Canadian River was its southern boundary. Chapter 2, but in 1901, when the Wichita-Caddo re County Organization to settlement, the Kiowa. From this newly opened Cheyenne-Arapaho reservation, additions were made to Kingfisher and Canadian counties to round them out, and six new counties were formed. These counties were assigned letters C. D. E. F. G. and H. counties and later became Blaine, Dewey, Day, Roger Mills, Custer and Washita respectively. Day county was abolished by the State Constitution Convention and later a part of it was added to Ellis and part of it to Roger Mills county. This same Constitutional Convention took the south<sup>2</sup> part of Greer county and formed these parts into the new county of Beckham.<sup>20</sup>

Blaine County lay in the eastern portion of this reservation, bounded on the east by Kingfisher and Canadian counties, on the north by the Cherokee Strip and on the south by the Wichita-Caddo reservation and South Canadian River, and on the west by Custer and Dewey counties.

<sup>20</sup> Report of W. A. Richards, Asst. Commissioner of General Land Office, Sen. Doc. Vol. 22, 57th Cong. 1st Session. 1901-1902

<sup>21</sup> Report of W. A. Richards, Asst. Commissioner of Gen. Land Office, Sen. Doc. Vol. 22, 57th Cong. 1st Session. Commissioners Proceedings, 1901-1902.

When the County was first formed, the South Canadian River was its southern boundary, but in 1901, when the Wichita-Caddo reservation was opened to settlement, the Kiowa, Comanche, Apache and Wichita country was subdivided into three counties, after having first attached to some of the surrounding counties small portions of the land more properly belonging to those counties. <sup>21</sup>

One of the "Small portions" properly belonging to those counties, was that part of the present Blaine County lying south of the South Canadian River, and in the Commissioners proceedings of Blaine County for January 20, 1902, is reported a petition of W. M. Hafer and others praying for the formation of a new township out of that part of Blaine County lying south of the South Canadian River. The petition was laid over until the next meeting of the Board.

On January 21, 1902 the Commissioners reported the following, "And it is now by the board ordered, adjudged, and decreed that all that part of Blaine County lying south of the South Canadian River and west of the meridian line between ranges 10 and 11 west, and north of the third standard parallel, and east of the meridian line between range 11 and 12, be and the same is hereby annexed to and made a part of said Canadian township in said county and territory and that part of said county lying north of the third standard parallel and west of the meridian line between ranges 11 and 12, and south of the South Canadian River and east of the Meridian line between ranges 13 and 14, be and same is hereby made a new and independent township in said county and territory and shall be and is hereby named Long township, and all of said above newly organized territory is hereby declared to be and is a part of the first commissioners district of said county to all intents and purposes, all as per journal entry in the Commissioners proceedings." <sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Report of W. A. Richards, Asst. Commissioner of Gen. Land Office, Sen. Doc. Vol. 22, 57th Cong. 1st Sess. 1901-2

<sup>21</sup>Commissioners Proceedings of Blaine County Vol. 1

With this addition to the county it is now practically rectangular in shape and contains approximately 935 square miles.

Entering Blaine County from the northwest corner and extending diagonally across it to the southeast corner, runs the North Fork of the Canadian River. Running like a backbone, and parallel with the river are the Gypsum Hills, which slope off to the east in long undulating prairies, containing some of the finest wheat land in the world. Standing on the top of one of the hills, just before the harvest, observer can see miles and miles of waving, golden grain, dotted by farmsteads with houses, barns, and other out buildings, which are protected by groves of trees and orchards.

On the west bank of the river the land lies in the river bottom that gradually rises to the west. In this valley Blaine County produces the cotton as well as corn and other grains that have made it famous in Oklahoma history. In the southwest portions of the county the land lies in the basin of the South Canadian River. Some of the best farms in the county are in this part.

"C" County was officially organized on the 20th day of April 1892. The first meeting of the Commissioners was held on that date and a full set of County officers were installed and began their duties, serving until the first regular election in November.

These first officers were appointed by the territorial governor Seay.

The County was divided into four municipal townships, designated as follows: Watonga township, Cimarron township, Cheyenne township and Canadian township. In October four additional townships were added. Some of the names were changed and they were known by the following names: Okeene, Wells, Cheyenne, Cantonment, Granger, Watonga, Seay and Canadian. The County held its first election November 8, 1892 and a full set of county officials was elected.<sup>22</sup>

Late in the summer of 1892 the Republicans held their first convention in Blaine County.

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The first County officers were as follows:

Commissioners: Chairman C. W. Garland, A. C. Price and Lafayette Wells.

The other county officers were as follows:

George Rainey, County Clerk  
 D. F. Smith, County Sheriff  
 R. F. Overstreet, County Treasurer  
 W. R. Granger, County Register of Deeds  
 M. P. McCoy, County Surveyor  
 A. E. Newman, County Supt. Elected Oct. 8.

<sup>22</sup>

Probate Judge, Leander Martin  
 County Attorney, Seymour Foose  
 Register of Deeds, John Williams  
 County Clerk, George Rainey  
 County Treasurer, Charles C. Shaw  
 County Sheriff, William Wilson  
 Supt. of Schools, A. E. Newman  
 County Commissioners, S. E. Huff, T. E. Phillips and A. Poe  
 Coroner, G. Fringes  
 Justice of the Peace, M. P. Miles

The naming of the county came up for discussion and settlement. At first the Republicans deadlocked for a time upon whether they should call it Custer or Sheridan County. Finally as a compromise it was named Blaine in honor of James G. Blaine.

The Constitution of Oklahoma 1907 declares Blaine County to be in the 16th senatorial district together with Kingfisher County and allowed one senator. Blaine County is in the 17th court judicial district and in the 5th supreme court judicial district.

Blaine County in 1928 contained twenty one municipal townships namely: Cantonment, Homestead, Cimarron, Canton, Carlton, Flynn, Seay, River, Cheyenne, Lawton, Wells, Arapaho, Watonga, Cedar-Valley, Kennedy, Dixon, Lincoln, Long, Logan, Canadian and Alfalfa.

The first salaries were allowed on the estimated population of Blaine County as 6,000 and the salaries ranged from \$750.00 to \$800.00 per annum. Township school levies ranged from 2 to 5 mills, county school tax 5 mills and municipal township tax from 5 to 10 mills. As there were no taxes to speak of for the first two years, the County sold \$11,000.00 worth of bonds to pay their indebtedness.

The first official organ of the county made on April 21, 1892 was the Watonga Republican, edited and published by Ferguson and Baldrige. On June 1, 1892 D. J. Martz, editor of the Watonga Rustler was given a contract to publish the commissioners proceedings.



As the County became more thickly settled new precincts were established.<sup>23</sup>

Towns of Blaine County incorporated are the following:<sup>24</sup>

Watonga, incorporated 1901  
 Geary, incorporated 1901  
 Okeene, incorporated 1901  
 Darrow, incorporated 1905, now deserted.  
 Hitchcock, incorporated 1906  
 Canton, incorporated 1908.

Watonga, located near the center of the county, and in Watonga township was made the county seat and all court proceedings of the county, that came in the probate or district court are carried on there.

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<sup>23</sup>These new precincts were organized on the following dates:

July 11, 1894, Book 1. p. 229 Precincts Numbers, 1, 2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-11-12.

July 18, 1896, Book 1. p. 363 Precinct Number 13.

September 19, 1902. Book 2, p. 54 Precincts Numbers 14-15-16

April 18, 1904. Book 2. p. 162 Precincts Number 17-18-19-20.

February 2, 1906, Book 2. p. 310 Precincts Number 22

February 11, 1906, Book 2. p. 372 Precinct Numbers 23-24.

June 6, 1892, Book 1. p. 25 Cimarron divided into Cimarron and Wells.

November 7, 1910. Book 4 Creation of Cantonment into Cantonment and Canton Township. February 6, 1911 above lines altered and new boundaries made.

<sup>24</sup>Commissioners Proceedings. Blaine County Official Doc. Vol.1

## Chapter 3

## Education

The administration of the schools of Blaine County is under two divisions. First, the County Superintendent has general supervision of all the schools in the county except those in independent districts. Second, Independent districts are administered by city superintendents elected by city boards of education.

Blaine County uses the district system and the major support of the public schools being derived from advalorem taxes, it is very difficult for the people to maintain schools in many districts because of lack of funds. The twelfth Biennial Report of the State Superintendent shows that Blaine County has received \$15,000.00 State Aid for six districts from the year 1913 to 1928. <sup>36</sup>

The county is working with the state in its effort to eradicate illiteracy there. In 1900 there were 13.2% illiterates, in 1910 there were 7% and in 1920 only 3% illiterates. Most of this illiteracy is among the old Indians and old negroes who can not be prevailed upon to learn to read and write. <sup>37</sup>

36

<sup>37</sup> Twelfth Biennial Report, State Supt. Oklahoma 1928 p. 176  
 1920 Census Report, State of Oklahoma Agriculture and Pop.

In 1910 there were 4852 children attending school. In 1920 the number had decreased to 4138 attendance. The number of children of school age in 1920 was 6186 for Blaine County, an increase of only 18 over 1910, being 6168.<sup>38</sup>

The model school work has developed well in Blaine County. During the years 1926-27, 1927-28, forty-six model school certificates were issued to model schools and three model school certificates to three accredited elementary schools.

Blaine County has seven consolidated school districts. The Transportation in the consolidated districts is the most important item.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Due to loss in Population, Population in Blaine County 1910 was 17,960 and in 1920 was 15,875.

<sup>39</sup> Twelfth Biennial Report. Oklahoma 1928 p.44  
Of the two districts reporting for Blaine County Watonga and Geary (Districts 42 and 80) five motors were used to haul one hundred thirty two children at a cost of \$3,308.32. This gives a fair idea of the average consolidated district. The consolidated districts contain two hundred seventy five square miles with an assessed property valuation of \$4,381,775.00 using 28 motors to haul eight hundred twenty six pupils at a total cost of \$18,292,52.

Blaine County's rank in the state is as follows:

Blaine county holds	12th	place in average attendance.
" " "	19th	place in length of term.
" " "	28th	place in expenditure per child attending school.

Blaine County holds 25th place in expenditure per child of school age.

Blaine County holds 45th place in expenditure of salaries.

" " "	11th	place in per cent of efficiency bases on 8th grade and high school graduates, having a per cent of 47.2.
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The present County Superintendent (in 1927) Mrs. Kitty Hagan, with the help of the State Department has arranged her rural schools into groups and these groups held meetings at regular intervals.<sup>40</sup> On these days some speaker from outside the district demonstrates some improved way of teaching certain subjects or there are talks from persons who stand high in educational circles, on civic problems that pertain to the schools.

The County Superintendent also co-operated with the County agent. Ten school house poultry shows arranged over the county represent 70 school districts. A four day poultry show was held in Canton in 1928.

Watonga, the county seat, also supports a Business College to care for those who wish to attend it instead of the college or university. This Business College was established in 1928.

Blaine County's Parent Teacher's Association exerts a broadening and uplifting influence over the patrons of the larger towns while they also take care of many civic problems.

Within the border of Blaine County live a large per cent of negroes. In 1900 there were 10.4% of the population were black. In 1910 it was 8%.

An effort is being made to educate them and in each district having negro children in it, the same length of term is held for them as the white children get. They also get equal equipment and advantages. They are consolidated whenever possible and the County Superintendent selects the best colored teachers she can get for them.<sup>41</sup>

Her report for 1928 shows the condition of their educational facilities in 1928.<sup>42</sup>

In the rural districts where cotton is the principal crop the schools are opened in July or August and closed in September and October for cotton picking. This does not shorten the length of term.

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41

Blaine County has four hundred fifty negro children enumerated in her twenty one school districts reporting negroes. Eleven of these districts have negro school houses while eight districts report ten negro children or fewer. In the districts where there are ten or fewer they may be transferred to schools of their own color and no separate school in their own district is maintained. The negro school building in Geary, rural district No. 1-A and separate district No. 9 have been financed in part by the Rosenwald Fund.

42

Enrollment 1-8, 222  
 High School 31  
 Daily attendance, males 9,888; females 9,097  
 Average attendance, males 59; females 55  
 Teachers employed, eight  
 Certificate of Teachers, 1st, 3rd, 2nd. 5  
 Average salary \$675.00  
 Amount appropriated for Libraries \$58,44  
 Value of libraries \$1,000.00  
 Per cent of attendance for the County 85%  
 Number of schools used-eight  
 Number of separate schools in rural district-eight  
 Number of schools in independent districts-three  
 Number of one room schools-one.

All the towns of Blaine County have a school system with a four years high school. A County Agent has organized boy's and girl's clubs of all sorts. He also with their assistance, holds poultry shows, county fairs, stock judging contests, etc. Poultry culling, demonstrations, terracing, seed selection, and various other helps for the farmers are carried out. The County Demonstrator organizes clubs among the girls and farm women, teaching them the art of canning, using all the new methods, while the girls hold sewing contests and art exhibits.

As a result of the influence of the training received in the 4H Club of the county, banks of the county are helping the farmer's boys and girls to get a start in the line of stock raising. In the Watonga Republican, a weekly newspaper of Blaine County dated January 10, 1929, we read, "Watonga State Bank financed purchase of dairy calves," and it follows with this, "Several weeks ago a car load of high grade and registered dairy calves were shipped from Wisconsin to Watonga and sold to 4H Club boys and girls and farmers of the county. The Watonga State Bank, working in co-operation with the county agent, financed the purchase of the calves, which included thirty six high grade Guernsey heifers, seven registered Guernsey heifers, six registered Guernsey bulls, six high grade Holstien heifers, and one registered bull."

Farmers securing calves were:  
 W. H. Cox  
 Woolsey Lewis  
 R. A. Green  
 Charles Lorenz  
 Jake Voth.

"Thirty six of the heifers were put out with eighteen boys and girls, by placing two calves with each club member.<sup>43</sup> Some of the boys paid cash for their calves and others signed a note for a year. The plan is to have an auction sale about a year from the time the boys got the calves and each boy will have one calf to sell to pay off his note. The calves are doing fine. Another shipment of calves will be made about the first of March."

It has been the cry for the last several years that the educational system did not teach the rural children the things that is was necessary for them to know. With the fundamentals of a literary training such as offered in the public schools, rounded out by the work of the county agents and demonstrators, we find the rural population of Blaine County awakening up to their possibilities.

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43

Phillip Brown	2	Guernseys
Junior Dennis	2	"
Arthur Loewen	2	"
Wayne Russel	2	"
Billy Seitters	2	"
Jack Woolsey	2	"
Sherod Noel	2	"
Sammy Cordell	2	" heifers, 1 bull
Elmer McQuillian	2	"
Dale Smith	2	"
William Brothers	2	"
Lewis Barnett	2	"
Earnest Smith	2	"
Jewel Noel	2	"
Valor Thiesson	2	Holstines
Leonard Ammons	2	"
Will and Lee Walker	2	Guernseys
<u>Farmers securing calves were:</u>		
W. H. Cox		
Woolsey Lewis		
R. A. Green		
Charles Lorenz		
Jake Voth.		

As evidence of this we read in the same paper before mentioned, this article which shows the interest taken by

the farmers of this county. It reads, "Advisory Committee formulate program. The Agricultural Advisory Committee, which is composed of representatives from each commercial organization in the county, poultry association, cow testing association, Free Fair association, Livestock Association, Pure Seed association, and from the different communities of the county, will meet in the county agent's office on Friday of this week to work out the agricultural program for this year in Blaine County. It is felt that by co-ordination, the efforts of all these associations and rural groups that the greater success may be accomplished in an agricultural way in the county, This advisory committee is working with the Agricultural and Mechanical College at Stillwater, through the County Agent in putting this work over in the County."

Four major lines of work which will be likely to be adopted by this committee are Dairy Improvement, which will mean the introduction of good dairy bulls and heifers into the county; the organization of Mail Order Cow Testing Association and a better feeding campaign.

Farm management, which will mean the encouragement of more farmers keeping a record of their farming operations and in studying their farm from a business standpoint.

Soil improvement, which will mean the development of terracing work in the county and the growing of leguminous crops to aid in holding the fertility of our soils.

Poultry improvement, which will encourage the farmer in better feeding and better breeding of poultry.



## Chapter 30

## Economic Conditions

Economically, Blaine County falls naturally into the list of the agricultural counties of the State lying in the basin of one of Oklahoma's largest rivers. The soil is well adapted to agriculture and the different varieties of the soil, diversified farming is possible and profitable. In the river basins the soil is a rich sandy loam upon which most any kind of crops suitable to a temperate climate, can be grown. In the eastern part the soil is light red clay mixed with sand, making the ideal wheat producing soil.

During the first five years the farmers had a hard struggle to make a living. It was from twenty five to thirty five miles to the nearest railroad, the rainfall was scant and the hot winds parched the tender green crops. Sand storms were frequent in the early years and often whole fields had the top soil removed into the section line one day. In April 1893, 14,900 pounds of corn, wheat, and other grains were purchased by the legislature and distributed to eight hundred applicants, to sow as seed. Later in the spring 3,820 pounds were again shipped into the country.

The average farmer lived in small one or two room board houses without plaster or chimney. Others not so fortunate lived in dugouts made by digging excavations into the ground and covering them with logs and dirt.

## Chapter 1V

## Economic Conditions

Economically, Blaine County falls naturally into the list of the agricultural counties of the state. Lying in the basin of two of Oklahoma's largest rivers, the soil is well adapted to agriculture and because of the different varieties of the soil, diversified farming is possible and profitable. In the river basins the soil is a rich sandy loam upon which most any kind of crops suitable to a temperate climate, can be grown. In the eastern part the soil is light red clay mixed with sand, making the ideal wheat producing soil.

During the first five years the farmers had a hard struggle to make a living. It was from twenty five to thirty five miles to the nearest railroad, the rainfall was scant and the hot winds parched the tender green crops. Sand storms were frequent in the early years and often whole fields had the top soil removed <sup>in</sup> into the section line, one day. In April 1893, 14,800 pounds of corn, wheat, and other grains were purchased by the legislature and distributed to eight hundred applicants, to sow as seed. Later in the spring 3,220 pounds were again shipped into the country.

The average farmer lived in small one or two room board houses without plaster or chimney. Others not so fortunate lived in dugouts made by digging excavations into the ground and covering <sup>them</sup> with logs and dirt.

A stove pipe sticking up through the roof served as a chimney, while the hard dirt served oftentimes as the floor. Their furniture consisted of dry goods boxes or if real furniture, that of the cheapest kind. The shelter for the stock was made by building a frame work of black jack poles and covering it with wheat or oats straw.

As the hard times continued for the first four or five years a change in the ownership of real estate was frequent. Many gave up in despair and quit their claims going back to the states from which they came. Others sold their claims and relinquished their filing, while others stayed five years, which was the time required to get a patent from the government and then sold to men who were financially able to stay. As the result the poorest people by natural process left their farms and a thriftier class of farmers came into the country.

By 1900 greater prosperity had come and men began to lay aside their profits for better houses and barns. The farmers were gradually cultivating more land and fencing their farms and a more civilized appearance of the region greeted the newcomer.

One grave danger to the farmers property was the great prairie fires which swept down over the hills and plains with such ferocity and destruction that the homesteader gazed in horror at the first sign of smoke on the horizon.

Should he accidentally be away from home at that time, he would often return to find his hay stacks, barns and pasture burned completely and his stock, if they escaped it, left with out feed or shelter, as the worst fires occurred in the winter months when the grass was dry.

Wild animals and insect pests were also destructive. The skunk, opossum and coyote killed the chickens, which generally roosted in the trees, and wolves killed the lambs and small calves. The apple bore was destructive to the apple trees and the chinch bugs and corn worms ate the corn. But like most frontier counties, Blaine County dropped her pioneer life as the years became more productive and assumed the role of the more progressive ones. Four railroads and three state highways now cross this small county. The average land owning farmer has his radio, telephone, automobiles and tractor. He goes to the city to church and to shop, takes time off for recreation and keeps himself informed on the topics of the day.

Blaine County ranks high as an agricultural county in Oklahoma, having taken seven first and three second awards between the years of 1917 and 1926 inclusive.

Her leading crop is wheat which is followed closely by cotton.

The less important crops are oats, rye milo maize, kafir corn, cow peas, sou beans, cane, alfalfa, peanuts and forage crops which are raised in different parts of the county.<sup>25</sup>

Blaine county's farms are her greatest asset. The improvement in farm machinery had made it possible for each farmer to handle more land and as a consequence we find that in 1910 there were two thousand three hundred eighty seven farms operated, in 1920 there were more acres farmed but only one thousand two hundred twenty two farms operated.

#### Crops of Blaine County, 1910

Corn,	107,133	acres	producing	1,177,428	bushels
Oats,	16,514	"	"	444,362	"
Wheat,	52,699	"	"	703,360	"
Barley,	122	"	"	1,885	"
Rye,	584	"	"	5,174	"
Kafir,	7,920	"	"	87,114	"
Cotton,	7,160	"	"	1,590	bales

#### Crops of Blaine County, 1920

Corn	43,868	acres	producing	825,136	bushels
Oats	12,514	"	"	377,187	"
Wheat	143,012	"	"	1,825,974	bushels
Barley	1,609	"	"	45,226	"
Rye	6,025	"	"	75,937	"
Kafir	15,721	"	"	190,013	"
Cotton	1,517	"	"	426	bales

In 1927 the yield was 7,493 bales and in 1928 13,757 bales.

While the number of farms have decreased the numbers in  
live stock and farm products have increased. <sup>26</sup>

Like most progressive institutions Blaine County  
has its share of mortgages. <sup>27</sup>

The diversification of crops in Blaine County makes  
it possible for every farmer to raise live stock and  
poultry along with his crops. The raising of thoroughbred  
stock is one of Blaine County's chief industries.

<sup>26</sup> Blaine County, 1910

Value of all farm property	\$15,317,489.00
Value of farm buildings	1,504,161.00
Value of farm machinery	472,798.00
Value of live stock	2,310,349.00

Domestic Animals

Number of horses	13,587
Number of mules	2,754
Number of cattle	27,359
Number of sheep	764
Number of swine	26,465
Number of poultry	138,541

<sup>27</sup> Mortgage debts:

Number free from mortgage debt	659
Number with mortgage debt	713
Number not reported	41
Value of land and buildings reporting debts	\$2,165,820
Amount of Mortgage debt	475,664
Ratio of debt to value	2,290
Average rate of interest	6%

Mortgage debts 1920:

Number free from mortgage debt	365
Number with mortgage debt	717
Number not reported	140
Value of land and buildings reporting debts	\$2,165,820
Amount of Mortgage debt	475,664
Ratio of debt to value	22%
Average rate of interest	6%

Breeders of national reputation have their stock farms in Blaine County. H. C. Lookabaugh, the most noted of these stock raisers was not only known throughout the state but was also nationally known.<sup>28-9</sup>

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### 28 Blaine County-1920

Value of all farm property	\$26,394,450.00
Value of farm buildings	2,665,512.00
Value of farm machinery	1,520,412.00
Value of live stock	3,143,861.00
<u>Domestic animals</u>	
Number of horses	13,205
Number of mules	2,672
Number of cattle	30,795
Number of sheep	3,097
Number of swine	12,615
Number of chickens	169,033

<sup>29</sup>In the Watonga Republican of February 24, 1921 we read: "H. C. Lookabaugh, widely known live stock man of this community who stands at the head of his profession in the U. S. made a trip to Oklahoma City several days ago to meet the Bankers of that city in their association."

Again in the same paper for March 17, 1921 the large headlines greet the reader with: "Blaine County Shorthorns go over the top in Texas Nation wide competition". "When it comes to fine cattle, Blaine County occupies a prominent place on the map of Oklahoma." Also, "H. C. Lookabaugh returned Monday from Ft. Worth, Texas where he attended the National Breeders Show. Competition was strong and all that Mr. Lookabaugh won, he won by the superior grade of his stock."

H. S. Allen of New Port, Tenn., perhaps the highest authority in graded stock to be found in America spent several days at Lookabaugh's stock farm. Here is what he has to say of Blaine County stock. "Lookabaugh's Shorthorns are superior to any herd in the United States of England." Mr. Allen has been in all parts of the world where fine stock is raised and knows what it takes to make up a herd of shorthorns.

Blaine County cattle sales command the attention of men all over the Union. "In May 11, 1921 the biggest crowd ever assembled in Blaine County attended the Lookabaugh Shorthorn sale. A Shorthorn bull topped the sale by bringing \$1850,00.

Lookabaugh is not the only large cattle breeder in Blaine County. On April 4 and 5, 1921 a fine stock sale was held at the Star Barn. The stock sold on these dates were of the highest and best pedigree to be found anywhere.

Some of the farmers who are making a success in dairying are: Tom Ething, Ernest Elliot, John Temple and D. H. Cox. Others who do not have thoroughbred herds own many dairy cows. 29-30

Poultry raising is another important industry of this country. No farmer is without his flock of hens. Every town in Blaine County has one or more poultry houses, and eggs are one of the chief exports. Some of the more progressive citizens take pleasure in breeding up their flock of poultry and strong competition is evident in all entries at fairs and poultry shows. 31

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29-continued

Among those owning registered live stock in Blaine County were: C. T. Scott, J. R. Whistler, A. D. Outhier, Harry Lookabaugh, Harry Moorlan, Lee Yarnell, W. E. Thompson, T. A. Kerr, Fred Rehlin, J. W. Knisley, R. C. Dunn, Edd S. Wheelock, L. W. Cutrught, C. L. Frazier, Al Odell, Tom McKay, J. V. Noel, Charles Lorenz, Lew Brannen, Clate Duncan, Lem McCrillis, W. Oberdalhoff, E. T. Davis, Adam Sherer, Warren Rice, C. W. Gard, Jim Garriot, E. Moureguard, E. H. Lookabaugh, B. F. Smith, Charles Loewen, and Frank Loy.

The seven years which followed the above event has born its fruit and Blaine County stands out as one of the most progressive counties of the state in the pure bred cattle industry.

Not only in the beef brands of cattle does Blaine County lead but also with her dairy cattle. Almost every farmer has a small herd of dairy cows which contribute not a small amount to the bank account.

30 In 1910 the total number of dairy cattle in Blaine county was 9,104; 355 were cows or heifers two years old or over.

In 1920 the total number of dairy cattle was 10,489; 6099 of them were cows of heifers two years old or over.

31 In 1910 the total number of poultry in Blaine county was 138,541 with a value of \$57,500.

In 1920 the total number of poultry in Blaine county was 174,687 with a valuation of \$159,822.00



More than fifteen carloads of plaster, cement,

While most of the farms are comparatively large in this community, there is a great deal of truck gardening. Because of the warm climate and rich sandy soil vegetables, melons and other kinds of truck do well there during the early spring season and on through the summer until the late fall.

Outside of her farm industries, Blaine County has vast beds of gypsum deposits in the gypsum hills that run diagonally across the county. Only a small portion of this vast deposit has been utilized. In 1906 there were four large mills running in Blaine County, These mills were located at Okeene, Roman Nose Canon, and at Watonga. At the present date, 1928, there is only the one gypsum mill in operation in Blaine County. This mill is at Southard.

This mill has been in operation for the last fifteen years. It is the largest gypsum mill in the state of Oklahoma and one of the largest in the United States.

Daily Oklahoman  
June 16, 1921

More than fifteen carloads of plaster, cement, stucco, wall board, insulating tile, plaster of paris, dental cement, and pottery clay are turned out daily by three hundred employees at the mill.<sup>32</sup>

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At Southard is found the whitest, purest gypsum deposits in the world. Geologists are not quite sure how gypsum was formed but they think that some time probably a million or more years ago, this country was covered by a great lake. Some reaction in the water caused the calcium sulphite in solution in the water to precipitate to the bottom. This formed a layer of rock which at Southard is from 5 to 20 feet in thickness.

Its chemical formulae is  $\text{Ca SO}_4\text{-}2\text{H}_2\text{O}$ . It contains calcium sulphite with two parts water as the water of crystalization. This part of the water is driven off by cooking in great kettles after the rock has been ground to a powder. The supply of gypsum lies close to the surface and it is estimated that the available supply will last at least 50 years.

Two processes are carried on at the mill in getting the rock out of the ground. One is to mine it, the other is to quarry it. After the top soil has been removed by steam shovels, the rock is blasted away and hauled to the mill. When the top soil is too thick it is mined like coal. More than five miles of tunnels covering the land owned by the mill have been blasted and dug. Lines of narrow gage railway are strung through the tunnels and rock is pulled by modern electric engines into the mill.

Because of the location of the mill near the top of a hill no damp and gas are known. Large pillars of rock are left standing along tunnels and chambers to support the roof of soil.

Practically all building products such as gypsum, tile for insulating safes, vaults, boards for partitions, fire proof building material such as beaver board, sheet-rock, stucco for out side finishing and the new rough interior finish plaster are turned out of this mammoth institution.

Daily Oklahoman  
June 16, 1921

growing rapidly and the development of the  
Blaine County may prove a most valuable asset to the  
wealth of the county.

While the company operates twenty one other plants in the United States and Canada, the rare purity of the rock in Oklahoma makes the product turned out here, in great demand. Large shipments go to Europe, Australia, and Japan. One of the novel ways of using this product is in the making of moving picture sets at the studios in California. Castles, villages, homes and business houses can be shown in realistic style by merely building a light frame work and then plastering the surface. One of the best uses of the mill from an economic standpoint is the labor given to idle persons during seasons that are dull in other industries. There is scarcely a time when it is impossible to get work at the mill.

Seven miles northeast of Watonga is operated a mill for the crushing of rock into chat or small pebbles. The great gypsum rocks are blasted from the hillside and after being broken up, are used for many kinds of concrete work and pier building. Like the Southard Mill this rock quarry is a great economic asset to Blaine County for it uses many employees who may be unskilled, and so fill in the dull seasons when other industries are slowing down. As the demand for cement is annually increasing as a product used in the building of state highways and pavement, these industries are growing rapidly and the development of the gypsum beds in Blaine County may prove a most valuable addition to the wealth of the county.

While Blaine County is not considered a manufacturing county it had twenty two factories in 1920. <sup>33</sup>

Not only has the gypsum milling industry invaded this peaceful agricultural community but oil promoters have also entered her borders. A writer in the Daily Oklahoman for September 30, 1928 makes the following comment.

"A map showing the land under leases for oil and gas in Blaine County shows the country to be leased almost solidly. More than a score of acreage blocks have been assembled and thousands of acres of checker board leases have been recorded."

"Of a total of approximately 600,000 acres of land in the county is Indian land, leases of which have to be obtained through the Indian agency at Concho. It is estimated that about one half of the Indian land has been leased to date, or a total of 75,000 acres of land. This leaves about 75,000 acres of Indian land and 100,000 acres of non-Indian land in the county not yet leased."

Bids for Indian leases must equal the prices being paid in each locality for commercial leases and all bids are referred to the geological department for approval. The last Indian lease sale was held at Concho September 21, 1927. At this sale the leases sold, brought from \$3.42 to \$16.50 per acre.

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The twenty two factories in Blaine County had an average of one hundred fifteen wage earners earning \$131,400.00 per annum, while the product manufactured amounted to \$1,990,048.00

Corporation, Caudill Bros., W. O. Allen, L. O. Collins, Gordon Oil and Gas Co., Louis Gray, King et al., Gypsy, Sinclair Oil and Gas Company, Donnelly, Texana Petroleum, Shelly, Wittwer, A. C. Baker and Derby Oil Company.

In addition to bonuses paid, purchasers of Indian land must pay a rental of \$1.15 per acre the first year, \$1.30 the second year and gradually increase the rental up to \$2.00 the fifth year.<sup>34</sup>

Watonga, Geary and Okeene have profited alike from the bonuses paid for leases and royalties to land owners in their respective vicinities as have Hitchcock, Greenfield and other smaller towns. The boom has taken in the whole of Blaine County. As revealed by the map, the Indian Territory Illuminating Oil Company has been the leader in the purchase of acreage blocks in Blaine County being accredited with a total of six.<sup>35</sup>

Geologically, the whole north eastern part of the county lies in the Enid formation which extends west to about three miles west of Homestead, following South east along the Gypsum hills.

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<sup>34</sup> Daily Oklahoman, September 30, 1928

A check of the records at Watonga, county seat of Blaine County gives an amusing insight into the odd names of Indians whose names appear on the records as Wandering Woman, Grace Magpie, Nellie Big Head, Itching Nose, Scabby Horse, Coming on Horse Back, Dog Woman, Bobtail Bear, Howling Woman, Red Eye, Straight Crazy, and scores of others equally as amusing.

The companies leasing blocks in Blaine County are: The Illuminating Oil Company, Ragland Oil Company, The Indian Territory Illuminating Company, W. Atchison of Oklahoma City, Henshaw Oil Corporation, Caudill Bros., W. O. Allen, L. O. Collins, Cosden Oil and Gas Co., Louis Gray, King et al, Gypsy, Sinclair Oil and Gas Company, Donnelly, Toxana Petroleum, Skelly, Wittwer, A. C. Baker and Derby Oil Company.

Between the North Canadian River and the Gypsum Hills are the Gypsum deposits which extend from Longdale southeast to about 6 miles south east of Watonga. South of the Gypsum area in the southeast township of the county and north of Geary is the Dog Creek shale and Blaine County formation. Running along on both sides of the river from Watonga on to Woodward is the Woodward group. The Dog Creek dolomite, White Horse sandstone and Dog Creek shale are dominant in this formation. Just East of the South Canadian River lies the sand dunes and terrace deposits.

The Enid formation which covers the whole Northeastern part of Blaine County includes an almost unbroken succession of red material from the top of the Wellington non red shale to the base of the Blaine Gypsum. In well logs, four divisions may be distinguished although all the divisions are not recognizable in all areas. While present in its entirety the thickness of the Enid ranges from 1200 to 2200 feet, and variations taking place in all members. The lowest member is a zone of red shale and sand stone 100 to 300 feet in thickness, probably the Harper sand stone member. Above this is 100 to 300 feet of blue shale, with minor amounts of red shale.

This blue shale makes a good marker all over Blaine County and it is probably present in many logs where it has escaped notice through caving of red material.

From the top of this member to the base of the Blaine Gypsum there are one or two of these members. In most of Blaine County the interval is nearly all red shale. The presence of salt beds are explained by the knowledge of a zone of rock salt in the formation.

The Blaine formation is a zone of anhydrites and red shale, with a few thin dolomites. In many cases the relatively hard anhydrite beds are logged as limestone. Upon exposure the anhydrites in places become Gypsum. The formation is from 100 to 200 feet in thickness and appears in the log of practically every well that has penetrated its horizon. As a rule it marks the base of a series of thick sands and as already mentioned very little sand material is found for a long distance below it.

Lying in the temperate zone at an altitude of 1400 feet in the southeast corner and 1700 feet in the Northwest corner, with an annual rainfall of 27,30 inches with plenty of sunshine and balmy winds, Blaine county presents an almost ideal climate and country in which to live.

The growth of her wealth has been steady and the following statistics taken from the assessors records for the years of 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927 and 1928 will show how it stands. These records are always very conservative as the assessed valuation and number to be assessed are always below the real amount.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>See Appendix

## Chapter V

## Indians

When the Cheyenne-Arapaho reservation was thrown open to settlement in 1892 it was estimated that there were about thirty seven hundred Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians in Blaine County. After each Indian had taken out his one hundred sixty acre tract, the government had purchased the surplus land for \$1,500,000.00. This money was not paid down but it was issued to them in installments twice per month. As early as 1880 or about that time the buffalo began to disappear from the plains and the government began to import cattle to feed the Indians.<sup>36</sup> The method used, was to start a herd of about five hundred head of cattle from Texas or Arkansas and as they came to the different tribes a certain number were dropped out for their consumption. After the opening of the Cheyenne-Arapaho reservation the government continued this process issuing the beef along with the clothing and their semi-monthly allowance of money. In some cases the government bought teams, wagons, harness, and houses for the Indians. Seed was furnished for planting and an Indian farmer was employed by the government to advise and encourage the Indians in their farming.

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36

Dale, E. E. Ranching on the Cheyenne-Arapaho Reservation 1880-85. p. 2.



They had many kinds of celebrations such as the corn dance. He was given a district to supervise and to furnish the seed for the Indians in it. He was also to give instructions on how to sow it. George Coleman was the first Indian farmer in Blaine County and the first issuing grounds were two and one half miles south of Watonga, at the Coleman farm.

The Indians were educated by the government, Indian schools were established in the reservation and all Indian children placed in school. The Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians had four schools at the time of the opening. One of these located at Darlington was for the Cheyennes, one at Concho was for the Arapahos while two others were located at Cantonment and Secret Colony. The latter one was located in Washita County.

Owing to their method of living it was hard to keep the children in school. If for any reason they desired to change, they would pull down their tents, load everything into their wagons and with ponies and dogs trailing along behind they started out for any festive occasion that called them.

When the Indians in their tents heard the call of the tom tom they dressed in their Indian regalia, feathered head gear, and buckskin dresses which were covered with shells or elk teeth and often worth thousands of dollars. They also fastened tinkling ornaments to their feet and limbs and when they were all formed in a circle in the clearing they without touching each other, began the Indian war chant which they continued to use, keeping step to the weird music of the tom tom, swaying rhythmically as they kept step with each other. As the circle swayed, gaily dressed young Indian braves entered the center of the circle and leaping and swaying they danced until they were exhausted. These dances lasted for days at a time and were often attended by hundreds of Indians.

They had many kinds of celebrations such as the corn dance , war dance, sun dance, rain dance and others which were held regular intervals and which the whole tribe attended.<sup>36</sup>

In spite of the more sedentary life of the present day Indian the dances are still practiced and continue to be a nuisance for Indian school children. At first the old Indians refused to let their children go to school, and Indian policemen were often required to collect and place them there.

This at times proved to be very annoying as the parents often concealed and shielded the pupils and there was a tendency for the boys and girls to run away from school.

In the government schools their education was carried on by allowing half time for study and half time for vocational training.

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For these dances they would gather at some designated place, clear off the ground and pitch their tents in a circle around the clearing. Their tents were of the teepee type and a fire was built in the center of the teepee and each family gathered around his own fire. In the clearing two or more huge tom tom drums were placed and several Indians with clubs sat around them and beat upon them producing a weird rhythmic music.

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The girls learned to cook and sew, while the boys learned the carpenter trade, blacksmith, painting, tailoring the tanners trade, and farming. The Indian children were kept in school until they were eighteen years old or until they got married. The government furnished every thing that the child used in school such as books, supplies, clothing, board and lodging including doctor and hospital bills. In 1893 an effort was made to induce the Indian to give up camp life and live in houses like the white race. Although the government uses every plan to get them to live like white people it is a very common sight in Blaine County to see an Indian tepee pitched just back of his house and all his pretty blankets and trinkets in the tent while he uses the house as a place to store his corn or other grains.

The government sectarian missionaries, and preachers look after the spiritual welfare of the Indians. The mission work was first started by Quakers. Some of these were sent out by the government and some come of their own accord. The next missionary work was done by the Episcopal people. They preached at the schools and agencies all along the camps from Ft. Reno, north and west of Bridgeport, finally establishing Whirlwind Mission fifteen miles north of that town. This was about eight years after the opening of the country.

They first established a school there and the mission work followed. Bishop Brooks was the first Episcopal Bishop in Oklahoma. He established the school and for a period of years it was a success.

Indians were permitted to camp near the mission which had plenty of water and fuel close at hand and the children were placed in school. About 1912 the government issued an order that the Indians were to live on their land. This had a disastrous effect on the school as the children were sent to government schools and their parents lived on allotments. The mission declined and has had no resident missionary since 1922. About once a year a missionary visits the community and holds a meeting there. They still continue it as an Indian church but little is being done in a missionary sense.

The next work was started by Robert Hamilton, a Baptist missionary among the Indians. In 1896 he opened up the Kingfisher field and also one at Watonga, establishing missions at both places. These missions were composed of a church costing between \$1,000.00 and \$1,500.00. equipped much as our own churches are, and a parsonage of from four to six rooms. A cemetery was usually established at the mission on one corner of the mission grounds. This ground usually consisted of about five acres.

There Mr. F. L. King began work among the Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians about 1895. He preached at Darlington and Concho, thence on up the North Canadian Valley. He established a mission north of Geary known as the First Arapaho Mission.

Reverend King continued his services among the Indians for twenty years. He preached six years at one time with out a convert but before he retired he had been rewarded by seeing most of the leading chiefs of the tribes christians. About two hundred were baptized while he was on the field.

In 1917 T. J. Davis arrived on the field. In the earlier days the missionaries did the work going about in a buggy, driving a horse. Mr. Davis had a car, which was furnished by the Missionary Society for whom he worked. He was able to cover both fields established by Reverend King and Reverend Hamilton. Mr. Davis established new missions, held services in them and the older ones also. He held meetings at the government schools, attended to all kinds of social work, visited the sick and where there was no doctor he gave medicine.

During his stay on the field which has been continuous since 1917, more than three hundred Indians have been taken into the church. They have strong missions at Watonga, Kingfisher, Concho and Geary.

There are about three hundred active Christians working in the missions at present. (1928). From 1926 to the present time Reverend H. M. Cromer has assisted Mr. Davis in the work and has charge of the meetings at the schools and missions.

While the Indians had an Indian farmer to help them they learned a great deal about farming. Some of them especially the older ones had great difficulty in giving up their **tepees** for houses and working the land for a living instead of hunting.

They spent hours squatting on the walks of the towns near their allotments watching the white man rush back and forth. The Indian seldom speaks. He sits quietly smoking content to let others work and worry. With their shawls thrown around their shoulders and their hair still in long strands or braids nearly and tightly wrapped with bright strings, they add color to the otherwise drab surroundings.

The younger Indians have absorbed the ways of the white man. They cut their hair, dress and behave much as their white brothers. They are very susceptible to the white man's vices but their morals are about as high as those of the white man. At first when the Indian and white man came into contact there was a lowering of moral standards, due to the influence of the lower classes of the white race.

The return of the educated young Indians to their homes is improving this condition and as a result the standard is coming up again.

The court statistics show but a small per cent of crime attributed to the Indians except those of intoxication. The Indian can not control his appetite and his greatest offence is drunkenness. In these instances the whisky is procured from the low type of white bootleggers who cheat him and sell him bad liquor.

Prior to 1917 the death rate exceeded the birth rate but since that time the Indians have about balanced them. The Indian custom of courtship and marriage are very interesting and quaint. From the time Indian girl and boy were about twelve years of age they were kept apart and not allowed to mingle.<sup>39</sup>

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Indian population in Blaine County 1910-11 was 1,001. In 1920 is was only 661.

39 At this age the parents of a girl makes a great feast and invited her friends. This is the only way they have of announcing the marriageable age of their daughter. It is her debut. The consent of the young people was generally sought in order to make it more pleasant for them but if the girl objected she was obliged to marry whether she wished it nr not.

There were three ways of contracting marriage. One way was by arrangement and consent of the parents. There might be in this case an exchange of valuable presents such as blankets, horses, saddles etc. The second way involved property. Where the family was prominent and the girl quite beautiful, she was eagerly sought and the parents felt that they should require some compensation for their loss. The parents of the boy who wishes to marry the girl, visit the parents of the girl and offer a certain amount of property consisting of blankets, horses or ponies and the one who offers the greatest amount generally gets the consent of the parents to have the girl.

The marriages were arranged by the parents.

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38-continued.

After the agreement was made the parents of the boy took the girl to their camp and when the boy and girl were placed in camp together they were considered married from that time. Later on a date was set for a big wedding feast and all the Indians related to the girl and their friends collected on one side and the boys people on the other.

The girls were mounted on a horse and dressed in buckskin decorated with feathers and beads. She rode over to the camp of her husband's people where he was staying. The relatives followed her carrying with them any presents which they might wish to give to the parents and friends of the groom. Each present was designated as to whom it belonged. The father of the groom who had agreed to give a certain number of horses and blankets brought this ponies and presents together with what ever his family or friends wish to give, also and took them to the bride's people. The purchase price, whatever it might have been, was presented to the bride's father and the other presents went to the persons for whom they were intended.

Midway between the two camps the Indians prepared a big feast and after this feast the bride and groom were considered publicly married, although they may have lived together a month before the feast. While this custom is still practiced it is fast disappearing for they are required to make a civil contract which they agreed to before and when they accepted their allotments. This however did not keep them from practicing their own customs along with the civil contract. They call the civil contract of marriage a paper of marriage.



They had more than one way by which they could be married according to their customs. 39

Many Indians of Blaine County held responsible positions in their tribes before the reservation was opened to settlement. There are many who now are doing good work in a civilized way to promote the progress of their tribe. 40

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The third way was the elopement marriage. In case of an elopement the boy and girl had fallen in love with each other. Their parents had tried to marry them off to some one else, but because they had not been allowed to be together their elopement arrangements had to be made by their friends. Then when there was some public gathering where all the tribe mingled, they got together and eloped. When they went to the camp of a friend to stay, they were considered married. This was called an elopement marriage. 40

Blaine County is the home of noted Cheyenne chiefs who took part in Indian raids, Indian battles and peace councils. The most outstanding ones are Chiefs Whirlwind, Buffalo Meat, Roman Nose and White Fool. In the Watonga Republican for March 31, 1921 we read of the passing of White Fool to the Happy Hunting Ground.

"White Fool at the time of his death was 99 years old. Many times he had responded to the call of the Tom Tom. When young his string of scalps was second to none. He participated in the battle of the Washita when Black Kettle's camp was attacked by General Custer. He had his experiences with the government troops when they were trying to keep the Cheyenne from going on the war path and had had many skirmishes with emigrant trains. His wife, Matchless woman, was a girl in Colorado when she fell in love with White Fool then a young Cheyenne Chief, and followed him to Darlington, across the snow and ice of winter and burning sands in summer, doing the drudgery of the Indian squaw without a murmur. She was wounded in the battle of the Washita where she was with the other Cheyennes in tepees in Black Kettle's camp. She is the oldest representative of the five living generations of White Fools relatives. Matchless Woman, her daughter Ghost Woman, and Hair Woman, her grand daughter represent the oldest generations and live close to Watonga on White Fools allotment.

## 40-Continued

Among the Arapahoes we also find noted Chiefs who had their home here. They are: Chief Left Hand, Little Raven, and Powder Face. Among the younger generations there are many who are farming their allotments and making a success at farming. Those who have best succeeded are: Chyennes, Joe Williams, De Forest Antelope, Daws White Bird and Bruce Cohoe. Those who are Arapahoes are Albert Shawnee, Mathew Hale, Wilber Tabor, Lone Man and Tom Levi.

They also take an active part in county fairs and they have a tribal fair at Ft. Reno each year where they compete successfully with the white race. They are also taking a great interest in stock raising.

Their method of separation and burial are equally as interesting and pathetic as their method of marriage is unique. 41

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While they were forced to marry, they were not forced to live together and they could separate at any time they wished to do so. If a woman wanted her husband to leave it was the custom for her to throw all his things out of the tent. If he wished to leave her he took his belongings and left. It would be publicly announced that they were separated and this had the same meaning as our present day divorces. Like white people they were often reconciled and went back to live with each other. After a public announcement of their separation they were at liberty to marry at once if they chose.

The Indian custom of burial is one that has been modified yet still retains enough of the Indian color to make it very touching and interesting. Secluded and nestling among the trees the Indian mission reposed. The parsonage built beside it and in the rear the cemetery with its white head stones seemed to guard it. When one of the tribe for whom the mission had been built, passed from this earthly habitat, the body was taken to the mission in a carriage or hearse and religious services were held much as ours are held.

When the Indians began to gather at the mission for their final respects, many of them went into the burial ground at the rear of the mission and gathered around the grave of some departed relative or friend and there they would weep and chant in a weird uncanny way that seems to impress one strangely. Others who had entered the mission also were weeping and chanting and the extreme weirdness of the sound and the solemnity of the occasion made it almost impossible not to be touched by their grief which seemed in the hearts of these semi-civilized brothers of ours, to have been so sincere.

Some of the most talented ones sang in the choir, while tears streamed down their cheeks, yet their voices were clear and steady bespeaking the fortitude that had developed through the centuries of suffering. After the sermon, some close relative of the deceased stood up to thank the preacher and the white friends who had come to be with them and who had brought to them the message of Christ. It was all told with such trusting child like simplicity that the visitor wondered if it were not possible to learn a lesson of faith from these lately Christianized savages.

Biologically speaking, the Indians of the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes have become so mixed with other of the

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41-continued that many have other tribal blood besides

As the body was carried to the open grave it was placed over the opening while all around on the piled up earth laid the property of the departed, or standing close by, the ponies he once had possessed. As a part of the services, these ponies and articles were given away to the people who had come to bury him. Each one was handed over in the most solemn and impressive way while the older ones among them were weeping and moaning in such plaintive tones that the visitor marveled at the agony usual they seemed to endure. As the body was lowered into the grave the commotion increased, the plaintive tones rising and falling with a cadence so sythmic that the sound was carried far from the scene. No more impressive scene can be experienced or imaged than an Indian Burial with its wild outbursts of rhythmic weeping and chanting that swelled to a weird uncanny outcry, then sank to the smothered murmur of the heart broken soul.

no time have they annoyed or caused the white people the least uneasiness. They associated with their own kind and never intruded upon the society of the white people unless invited to do so. As a result of this distinguished trait the white people of Blaine County never think of having a celebration, fair or other festivities of that nature with out asking the Indians to help them.

The Indians are excellent athletes. They run foot races, ride horse races and do many other feats. They enter into contests with a quiet determination to win and all sign of bluff or bigotry are absent in their makeup. They enjoy horseracing and every fair or celebration in Blaine County has its Indian horse races.

Biologically speaking, the Indians of the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes have become so mixed with other of the plains tribes that many have other tribal blood besides the Chyenne and Arapaho. Many of the older Indians are pure blood Cheyenne and Arapaho who have held themselves above mixing with others. The younger generations have attended the different government schools, married into other tribes and brought them home so that it is not unusual to find Pawnees, Crows, Wichitas, Kiawax, Camanches, and Pottawatomas in our population.

From the date of the opening up to the present time the Indians have seemed contented and peaceful. At no time have they annoyed or caused the white people the least uneasiness. They associated with their own kind and never intruded upon the society of the white people unless invited to do so. As a result of this distinguished trait the white people of Blaine County never think of having a celebration, fair or other festivities of that nature with out asking the Indians to help them.

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## Chapter VI

The Indians make a very spectacular feature in all parades in which they not only take part but really enjoy. Dressed in full war regalia, feathered head gear buckskin clothes fringed and metaled, war painted faces, their long hair braided or wrapped in bright colored ribbons, they rode in the parade. With their glittering and colorful dress, and their cymbals jingling in rhythmic pulsations they present an awe inspiring scene. Though a conquered and dispoiled people they rode by, proud and haughty, head held high yet not defiant. They have submitted to our laws, they have kept the faith, but who known the heart hunger of the dauntless semi-savage soul reposing beneath that calm quiet exterior of him who once rode in this same garb, at the head of his tribe, leading his braves to the hunt or to the battle, who roamed the plains as free as the wind and who knew no law but his own, whose tribe was one of the wildest and fiercest of tribes, and what is now merely a ward of Uncle Sam.

While we watched him ride by we wondered what was in his heart. Did it throb in memory of bygone days. Did he ponder the question of race amalgamation and assimilation and does he wonder what the future had in store for him or had our civilization crushed his courage and individuality until he felt that he was but one of a vanishing race.

Chapter VI

Towns of Blaine County

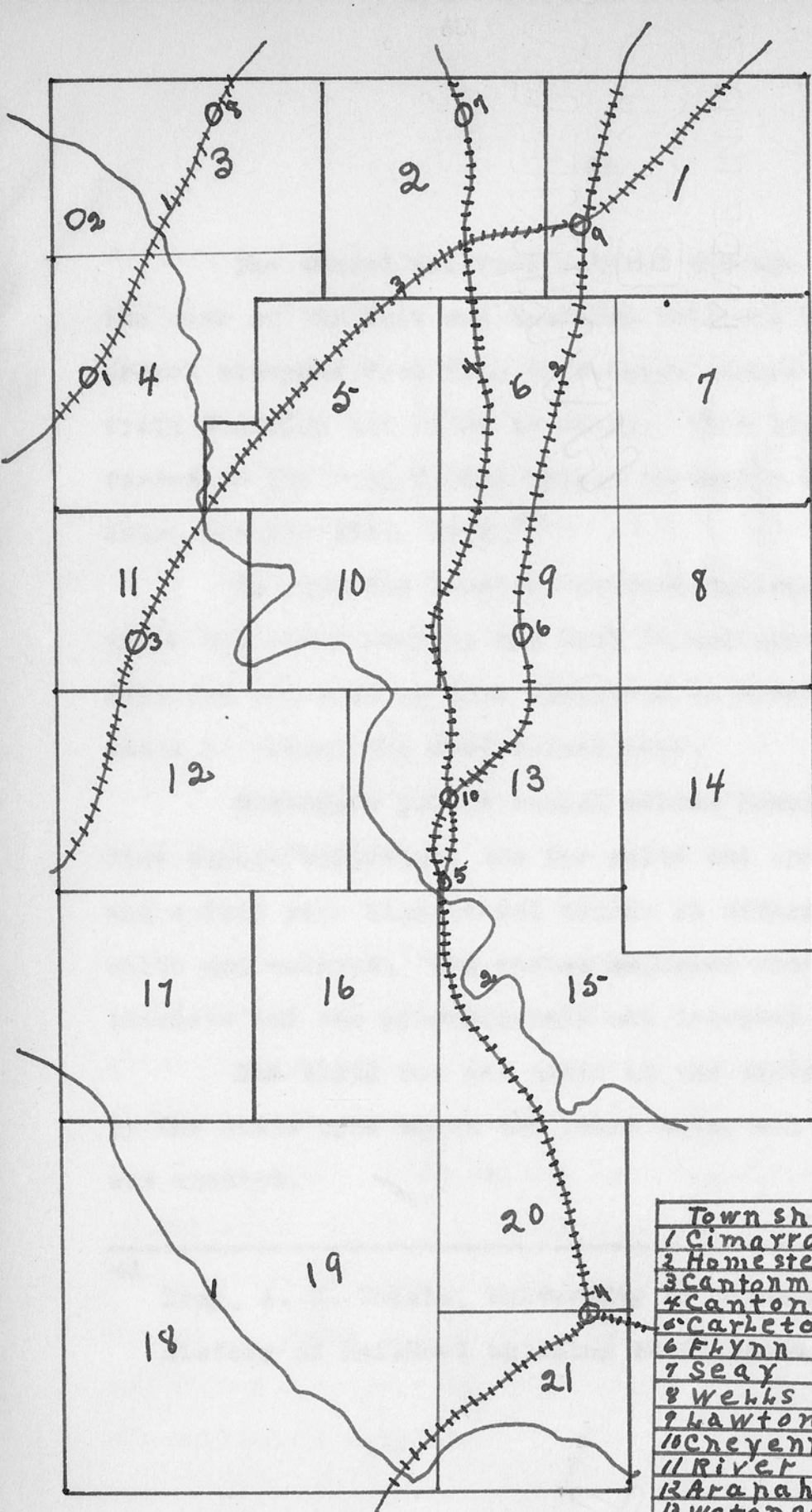
Watonga

Watonga the county seat of Blaine County is located at about the center of the county. It is surrounded by a rich farming district and has a population of 2150 persons. It draws its business from a large territory to the west also from the east as the closest railroad is twenty five miles in that direction. The transportation facilities consist of highways numbers 8 and 33 and the Chicago Rock Island and Pacific Railroad. The railroad facilities have diminished instead of increased. The first railroad to enter Watonga was the Watonga & Northwestern Railroad Company. This company was incorporated under the laws of the territory of Oklahoma May 19th, 1900, to build 100 miles of road northwest from Geary Oklahoma, It was reorganized March 22nd, 1901 thereby creating the Choctaw Northern Railroad Company. This latter company constructed a line of railroad 137 miles northward from Geary passing through Watonga to a connection with the Atchison, Topeka and Sante Fe Railroad, at Anthony, Kansas.

Through a deed of sale, on May 3rd, 1902 the ownership of the entire line was conveyed to the Choctaw, Oklahoma and Gulf Railroad Company.

11 River	2 Greenfield
12 Acapaha	3 Hitchcock
13 Watonga	4 Homestead
14 Cedar Valley	5 Ponca
15 Lincoln	6 Okfuskee
16 Dixon	7 Watonga
17 Kennedy	
18 Long	Rivers
19 Logan	2 Canadian
20 Canadian	3 North Park
21 Alfalfa	Canadian

BLAINE COUNTY



BLAINE COUNTY

Townships	Railroads
1 Cimarron	1 Santa Fe
2 Homestead	2 Rock Island
3 Cantonment	3 Frisco
4 Canton	4 Choctaw, Ok & Gulf
5 Carleton	
6 Flynn	Towns
7 Seay	1 Canton
8 Welles	2 Cantonment
9 Lawton	3 Eagle City
10 Cheyenne	4 Geary
11 River	5 Greenfield
12 Arapaho	6 Hitchcock
13 Watonga	7 Homestead
14 Cedar Valley	8 Longlake
15 Lincoln	9 Okene
16 Dixon	10 Watonga
17 Kennedy	
18 Long	Rivers.
19 Logan	1 Canadian
20 Canadian	2 North Fork Canadian
21 ALFA & FA	



The second railroad entered Watonga in 1901, under the name of the Enid and Anadarko Railroad Company. The branch extended from Enid to Watonga thence on to Greenfield Junction and later to Geary. This line was transferred to the Rock Island system through a deed of sale dated October 21st, 1903.<sup>41</sup>

In 1927 the Choctaw Northern Railroad Company's track was taken over by the Rock Island system and the railroad was torn up from Homestead to Greenfield Junction where it joined the Rock Island line.

Watonga's public school system consists of three fine school buildings, two for white and one for colored, and a four year high school course is offered to both white and colored. The system employes about thrity teachers and has approximately one thousand pupils.

One block was set aside in the center of the town by the state upon which the court house and county jail was erected.

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<sup>41</sup> Bray, A. C. Thesis, University of Oklahoma p. 71-72

History of Railroad building in Oklahoma.  
and it was necessary to climb steps in order to get from one building to another.

Watonga has a good water and sewage system, paved streets, electric lights, furnished by the Oklahoma Gas and Electric Company, a county fair ground, American legion park, beside many business houses and other institutions.<sup>42</sup>

Not far from the town are two recreation parks which are very interesting and useful. Thompson Lake Park, known in early history as Monet Springs, has springs of mineral water which rush down the hillside into great concrete basins which furnish a swimming pool and lakes of great beauty. Many forms of amusement are available in the park. Fishing and attractive camping grounds draw many from other counties on vacation outings.

In the early 90's Watonga was a typical western town. With the main street running east and west centrally intersecting Noble Avenue, here were four good corners upon which to begin business. Three of these corners were occupied with saloons while the fourth one was held by the First Bank. Although the land seemed level enough, it seemed to change its appearance when building commences. Each succeeding building west from the center of town raised its porch a foot or so above the one below it and it was necessary to climb steps in order to get from one building to another.

The saloons announced their presence by big advertising signs swinging out across the walk, and by the time the town had reached a population of one hundred inhabitants there were no less than eight saloons decorating Main street with their sign boards. All buildings were built of lumber, each one furnishing a potential fire trap. Most of the grocery stores carried dry goods, shoes and notions. On the side walk lounged swarms of Indians squatting in groups, while ranchmen, cowboys, and pioneers rode through the street. Yokes of oxen, horses hitched to prairie schooners and horses with saddles, stood hitched to the hitching posts arranged along the side walk for that purpose. Through the streets at intervals moved the prairie schooner headed for farther west, its owner going to Dewey or Custer County to settle on a claim.

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The institution and business houses of Watonga consist of one hospital, one Masonic Temple, one business college, a talky picture, photograph studio, Trust Company, ten grocery stores, four drygood stores, four ready to wear stores, three hotels, twelve cafes, ten filling stations, four meat markets, six garages, five automobiles sales rooms, four hardware stores, two drug stores, two variety stores, two banks, one funeral home, five barber shops, three cotton gins, four elevators, two jewelry stores, three beauty shops, five poultry houses, five creameries, one newsstand, two newspapers, one telephone company, one ice plant, three apartment houses, one amusement hall and other small offices.

high string, and capable of great endurance and fatigue, being able to go longer without water than the ordinary horse.

Or perchance there might be one going east, containing the family and all the belongings of one who had tried it farther west and in order to keep from starvation had abandoned his claim and was on his way back to his wife's people." In such cases the family would be poorly clad, tired and hungry, while the dog sulked lean and vicious under the wagon. A pitiful example was this of the early settlers fight for a home which sometimes cost them their lives. Many Indian wagons were also seen in the street. They were loaded with poles, tepees, and other Indian paraphernalia. The back part of the wagon would be covered by round bows and a canvas cover, which covered the family seated flat in the bottom of the wagon. Many times the canvas was missing, and on the hottest days in July the old Indian squaws would sit bare headed with a hot blanket wrapped about them and long leather leggings and mocassins on their feet, while the pitiless sun shone down upon their uncovered heads.

Following the wagons would be several ponies and many dogs. Sometimes as many as a dozen would be following each wagon. These dogs were used by the Indians for meat and made a very tempting dish for them.

The ranchmen and cowboys rode horses of the Indian pony type, known as mustang. They were quick nervous, high strung, and capable of great endurance and fatigue, being able to go longer without water than the ordinary horse.

These horses are capable of greater and more extended exertion. The cowboys used large leather saddles with high prominent horns, large roomy pockets, beautiful scroll work on the leather which was laced together with leather laces. The saddles were generally equipped with steel stirrups. Mounted on the saddle rode the graceful figure of the cowboy, who with his leather boots, and chaps which were usually made of leather or the skins of animals to protect the limbs, his colored shirt, large handkerchief tied about his neck and a large black or tan felt hat, he made a colorful picture.

While many of the town people were ranchmen or cowboys most of them were plain common people with many talented ones among them who had for different reasons sought the New West. Scarcely had the town come into existence and the government, churches and schools been established, when a band was organized for many of the settlers were musicians with years of experience. Among the leaders and members of the band were Rudolph Bernet and William Munger.

Some of the earliest business men of Watonga are the following: T. B. Ferguson, later Territorial Governor of Oklahoma who came there about the time of the opening and established the Watonga Republican, a county paper, which is still circulating. He filled the office of post master for many years, and held many political positions in Blaine County.

His son, W. H. Munger, who conducted a hardware store for many years was a member of Watonga's first band and who also played a very important part in many activities around town. D. J. Martz, was the founder of the Watonga Rustler the first Democratic paper in Blaine County. He also owned a dry goods and grocery store in the early part and at the present date, 37 years later, it still in business. He was one of Watonga's early lawyers and he has been an active politician all during his stay in Watonga. His son Lew Martz will follow in the business circles of the town being engaged in the drug business.

J. H. Wagner, one of Watonga's best known merchants started in as a clerk for Logan and Kennedy who owned a store in Kingfisher at that time. He soon succeeded in owning the store himself and later built one of Watonga's best dry goods stores. At the time of his death he was still in business and one of Watonga's best known merchants.

Dr. Wishard, one of the first doctors in Watonga was a large, genial, kindly man who doctored the people for their ills and with sympathetic kindness helped many over the rough stones of pioneer life. The hours of sleep were of less importance than the health of his patients or the pain of toothache, which he relieved by placing the patient on a small box and without further preliminaries extracting the offending molar with a pair of forceps. These methods improved with the years.

His son, J. P. Wishard, who in an early day took up the profession of law in Watonga, is still in that business.

Seymour Foose, the foremost lawyer in Blaine County in the early 90's took part in every political activity of the County, protected the towns people from unscrupulous rogues, plead the divorce cases, and as the County's first attorney prosecuted criminal's law breakers. Though Mr. Foose came at the beginning of County's political existence he is still employed in many of the most important cases in the courts and he maintains his office over the First Bank and Trust Company quarters.

Dr. E. D. Vanbrunt, another physician, was an early pioneer. He also owned and conducted a drug store for many years. He held many positions in the town among them the County Health Office.

The History of Watonga would not be complete without the colorful picture of J. E. Gifford, or Dad Gifford as the people were wont to call him. In the early 90Is he owned a farm east of Watonga, but he did not spend all his time there. He was a very fluent speaker and very religious. He would go out through the country preaching in school houses to those who had neither the transportation nor the means to attend the town churches.

Many country urchins heard their first sermon in a crudely constructed log school house where Dad Gifford came to preach. He was also an able lawyer, and for many years held the office of Justice of the Peace. An Old soldier of the Civil War, no Decoration day program was complete without his speeches and at the time of his death he was still engaged in business as a dealer in paint and wall paper. His two sons, James and Fred followed their father in his business of painting and paper hanging and at present are active business men of Watonga.

One of the first business men to build a two story brick store in Watonga was N. Crandorff. He was one of Watonga's energetic and well known business men in the dry goods business and though he has passed on, he left to Watonga's business circle his son Clarence who is now engaged in the confectionery and News Stand business.

For years Phil Koch was one of the best known business men in Blaine County. He owned and conducted a hardware store in Watonga, while he was also active in politics, church and other activities. He served several terms as commissioner of Blaine County and was one of her most active citizens. His son Ted who started out in business with his father in the early years now owns and controls one of Watonga's largest and most up to date garages.



Hohn Dillon, one of Blaine County's early bankers was also a worthy promoter as he helped many farmers to tide over the weak years. He was an active politician and although he has left Watonga he is still an active banker in Blaine County being now located at Geary.

W. H. Peters, commonly known as Old Uncle Billy, was one of the pioneers whom people regretted to see pass on. For years he and his wife, Aunt Jenny, were engaged in the Hotel business and few people lived at that time and in that vicinity that did not know them. Uncle Billy served as the Justice of the Peace and held several minor political offices.

Geary is surrounded by a rich farming district which produces many kinds of small grain, corn and cotton. Two State highways, NO. 8 and NO. 66 pass through the town.

The town has all the modern conveniences of the larger cities such as electric light, telephone service, paved streets. The town of Geary, Oklahoma is located in the south east corner of Blaine County. The east part of the town is in Canadian County and the west part is in Blaine County. It is on the main line of the Rock Island railroad. On May first, 1902 through deed of sale from the Western Oklahoma Railroad Company the Choctaw, Oklahoma and Gulf Railroad Company secured the entire line of railroad and property of the Western Oklahoma Railroad Company, extending from Weatherford on west to the state line. In 1904, a lease for 999 years was granted by the Choctaw, Oklahoma and Gulf Railroad Company to the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad Company. This was the first road that had entered Geary. When Geary was first established the Rock Island Company had their railroad shops located there and Geary inhabitants expected much help from this industry but later it was removed and the town had to look to the farming districts for her growth.<sup>43</sup>

Geary is surrounded by a rich farming district which produces many kinds of small grain, corn and cotton. Two State highways, NO. 8 and NO. 66 pass through the town.<sup>44</sup>

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Bray A. C. Thesis O. U. p. 71

9 filling stations, 11 grocery stores, 2 garages, 2 lumber yards, 3 meat markets, 3 millinery stores, 3 produce houses, 2 book stores, studio, cleaning and pressing shop, 7 churches, 3 hotels, 6 cafes, and several rooming houses. Its fraternal organizations are Masonic, Odd Fellows, Eastern Star, Rebecca, P. E. O. and Modern Women of American. Civic clubs are Federated Womens Club and Geary Business Men's Club.

The town has all the modern conveniences of the larger cities such as electric lights, telephone service, paved streets, sewer, bus lines and park. It also has many business houses and other institutions.

Geary has a good public school system with an accredited four year high school. While it is an independent district it has several outlying country districts which have consolidated with it. These outside districts run three motors and haul ninety children at a total cost of \$1,868,32 per annum. Owing to the large number of negroes in her district she was required to build a separate school for colored. This was financed in part by the Rosenwald Fund.

Some of her oldest citizens are: S. E. Huff, who came to the county in an early day. He was the first county commissioner for the south side of the county and was appointed by Governor Seay. Peter Lough, another of the early day pioneers came to Blaine County in the early 90's and settled in Geary. He played a prominent part in her early history and is known by most of the early settlers of that community.

44  
 Geary business houses and institutions comprise the following: 1 ice plant, 2 weekly newspapers, 2 banks, 4 Barber shops, 3 cotton gins, 2 drug stores, 3 dry good stores, 3 elevators, 3 feed stores, 2 furniture stores, 9 filling stations, 11 grocery stores, 2 garages, 2 lumber yards, 3 meat markets, 3 millinery stores, 3 produce houses a book store, studio, cleaning and pressing shop, 7 churches 3 hotels, 6 cafes, and several rooming houses. Its fraternal organizations are Masonic, Odd Fellows, Eastern Star, Rebecca, P. E. O. and Modern Women of America. Civic clubs are Federated Womens Club and Geary Business Men's Club.

72  
Hitchcock

When the surveyors for the Enid and Anadarko Railroad Company surveyed the line through the present town of Hitchcock they found nothing there save the broad expanse of farming country with a few small farm houses scattered here and there. In 1901 the branch of railroad from Enid to Greenfield Junction was constructed and it was on this railroad that Hitchcock was built. In 1903 this above mentioned railroad was transferred to the Rock Island System and since that time has been known as such.<sup>45</sup>

Prior to 1901 a small community center with a grist mill was located just east of where Hitchcock now stands, known as Oxley. A little further east was the little post office of Cooper, Oklahoma. When the railroad came through the country the little towns of Oxley and Copper moved to the railroad and the town was called Hitchcock, named for the United States Cabinet Officer Hitchcock. Hitchcock is located eleven miles north east of Watonga on the State Highway No 8. It is surrounded by a rich farming district, whose broad acres fill her elevators at harvest time. The soil is red in color and to hard to raise corn or grow trees successfully.

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<sup>45</sup> Bray A. C. Thesis, Oklahoma. p. 72

Hitchcock has a fine public school system which comprises the largest consolidated district in Blaine County. The district has an area of 68 square miles with an assessed property valuation of \$1,277,892.00. It uses seven motors in transporting one hundred eighty four pupils at a total cost of \$4,688.35.

While the school is the vital part of the community Hitchcock has a nice residence district and a fair number of business houses and other institutions.

After twenty years of struggling the town began to go down and at present 1928 it is little more than a community centering around a consolidated school which is however a very good one and several elevators which convenience the farmer in shipping his crops. The school district is consolidated and contains twenty square miles of territory. It has an assessed valuation of \$1,277,892.00, uses three motors to transport 81 pupils at a total cost of \$1,705.14.

Homestead is the home of John French who served for many years as commissioner from the northern district of the county.

- 46 Twelfth Biennial Report, State Dept. of Public Instruction, 1928
- 47 The town of Hitchcock has 1 store, 1 drug store, 4 elevators, 4 grocery stores, 10 dry goods stores, 1 meat market, 2 cafes, 1 hotel, 10 barber shops, 2 poultry houses, 10 blacksmith shops, 4 furniture stores.

## Homestead

Homestead, like many of the towns in Blaine County sprang up after the Watonga & Northwestern Railroad was built through that country in 1900. For several years it was a flourishing little trading center and as it was in the heart of the wheat producing country its elevators shipped much wheat. But its close proximity to Okeene was destined to ruin its future for it was only four miles to this thriving little city and the roads were good.

After twenty years of struggling the town began to go down and at present 1928 it is little more than a community centering around a consolidated school which is however, a very good one and several elevators which convenience the farmer in shipping his grain. The school district is consolidated and contains twenty square miles of territory. It has an assessed valuation of \$589,044.00. Uses three motors to transport 91 pupils at a total cost of \$1,705.14

Homestead is the home of John Kennedy who served for many years as commissioner from the northern district and athletics during the week. A preacher from outside of the county.

- 46 Twelfth Bienial Report, State Supt. of Public Instruction p48.
- 47 The town of Hitchcock has 1 news paper, three churches, four elevators, four grocery stores, two dry goods stores, one meat market, two cafes, one bank, one drug store, three barber shops, two poultry houses, two hardware stores, two blacksmith shops, four filling stations, one feed mill, one furniture store.

In 1927 the ~~Company~~ Southard

for the Southard, Oklahoma is located in the northern part of the county. It is a very beautiful little town nestled among the Gypsum Hills and having about 1,000 inhabitants. The chief reason for the town being there is to accommodate the big United State Gypsum Mill which is located there.

nestles The entire town with all the buildings, is the property of the United States Gypsum Company. The inhabitants and town is entirely dependent on the mill for its existence. Everything is run on a cooperative basis.

Even the grocery store is cooperative. The community is governed by an association in which every inhabitant is a member. Everything is directed by the association from the schools to the base ball games. The town has a fine school system with four years of high school. The school house was erected at a cost of \$30,000 and is all modern in equipment and using from 4 to 6 teachers.

Besides the school house it has a large nicely arranged community house which is used as a church on Sunday and for entertainments, socials, club meetings, and athletics during the week. A preacher from outside towns is invited into preach, but no denominational services are allowed, the Sunday School and Church being a Union of them all. Donald Bredbeck is the director of Community affairs and M. G. Allen in the Work manager.

In 1927 the Company was carrying out a project for the building of modern homes. All houses were equipped with running water from the Company's big stand pipe. Whole blocks of houses are built on the same plan with wide streets and all are painted white. Everything is white, even the mill is white and as it nestles against the green background in summer it presents a beautiful natural landscape and picture.

It is located on the Frisco Railroad and while it is surrounded by a rich farming district, it is not a farmers town and little produce is brought here except through the company store. It has a grocery store, picture shows, a post office, filling stations, garages, hotels, cafes, meat markets, and dry goods stores.

square miles of territory with an assessed property valuation of \$418,823.00 using three acres to transport her rural children who number sixty eight at a total cost of \$1,219.00. The town also has many business houses and other institutions. Kansas is close to the western line of the county and draws a rail line forty miles to the west.

Quantan business houses and institutions are as follows: One newspaper (The Outlook & News) three churches, four elevators, eight grocery stores, one dry goods store, two meat markets, four cafes, one school, three mechanics, two poultry houses, one bank, two drug stores, three barber shops, one coffee mill, three elevators, two large garages, two hotels and a mill block.



## Canton

Canton, Oklahoma is located in the northwest part of Blaine County. It is surrounded by a rich farming country which is well adapted to the growth of cotton, alfalfa, corn, wheat and other small grains. The North Canadian River is just at the edge of the town and divided it from the other towns in the county.

Canton, like many of the Blaine County towns had its origin as a railroad town which was built when Kansas City, Mexico and Orient built its road through the country. There are many Indians in and about Canton, the Contonment Indian school being about four miles north of there. Canton has a large consolidated school with the district comprising a ~~area~~ area of thirty square miles of territory with an assessed property valuation of \$418,823.00 using three motors to transport her rural children who number eighty eight at a total cost of \$1,710.00 The town also has many business houses and other institutions. <sup>48</sup> Canton is close to the western line of the county and draws a trade for forty miles to the west.

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<sup>48</sup> Canton business houses and institutions are as follows: One newspaper (The Canton Record) three churches, four elevators, eight grocery stores, one dry goods store, two meat markets, four cafes, one studio, three creameries two poultry houses, one bank, two drug stores, three barber shops, one cotton gin, three elevators, three large garages, two hotels and a golf link.

## Okeene

Not far from the northern line of ~~Plaine~~ <sup>Blaine</sup> County is located the town of Okeene. This town was laid out shortly after the opening of the Cheyenne-Arapaho territory. As it was surrounded by a rich farming country it began at once to grow into a busy little trading center. When the Enid and Anadarko Railroad Company built its branch from Enid to Greenfield Junction, Okeene was in its pathway and this improvement served to take care of the wheat production which was growing steadily each year. The community around Okeene is composed steadily each year. The community around Okeene is composed mostly of people of German nationality. They are thrifty and industrious and many, after making a success of their farming have moved into Okeene as retired farmers.

In 1920 the Blackwell, Enid & Southwestern Railway Company incorporated in the Oklahoma territory in 1900, constructed the railroad from Blackwell through Enid to Red River north of Vernon, Texas.<sup>50</sup> This railroad intersected the Enid & Anadarko at Okeene and gave Okeene two railroads, each running in opposite directions.

Highway No. 8 passes through Okeene and furnishes bus service with points not connected with the railroad, because of the thrifty German element which constitutes a large part of the population of the surrounding country. Okeene has more churches than any city or town in the county<sup>51</sup>

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Okeene has paved her main street and some of the roads

51

The churches located there are American Baptist, German, Baptist, Methodist, Christian, Catholic, Adventist, Lutheran, Minnonite, and German Evangelical. Beside her many churches Okeene has two hospitals, seven grocery stores, five dry good stores, two meat markets, three hotels, four cafes, one studio, six creameries, seven poultry houses, two banks, two drug stores, six filling stations and two lumber yards, and excellent municipal light plant.

Among the oldest pioneers there are: J. C. Boyle, Houser, Charles Patrick, Frank Crissman, Dr. Norris and John Fisher. All of these early pioneers played their part in making Okeene what she is today. John Fisher for many years represented the northern district of Blaine County as County commissioner of that district.

Okeene has paved her main street and some of the branch streets. Owing to the soil formation most roads entering Okene are good.

Okeene has a good public school system. The district is independent and the four year high school is fully accredited. The Catholic Church maintains a Catholic School there.

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Among the oldest pioneers there are: J. C. Boyle, Si Houser, Charles Patrick, Frank Crissman, Dr. Norris and John Fisher. All of these early pioneers played their part in making Okeene what she is today. John Fisher for many years represented the northern district of Blaine County as County commissioner of that district.

consolidated school which has in its area thirty square miles of territory with an estimated population of \$325,615.00 using four schools to transport and educate thirteen pupils of a total cost of \$2,000,000.00 use six teachers.

Longdale has the following business houses:

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In November 1922 the United Fruit Company bought the land

Longdale business houses are as follows: Seven grocery stores, two dry goods stores, two filling stations, one barber shop, one drug store, one bank, one cotton gin, one electric power plant, one garage, two cafes and two saloons.

## Longdale

For many years the people in the north west of Blaine County had no near railroad to which they could haul their products. In 1903 the Kansas City, Mexico and Orient built a railroad through that part of Blaine County and the town of Longdale was established as a trading center.<sup>52</sup> Longdale is located in the extreme northwest corner of Blaine County being only two miles from the northern boundary line and five miles from the west line. The soil around Longdale is sandy and well adapted to the growth of small grains and forage crops. Cotton is one of the leading products of that community.

The community interests center around the consolidated school which has in its area forty square miles of territory with an assessed property valuation of \$325,615.00 using four motors to transport one hundred thirteen pupils at a total cost of \$1,579.79. They use six teachers.

Longdale has the following business houses:<sup>53</sup>

Its population is about 250.

In November 1928 the Santa Fe Company bought the R. R.

Longdale business houses are composed of the following: Seven grocery stores, two dry goods stores, four filling stations, one barber shop, one drug store, one bank, one cotton gin, one hotel, two hardware stores, one garage, two cafes and two elevators.

## Greenfield

Greenfield is the outgrowth of a little post office named after one of the old settlers who owned a farm close by. In 1900 the Enid and Anadarko Railroad built its line from Enid to Greenfield Junction. When the railroad came elevators were built and a trading center sprang up on the old post office site. Greenfield was too close to Watonga to succeed in getting very large and in 1927 the only bank was moved to Watonga. However, the next year another bank was chartered and it still continues to carry on a small volume of business. Greenfield has a progressive consolidated school system accredited with eighteen units. The district is the second largest consolidated district in the county containing sixty square miles of territory with an assessed property valuation of \$830,856.00 using six motors and hauling two hundred nineteen pupils at a total cost of \$5,590.00. Highway No. 8 passes through Greenfield and connects Greenfield with points north of there. Greenfield has several business houses and other institutions. Its population is about 250.

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<sup>54</sup> Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Inst. p. 48

<sup>55</sup> Greenfield business houses consist of one bank, one drug store, one barber shop, one grocery store, one dry goods store, filling stations, garage, elevators and produce houses.

have closed their doors but there are still several elevators, a lumber yard, produce house, hardware store, general store, cafe and several grocery stores, filling stations and a church.

## Eagle City

Owing to its located so far from another post office many attempts had been made to establish a town on the present site of Eagle City or there about. Just west of the present site a post office known as Dyke Post Office existed for some years, then the Dillon Post Office was located on the present sight of Eagle City named after the old settler that owned the quarter section of land upon which it stood. In 1903 L. A. Everhart and D. C. VanBuskirk built and operated a general merchandise store and later took over the Post Office. About two years later the Frisco built their Rail Road through the same quarter section and a new town sprang up called Eagle City which took over the old Dillon Post Office and the Everhart store was moved up to the track. That was the first store in Eagle City. Eagle City is located close to the western boundary line of Blaine County. It is surrounded by a rich farming district but owing to the good roads and its close proximity to Watonga and Canton the use of the automobile and trucks have caused the decline of this little village. It, like all other small towns of Blaine County has a good consolidated school system, using about 6 teachers. It also has a four year high school. Most of its business houses have closed their doors but there are still several elevators, a lumber yard, produce house, hardware store general store, cafe and several grocery stores, filling stations and a church.

Other small towns that are victims of the automobile and good roads era are Ferguson, Darrow, and Bickford. These places have practically lost their identity, for even the post offices have been discontinued. The Railroad has been torn up and only a few old decayed buildings testify to the lively pioneer days. Ferguson which was only 4 miles from Hitchcock was never a very large place and after Hitchcock came into existence quickly died out.

Darrow was a little better off. It stood at the intersection of the Frisco and Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific and as it was in a rich farming district it handled a great deal of wheat in its elevators, however it was too close to Okeene which was pushing right to the front, and it soon closed its business houses and nothing is there now but the depot and several elevators.

Bickford was at one time one of the busiest little industrial communities in the state. It was the home of Roman Nose, Gypsum Company. It was one of the largest mills in the Southwest, and it made all kinds of plaster, plaster board, cement, cement blocks, and all by products made by such mills. It owned the commissary, stores, houses, hotels, water works, pipe lines and every thing that pertained to the town. It was located in the Roman Nose Cannon 8 miles north of Watonga, which is noted for its most beautiful scenery.



The canon bordered by the dense foliage of cedar and other native trees through which flowed a large creek known as Bickford Creek, and the great white mill with all its white houses nestling in the bosom of the canon made one of Blaine County's most attractive landscapes.

But for economic reasons the mill was shut down, none of the inhabitants of the community knew why. The houses were vacated one by one as there was no further inducement to stay longer as the houses belonged to the company. The mill fell into decay, great powerful engines towering high above man's head rusted and fell into ruin. The bats played about the eaves, the shingles rotted and the rain came through rusting and rotting the great mill wheels, ropes, and leather belts which weighed nearly a ton. All is desolation and ruin where once the busy wheels of industry made a human bee hive. The houses too, have fallen down or are in a state of dilapidation. The railroad has been torn up and removed and only the ruins of the once thriving industry mark the place where Bickford once stood.

From the day of his entry to Blaine County until his death, Tom Ferguson was a strong political power in Oklahoma.

### Prominent People of Blaine County

T. B. Ferguson

Blaine County's History would not be complete if we failed to mention a few facts regarding her prominent men and women who are not only known throughout the state but in some cases have played a part in the nations affairs. County was named after James G. Blaine and called

Blaine. One who stands out pre-eminently among them is T. B. Ferguson, Ex Governor, statesman, and historian and journalist. At the time of the opening of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Country T. B. Ferguson was a young man just starting out on his career as journalist and newspaper man. He was born of Highland Scotch parents, in Iowa during the bloody Kansas War, 1857. During the years of his most impressionable age the Civil War was raging. His father a Union Soldier, what wonder that young Tom grew up as one of the most positive of republicans. With a literary education gained at Kansas State Normal School of Emporia and several years of experience as a newspaper man, T. B. Ferguson with his family came to Watonga in 1892. Here he established the Watonga Republican a weekly newspaper which he edited until his death.

From the day of his entry to Blaine County until his death, Tom Ferguson was a strong political power in Oklahoma. expounding his principles and wielding

his influence for the good of his party.

The story of his hardships, deprivations which he endured during

When the first Republican convention was held in Blaine County in the fall of 1892, Ferguson was chairman. The naming of the county was one of the problems to be considered. For awhile the Republicans dead locked upon whether it should be Custer or Sheridan. Finally through the influence of Ferguson a compromise was made and the County was named after James G. Blaine and called Blaine County. Having a strong political power and a forceful personality and character as well, he exerted an untold influence through the columns of his paper. Perhaps no weekly newspaper in Oklahoma has exerted such a long term of years and has been so highly respected and its editorial opinion considered as has the Watonga Republican.

Every political issue that came before the people was fought out in the columns of his paper. People knew exactly where he stood and how he felt about it. It is probable that no other man in Oklahoma was better acquainted with Oklahoma politics and at the same time in sympathy with his people and possessed the fortitude and courage of his conviction to stand up and fight for the things that he considered essential to their well being than he. No political meeting was complete without his presence. Tall and staunch, this young Abraham Lincoln of Blaine County stood before his friends and political antagonists expounding his principles and wielding his influence for the good of his party.

a man of his position, in his home town cemetery after

The story of his hardships, deprivations which he endured during these pioneer days could have been told only, of a brave and courageous man. Possessed by the indomitable spirit of the west which strengthened his character as the years progressed we find him climbing gradually yet surely from his humble beginning as editor of Blaine County's first newspaper to Governor of Oklahoma, the highest office the state has to offer.

During his political career he was a member of the County's first election board, a member of the State's First Election Board, Post Master at Watonga, Chairman of Republican Territorial Committee, a candidate for Congress and Governor of Oklahoma.

The best and greatest of his life has been given to the State through the pages of his paper. He served as Governor, four years and six weeks, the longest term ever served by a territorial governor of Oklahoma. In fact, out of the seven territorial governors of Oklahoma C. M. Barnes and T. B. Ferguson were the only two that served their full terms out. Jenkins and Seay were removed. Steele and Ranfrow resigned, and Grant's services terminated with admission of Oklahoma as a state.

In the very midst of his successful career and at the very gate of political recognition, T. B. Ferguson was stricken with death, while the country little realized at the time what an ally she had in him. He was laid to rest in all the glory, pomp and splendor becoming a man of his position, in his home town cemetery after

lying in state at the state capitol building where he at one time ruled as governor, and who knows but that like all worthy men, his greatest appreciation will come from the unborn generations yet to come.

Mrs. Elva U. Ferguson

Among the most important personages of Blaine County we are proud to place Mrs. Elva U. Ferguson, wife of Ex. Governor Ferguson upon the list. Mrs. Ferguson was born in Kansas and it was in that state that she met and married T. B. Ferguson. She is a woman of exceptional ability and at the time of her husband's appointment to the governorship Mrs. Ferguson was serving as Post Mistress of Watonga Post Office, her husband having resigned because of political activities. After serving her term as first lady of the state, she was again appointed Post Master at Watonga and served during Taft's administration. Upon the death of her husband, 1921, she assumed the sole responsibility for the editing and publishing of the Watonga Republican, a weekly newspaper which they had established back in 1892, and which had a very large circulation for a county paper.

Her initiative and ability to make a decision is shown in this reference to Ferguson's elevation to the governorship, taken from the old files of a Territorial newspaper. He was not a candidate and did not even then know that his name was being considered.

When the wire reached Watonga asking Ferguson if he would accept the position, he was away from home. His wife wired back his acceptance and when her husband returned home he found his grip packed and every thing ready for him to start for Washington as Governor of Oklahoma.

during During his public career and also as a newspaper man, Mr. Ferguson had a worthy helpmate in his wife, formerly Miss Elva U. Shartell. She is an exceptional newspaper woman and one imbued with both business and political judgement. Her political career has been very eventful for a woman. In 1924 she was chosen as delegate from the 6th district by a state delegation to the Republican National Convention at Cleveland Ohio to nominate Coolidge. She was made chairman of a state delegation at a national convention.

County When in 1926, Philadelphia had the Sesqui Centennial Mrs. Ferguson was chosen as the Representative from Oklahoma. She has also held a place on the Executive Committee of Republican conventions in state, county etc. In 1928 when the state was torn into pieces politically by the Smith-Hoover factions, Mrs. Ferguson was made vice chairman of the Republican party of Oklahoma and one of the managers of the Oklahoma campaign. She is also a member of the Theta Sigma Phi journalist Sorority, member of the Watonga Chamber of Commerce, belongs to the Order of the Eastern Star and other numerous societies of her home town.

leading members.

While she is an active business woman and politician, she also had a family of children, two boys and one girl. The little girl died in early childhood, the younger son T. B. Ferguson Jr. died during the World War while in camp. Her older son Walter is well known in the Oklahoma business world and lives in Tulsa.

#### Harrison Brown

Harrison Brown is one of Blaine County's best known citizens. He has served in most every political capacity of the Republican party in Blaine County. He served two terms as Watonga's Postmaster and two terms in the legislature as Senator from Blaine and Kingsfisher Counties.

He is a very able officer and politician. Being in the senate at the same time L. A. Everhart was in the House, he helped put the bills through that had been introduced in the House by Everhart, while he undoubtedly has many Acts to his own credit. (See Appendix).

The Watonga Republican for February 10, 1921 expresses the opinion of many in the following manner: "Senator Brown is serving the first part of his second term and is recognized as one of the big men of the Upper House. His long experience and acquaintance have made him a valuable man and he is easily one of the leading members.

He is chairman of the committee on Federal Relations a distinction for a minority member. In addition to his chairmanship he is a member of the following committees, Agriculture, Legislative and Judicial apportionment, Banks, and Banking, Insurance, Appropriations, Roads and Highways, and the committee on rules and on appropriations. The fact that he is a minority member of the committee on rules and on appropriations is a sufficient indication of his standing in the House.

Few campaigns in Blaine County have not felt the controlling influence of Harrison Brown, except those held when he was employed as Post Master. He is a man of few words but his subtle influence like the under current of the stream carries force with it and the object is accomplished. At present he is Post Master of Watonga, Oklahoma and has a controlling interest in the Watonga Herald, a weekly newspaper at that place.

**L. A. Everhart**

One of the most widely known citizens of Blaine County, Oklahoma is L. A. Everhart who came to the county shortly after the opening and filed on a claim. He was just old enough to file when he came and since that time has spent the best years of his life in Blaine County. He was Post Master of Eagle City when it was known as Dillon Post Office and before it had the railroad.



He built and operated the first store in that place and for many years was in business there. About 1906 he moved to Bickford, Oklahoma where he was Supt. of the Roman Nose Gypsum Company at that place, in its most flourishing days. For years he has been actively engaged in all political activities of the County, serving on many kinds of committees, boards etc.

For twelve years he served in the legislature of Oklahoma representing Blaine County. He was present in that capacity when the great "ink bottle fight" took place in the House. At the time of his retirement he had served in the house longer than any other representative. Quoting from Watonga Republican of Feb. 10, 1921 we read, "Blaine County Representative has considerable influence in the present session of Oklahoma legislature in view of the standing and experience of Senator Brown and Representative L. A. Everhart who are both old members with a wide and valuable experience. With the sudden turn of political affairs Everhart as a Senior member found himself with an extended influence in the Lower House. In the House organization he was one of the dominant figures and had much to do with the first Republican organization since Statehood.

He was made chairman of the committee on House Employees in which place he controlled practically all the awards of places. Due to his position he was able to give the most important and most widely sought after places to Blaine County men. In addition to this chairmanship, Everhart is a member of the following committees, Judiciary No. 1. Roads and Highways, Agriculture, Insurance, Drains and Ditches, Municipal Corporations and House Accounting.

Some of the most important bills proposed by Everhart in the house were very important to the people of Blaine County. (See Appendix). While he was there he was always ready to help pass any bill that was for the good and upbuilding of the county. His home is still in Blaine County and most of his old constituents know him personally.

Others who served for a term or so in the legislature and who were as conscientious in their duty as others who had a chance to do more were Emery D. Brownley of Kingfisher, A. L. Edington, Ben J. Clardy, T. J. Ballow and A. McBride.

Benjamin Hennesey of Ferguson, Blaine County served as Secretary of the State Board of Agriculture. He was also a strong politician and a dramatic entertainer of state wide renown.

Marjorie B. Everhart of Watonga won the distinction of being the first lady lawyer to be admitted to the Bar in the State of Oklahoma and one of the first ladies to sit on a City Council.

Frances Smith of Geary won National fame as the champion girl of the 4H Club.

Clive Lookabaugh of Watonga was nationally known as a breeder of fine Pure Bred Short Horn Cattle. He had one of the largest stock farms in the south west.

Guy Lookabaugh won state and national fame as an Athlete.

C. T. Scott and William Barnett are two of the States Master Farmers.

Men of the World War

While the living have been doing great things for Blaine County no less can be said of the dead who gave their lives in the great struggle for democracy that we might uphold the principles for which our forefathers fought and died.

The following is a list of those who made the supreme sacrifice. The list is procured from the Post Adjutant of the Watonga Post #129. His letter and list are as follows:

Attached hereto is a list of the casualties by death of soldiers in the World War from Blaine County, Oklahoma.

It was made up for the Home Service Section of the American Red Cross of Blaine County in 1920 by Mr. Seymour Foose, from official information obtained by Correspondence and inspection of official documents, and is correct in detail, and particularly as to spelling of names, designation of organization, and nearest relatives.

There were two others that were believed to have belonged in Blaine County but probably enlisted or were drafted elsewhere, but as to these no verification officially could be had. They were Ralph W. Brown of Hydro, Oklahoma and Frank B. Mingus of Geary, Oklahoma.

This was submitted to the American Legion by Semous Foose in the interest of securing a correct list for the memorial inscription of the names of the State Capitol on the Mural Painting.

Yours very truly,  
 Watonga Post #129  
 American Post  
 By Post Adjutant.

Soldiers from Blaine County, Oklahoma who died in the Military Service of the United States during the World War:

Name, Rank, Organization	Address.	Relative
Tom Ferguson Jr; 2nd Lt. Aviation Service	Watonga, Oklahoma	Elva U. Ferguson
Harold M. Davis. Private College Station, Austin, Tex.	Father. J. G. Davis Gentry, Oklahoma	
Edgar Lee McCord. Private A.A.R.D. Co. 19. Med. Corps.	Father, Edgar E. McCord Watonga, Oklahoma.	
Ellis Madden. Private Co. B. 365 Inf.	Mother, Melinda Love Watonga, Oklahoma.	
Emanuel Greisemer. Private Air Service	Mother, Ida Bollinger Watonga, Oklahoma.	
John P. Koch. Private Co. G. 141 Inf.	Mother, Mrs. Helen Koch Watonga, Oklahoma	
Claude W. McKinsey. Private Air Service	Father, J. L. McKinsey Omega, Oklahoma	
Chas. Dewitt Fairchild. Private Co. 1 38th Inf.	Mary Amanda Payne	
<del>Harry Gold</del> Harry Gold. Private Co. C. 113	Wife, Irene Gold Canton, Oklahoma	
Ricahrd Roberts. Private Co. A. 346 Trk. Bat. Sigt Corps.	Father, Frank Roberts Geary, Oklahoma.	
Henry Shawnee. Private Co. A. 343 MCH Gun Battery	Father, Albert Shawnee Greenfield, Oklahoma	
Benjamin Towns, Private Motor Co. NO 3, Med. Dept.	Mother, Mrs. Dora Towns Okeene, Oklahoma.	
Stephen D. McBride. Private 1 cl Co. D. 142 Inf.	Father, Andrew W. McBride Watonga, Oklahoma	
Miles Dickinson. Private S. A. T. C. State Univ. of Oklahoma	Father. Harry Dickinson Hitchcock, Oklahoma	
Leonard C. Dennison, Private Co. D. 131 Mch. Gun Battery	Father, Samuel H. Dennison Greenfield, Oklahoma	

	1923	1924	1925	98.	1926	1927	1928
Horses		7073	6814		6603	6312	5743
Mules							
Cattle							
Sheep							
Goats							
Hogs							
Cotton land							
Mortgage							
Elevators							
Total personal prop.		\$1582910.00	\$1329419.00		\$1364000.00	\$1271000.00	\$1197100.00
Personal tax							
Personal property							
Real estate	482000 A.	484231 A.	486390 A.		488500 A.	490650 A.	492800 A.
Value * *	\$3173320.00	\$7367025.00	\$7417125.00		\$8652100.00	\$871200.00	\$871200.00
Value of im- provements	\$1004855	\$857150.00	\$861800.00		\$860000.00	\$860000.00	\$860000.00
City Lots	20355	19715	19750		19750	19750	19750
Value * *	\$484000.00	\$1120075.00	\$1120075.00		\$1120075.00	\$1120075.00	\$1120075.00
Value im- provements	\$121200.00	\$1120075.00	\$1120075.00		\$1120075.00	\$1120075.00	\$1120075.00
Total val- uation	\$1247000.00	\$1247000.00	\$1247000.00		\$1247000.00	\$1247000.00	\$1247000.00

John L. Smith. Candidate  
Officers Training School 31  
Training Battery. Field Arty.

Henry Blender. 1st. Lt.  
Medical Corps.

Harvey M. Cavett. Private  
Hospital Corps

Frank Paul Wind. Wagoner;  
Co. A. 131 MCH. Gun Bat.

Archie Stunz. Private  
Q. M. C. 2nd Gas & Oil Unit

George Morris. Private  
51 Aero Squadron

Benjamin H. Lake, Sergeant  
Co. G. 357 Inf. 90th Div.

Wife, Jessie A. Smith  
Homestead, Oklahoma

Wife. Mrs. Lulu E. Blender  
Okeene, Oklahoma.

Mother, Mary E. Cavett  
Eagle City, Oklahoma.

Father, J. P. Wind  
Hydro, Oklahoma.

Father, C. Stunz  
Cherryvale, Kansas

Father, A. Morris  
Thomas, Oklahoma

Wife, Mrs. Gertrude Lake  
Geary, Oklahoma.

1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928
Horses	7073	6814	6603	6312	5748
Mules	2134	2261	2186	2160	1848
Cattle	19120	15356	16092	18291	196000
Sheep	1924	2059	2003	4009	4330
Goats	839	836	940	1233	1234
Hogs	3240	2855	2714	3937	4150
Cotton on hand		\$22175.	229 B	138B	228B
Mortgages	\$35265.00		\$68670.00	\$67030.00	\$24960.00
Elevators	\$90205.00	\$81175.00	\$94925.00	\$94925.00	\$85350.00
Total personal prop.	\$1582910.00	\$1329919.00	\$1640440.00	\$1701727.00	\$1767152.00
Personal tax					
Personal property					
Real estate	482590 A.	484231 A.	486990 A.	519859 A.	522860 A.
Value " "	\$8373320.00	\$7367625.00	\$7417135.00	\$8635150.00	\$8691550.00
Value of improvements	\$1004855	\$857150.00	\$861650.00	\$950050.00	\$950050.00
City Lots	20355	19715	19720	15454	15454
Value " "	\$484800.00	\$1178375.	\$393423.00	\$393322.00	\$384106.00
Value improvements	\$1213810.00	\$1178315.00	\$1208855.00	\$1355186.00	\$1376186.00
Total valuation	\$12475595.00	\$11126492.00	\$11325002.00	\$15535711.00	\$12977644.00

House Resolution 1921

House Resolution NO. 28

Resolution on death of former Governor T. B. Ferguson

Resolution calling for information from Commission of Land Office

Resolution in commemoration of late Ex Governor T. B. Ferguson

HOUSE BILLS introduced by L. A. Everhart in the State Legislature 1924.

HOUSE BILL NO. 1

An Act establishing a propagating farm and fish hatchery.

HOUSE BILL NO. 2

An Act requiring the heads of the Departments and State Institutions to report certain items of indebtedness to the State Board of Affairs, etc.

House Bill NO. 3

An Act repealing section 2, chapter 213, House Bill NO. 372, Session Laws of Oklahoma 1923, relating to the purchase of army shoes etc.

HOUSE BILL NO. 4.

An Act requiring the head of each State School to furnish the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, certain sworn statements as to the number of persons enrolled in said school and requiring the Head of each State School to furnish said Superintendent with certain lists of all persons enrolled in said school, etc.

HOUSE BILL NO. 5

An Act relating to the disposition of monies received for the care of patients by State Hospitals at Ft. Supply, Norman and Vinita, Etc.

HOUSE BILL NO. 6

An Act repealing chapter NO. 143, House Bill NO. 22, 33, Session Laws of Oklahoma of 1923 relating to the capture and delivery of Fred Dennis, Etc.

HOUSE BILL NO. 7.

An Act repealing Chapter 263 Senate Joint Resolution NO. 39 session Laws of Oklahoma, 1923 etc.

HOUSE BILL NO. 8

An Act amending section <sup>8888</sup>~~2694~~, Compiled Statues of Okla. 1921 relating to the penalty for violation of the Narcotic Drug Act. etc.



## HOUSE BILL NO. 9

An Act amending section 9694, Compiled Statutes of Oklahoma, 1921 relating to Excise Board of each County etc.

## HOUSE BILL NO. 10

An Act creating a State Highway Commission etc.

## HOUSE BILL NO 11

An Act amending section 104 Compiled Statutes of Oklahoma 1921, as amended by Section 4, Chapter 189, House Bill NO. 250 session Laws, 1923, relating to the collection of certain tax from fire insurance companies, etc.

## HOUSE BILL NO. 12

An Act amending paragraph (1) of section 111, Compiled Statutes of Oklahoma, 1921 relating to the State Insurance Board. etc.

## HOUSE BILL NO. 13

An Act amending section 6740, Compiled Laws of Oklahoma 1921 relating to the State Insurance Board and declaring an emergency.

## HOUSE BILL NO. 14

An Act amending sections 1 and 8 of House Bill NO. 503 Chapter 239, session Laws of Oklahoma, 1923, and levying an excise tax of two and one half cents per gallon on gasoline, providing for the distribution of the one half cent on each gallon of the proceeds of the State Tax to the County Highway Fund of each County, etc.

## HOUSE BILL NO. 15

An Act amending section 1, Chapter 233, House Bill 485 session Laws of Oklahoma, 1923, relating to the appropriations for State Educational, Chairtable, eleemosynary and Penal Institutions.

## HOUSE BILL NO. 16

An Act repealing chapter 175, House Bill No. 197 Session Laws of 1923, reenacting ~~Section~~ Sections 10250-10254-10261-10264 Compiled Statutes of Oklahoma, 1921.

## HOUSE BILL NO. 17

An Act providing for the filing of market agreements authorized by Chapter 181, Session Laws of Oklahoma, 1923 or Acts or parts of Acts amendatory thereof between any cooperative Marketing Association and its members or certified statement of the provisions of any such agreements together with a list of names of contracting members etc.

House Bills, and House Resolutions introduced in the State Legislature and sponsored by L. A. Everhart. Representative 1921

HOUSE BILL NO. 281.

An Act appropriating money to cover expenses where shortage occurred in the State Capital.

House Bill NO. 169:

An Act authorizing certain school districts to dispense with school in their districts, and provide for transfer of pupils to another district, and providing for payment of transfer fees and cost of transportation of pupils and defining certain duties of school board and declaring an emergency, etc.

HOUSE BILL NO. 206

An Act providing for holding free township and Co. Fairs.

HOUSE BILL NO. 284

An Act Relating to Primary and General Elections, prescribing penalties for violations of the provisions thereof, etc.

HOUSE BILL NO. 199

An Act to prevent floods, protect, cities, farms, and highways from inundations, and authorizing the organization of drainage and conservation districts, etc.

HOUSE BILL NO. 262

An Act relating to the sale of Bonds issued by a vote of the people of any County, City, Town, Board of Education etc/

HOUSE BILL NO. 325

An Act fixing a penalty for domestic animals running at large, as prohibited by chapter 158 session laws 1919.

HOUSE BILL NO. 332

An Act acknowledging the indebtedness of the State of Oklahoma to those citizens who were engaged in military service of the U. S. during the World War. etc.

HOUSE BILL NO. 411

An Act authorizing Text Book Commission to adopt a Speller by T. J. Hilber, for colored schools of the State. Etc.

HOUSE BILL NO. 412

An Act making an appropriation for payment of mileage of President Electors. etc.

HOUSE BILL NO. 412

An Act making an appropriation for Okla. A. & M. College at Stillwater for buildings etc.

## Bibliography

## HOUSE BILL NO. 34

An Act creating a County Board of Education in each and every County in the State of Oklahoma. etc.

## HOUSE BILL NO. 65

An Act amending section 5735 of Chapter ~~54~~ 35 Article 6, Compiled Statutes of Oklahoma, Annotated 1921, fixing and lightening the terms of Office of the County Attorney, Court Clerk, and County Surveyor, and County Superintendent of Public Instruction., etc.

## HOUSE BILL NO. 89

An Act requiring every person, firm or corporation who conducts or carries on ~~business~~ the business on manufacturing or distribution of farm, mill, factory, or road machinery, etc.

## Kappeler, Indian Laws and Treaties

(Author'S Note), Explorations of the R<sup>d</sup> River of Louisiana

It will be noticed that the first seventeen bills introduced in the House of the Legislature for the year of 1924 were introduced by Mr. Everhart.

This is probably due to the fact that he was the senior member in the House and was better acquainted with the condition of affairs.

## Report of Indian Commissioner 1888

Senate Executive Document 17; 45th Congress Second Session Volume 1

Theburn, Joseph B. History of Oklahoma Volume 2

United States Statutes at Large Volume 10

United States Statutes at Large Volume XI

United States Statutes at Large Volume 18, Treaty of Medicine Lodge.

United States Statutes at Large Volume XIV

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- Casteneda, Pedro De, Narratives of Spanish Explorers
- Cheyenne-Arapaho Executive Order 1869
- Commissioners Proceedings, Blaine County Oklahoma Volume 1
- Constitution of Oklahoma
- Kapplers, Indian Laws and Treaties
- Marcy, Randolph, Explorations of the Red River of Louisiana
- Oklahoma Red Book Volume 1
- Official Record of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for Blaine County Oklahoma Volume 1
- Report of W. A. Richards Assistant Commissioner of the General Land Office Senate Document 57th Congress 1st, Session 1901-1902 Volume 2
- Report of Indian Commissioner 1888
- Senate Executive Document 17; 48th Congress Second Session Volume 1
- Thoburn, Joseph B. History of Oklahoma Volume 2
- United States Statutes at Large Volume 10
- United States Statutes at Large Volume XI
- United States Statutes at Large Volume 15, Treaty of Medicine Lodge.
- United States Statutes at Large Volume XLV

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1880-1885

Gideon, D. C. History of the Indian Territory

Thoburn, Joseph B. History of Oklahoma Volume 2

Wrights, M. H. History of Indian Territory.

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