

ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF BROKEN ARROW, OKLAHOMA

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THESIS PRESENTATION

ESTABLISHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF BROKEN ARROW, OKLAHOMA

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BROKEN ARROW LEGEND

A town was born - one early morn,
When a chief so bravely spoke,
"Let fighting cease - Let there be PEACE."
And his mighty arrow broke.

The big chief said, "It's no disgrace,
If daughter love-um white pale-face,
We're brothers all, with Peace our aim -
And Broken Arrow shall be our name."

- Mrs. Walter Williams

PREFACE

This study has for its purpose the presentation of an accurate account of the events which transpired throughout the development of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma. An attempt has been made to point out the significant details concerning its growth and development from the time of its establishment to the present.

The materials for this study have been gathered from manuscripts, early day newspapers, city, county, state, and national records, and conversations with pioneers of Broken Arrow.

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To all those pioneer settlers who gave him first-hand information concerning the founding and growth of the town, the writer is indeed grateful.

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CHAPTER I
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF BROKEN ARROW

When Thomas Jefferson purchased Louisiana, in 1803, all of Oklahoma east of the hundredth meridian became a part of the public domain of the United States government. Within a short time the Louisiana country was organized into different territories but the writer is only concerned with the Arkansas Territory, since all of Oklahoma except the panhandle was included in that territory, as it was organized in 1819.

The United States government attempted to recognize the rights of the Indians who lived in the Louisiana Territory or claimed large portions of it as their hunting grounds. Many of these claims overlapped one another, causing much trouble and occasionally open warfare. At the time of the Louisiana Purchase, the Osage Indians claimed the area between the Arkansas and White rivers as their hunting grounds. Their claims included much of northwestern Arkansas, a large portion of southwestern Missouri and practically all of the present state of Oklahoma north of the Canadian river. The major portion of the Osages maintained their permanent settlement on the Little Osage River in present Vernon County, Missouri. However, shortly after 1800 the Arkansas Band of the Osages was persuaded to move southward and made their home in the area between the Grand and Verdigris rivers.¹

¹Joseph B. Thoburn and Muriel H. Wright, Oklahoma - A History of the State and Its People (New York, 1929), Vol. I, p. 111.

A short time after the United States acquired the Louisiana country, several hundred Cherokee Indians moved into the Osage hunting territory of Arkansas. In July, 1817, these Western Cherokees made a treaty with the United States government, which granted them the land between a line running directly north from the mouth of Point Remove creek on the Arkansas river to the White river and the west boundary line beginning at a point on the Arkansas river about ten miles north of Ft. Smith, northeast to the White river opposite the mouth of Little North Fork.²

The land sold to the Western Cherokees had been claimed as a hunting ground by the Osages who were irritated when they saw other Indians settling on their lands. They began to make raids upon the Western Cherokees who, in turn, retaliated. Thus war began between the two tribes, during which each side attacked the other's villages, stole livestock and carried away prisoners.

The federal government sought to minimize the friction between the Osage and Western Cherokee by a series of treaties which had as their general purpose the forced withdrawal of the Osage from present-day Arkansas and Oklahoma.

By the treaty of 1818,³ the Osages relinquished all their lands north of the Arkansas river between the east Osage boundary line and the Verdigris river, north to the falls of the Verdigris (Okay); thence

²Charles J. Kappler, Laws and Treaties Indian Affairs (Washington, 1904), Vol. II, pp. 140-44.

The Oklahoma Red Book (Oklahoma City, 1912), Vol. 1, p. 245.

³Kappler's, Laws and Treaties, Vol. II, p. 167.

eastwardly to the Osage boundary. By the treaty of 1825⁴ they surrendered all the rest of their claims in Oklahoma to the United States government.

In spite of the treaties occasional trouble and warfare between the two tribes continued until January 11, 1839, when the Osage chiefs met in council with the Cherokee and Creek Indians at Ft. Gibson.⁵ Capt. William Armstrong and Gen. Matthew Arbuckle were commissioned by the United States government to hold the treaty with the three tribes. The principal features of the treaty were those by which the Osages finally agreed to remove from the Creek and Cherokee land to territory in the present state of Kansas granted them in the 1825 treaty and the United States government agreed to pay the Creeks and Cherokees \$30,000.00 for damages committed by the Osages.

The purchase of the Osage lands by the government in 1818 and 1825 made it possible to assign reservations to other Indian tribes living east of the Mississippi. One of the cessions out of this land was made to the Creek Indians of Georgia and Alabama.

Since Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, is located in what was the Creek Nation, Indian Territory, it will be necessary to give a brief account of the Creek Indians as they lived in their old home in Georgia.

When James Oglethorpe made his settlement in Georgia, the interior of that region was occupied by a tribe of Indians called the Muskogees or Creeks. At the end of the eighteenth century this nation of some 15,000 or 20,000 people occupied a large portion of the present states

⁴Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma, Vol. I, p. 114.
Kappler's, Laws and Treaties, Vol. II, pp. 217-18.

⁵Kappler's, Laws and Treaties, Vol. II, p. 525.
Grant Foreman, The Five Civilized Tribes (Norman, 1934). p. 166.

of Georgia and Alabama, with most of their larger villages located along the Chattahoochie River.

During the eighteenth century, the Creek Indians lived in towns which were built around a public square, where a campfire was kept burning continuously. Each town selected its own leaders who represented the town at the grand council. These towns were united in a confederacy which controlled the Muskogee Nation. This confederacy was composed of fifty or more towns united in two main groups, the Upper Towns and the Lower Towns.⁶

On the whole, as the white settlements increased, the Creeks profited from their association with the white man. Goods from European countries had made life easier for the more progressive members of the tribe. On the eve of the American Revolution rifles had partially replaced the bow and arrow for hunting, cloth was being used for clothing instead of deer skin and many other imported, manufactured articles took the place of those previously made by hand.

The westward expansion of the colony of Georgia inevitably brought settlers into regions nominally under Creek control. Territorial conflict resulted.

In 1773 the people of Georgia were still confined to a narrow strip along the coast but during that year they were able to secure their first land cession from the Creeks.⁷ From this time until their final removal to the west, the Creeks, with the help of their Cherokee neighbors to the

⁶John R. Swanton, Early History of the Creek Indians and Their Neighbors, Bulletin No. 73, Bureau of American Ethnology (Washington, 1922), p. 430. Hereafter cited as Swanton's, History of the Creek Indians.

⁷Angie Debo, The Road to Disappearance (Norman, 1941). p. 35.

north, used every known political strategy to keep the Georgians from taking their homeland. No doubt this diplomatic struggle against the government's attempts to dispossess the Creeks of their homeland, gave valuable leadership training to the young chiefs. By 1817 William McIntosh,⁸ as head chief of Coweta, was the most influential leader and speaker of the Lower Creek towns. He was subordinate only to Little Prince, an aged chief of Broken Arrow, who was recognized as speaker of the nation.⁹

The Georgians pushed their control further into Creek territory under the pretense of establishing trading posts for the benefit of the Indians. As soon as the posts were established, state officials would ask permission to open roads connecting them with the white settlements. Every trading post and road brought nearer the white settler's ultimate goal; driving the Creeks from Georgia.

When the United States government purchased the Louisiana Territory in 1803 from France, it unexpectedly advanced the state's occupation of Creek lands by a quarter of a century. It speeded the movement to settle the southwest and created a new frontier along the Mississippi River, with the results that the Creeks were now also threatened from the west. In addition these endless miles of rich bottom and prairie lands far to the west, into which frontiersmen would not move for many years, offered an added argument for resettling the Indians across the Mississippi.

⁸William McIntosh was the son of a Scotch trader and a Creek woman. His residence was at Coweta on the Chattahoochee River, where he had two wives, one Creek, the other Cherokee. Another wife resided some fifty miles away on another of his plantations.

⁹Angie Debo, Road to Disappearance, p. 85.

After 1817 the federal government began to add its pressure on the Five Civilized tribes¹⁰ to induce them to move beyond the Mississippi. Before 1825, however, only small groups of Cherokees and Choctaws had made the westward move.

The people of Georgia became dissatisfied with the slow and gradual absorption of Indian lands and the idea of removing the Creeks to the west by force was gaining favor. Not only the white people of Georgia but some elements of the Creek nation, headed by William McIntosh, began to advocate an emigration policy.

In spite of continued appeals and protests which had been made by the Creeks against land cessions, the United States commissioners met with the chiefs at Broken Arrow in December, 1824, to ask for additional cessions. The answer of the Creek leaders was an unqualified refusal.¹¹ The commissioners then made a secret visit to McIntosh's home and resolved to negotiate a treaty with him and a few of his friends.

To carry out his plan the commissioners called a council of the Creeks to meet with them at Indian Springs, Georgia, near the home of McIntosh. The chiefs, having decided not to make a treaty, refused to attend this council, pointing out that they had already given their answer and had no thought of changing it. However, McIntosh and those citizens of the Lower Creek Towns whose support he had won signed an agreement in February, 1825, known as the Treaty of Indian Springs.¹² By this agreement McIntosh agreed to give up all the Creek land in

¹⁰The Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole Indians are known as the Five Civilized Tribes.

¹¹Angie Debo, Road to Disappearance, pp. 88-89.

¹²Kappler's, Laws and Treaties, Vol. II, pp. 214-15.
Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma, Vol. I, p. 116.

Georgia and a portion of their territory in Alabama in exchange for an equal area in the present state of Oklahoma.

Before McIntosh signed the treaty, Opothleyahola, a leading Lower Town Chief, who had attended the council only to witness the signing, warned him of the death penalty for anyone seeking to sell Creek land. For this violation of the Creek law, which he had helped to enact, William McIntosh was charged by the principal chiefs in council with treason and condemned to death. Early one morning he awoke to find his house surrounded by angry Creek warriors. After calling out the members of McIntosh's family and two white men, who were spending the night in his home, the warriors set fire to the house and shot him as he came out of the door.

The following year the Creeks sent representatives to Washington with full authority to act for the tribes. A new removal treaty known as the Treaty of Washington was made in 1826.¹³ This agreement expressly declared the Indian Springs Treaty null and void. It also agreed that the Indians were to be given aid in removing and were to be furnished with food and supplies during the first year. The territory received in exchange for their homeland was practically the same as that in the Indian Springs Treaty; namely, the area between the Canadian and Arkansas rivers.

The first party of Creeks emigrated in 1828 and settled at the Three Forks of the Arkansas, Verdigris, and Grand rivers a few miles north of the present Muskogee, Oklahoma.¹⁴ In general they represented

¹³Kappler's, Laws and Treaties, Vol. II, pp. 264-68.

¹⁴Grant Foreman, ed., A Traveler in Indian Territory, Journal of Ethan Allen Hitchcock, 1841-42 (Cedar Rapids, 1930), pp. 119-20.

a progressive element in the tribe with a mixture of white blood. Most of these emigrants came from Broken Arrow, Coweta, Big Springs, and other Lower Creek towns in Georgia. Three families who were to play important parts in the Broken Arrow community, the McIntoshes, Ferrymans, and Childres, were among these early settlers.

According to a report sent by Col. A. P. Chouteau in 1830 to Senator Benton on conditions in the Creek Nation, the soil was very fertile, producing forty-five to fifty bushels of corn per acre, there was much timber along the rivers and fine grass covered the wide prairies. Numerous fruits in abundance consisted of delicious grapes, plums, blackhaws, strawberries, blackberries, pawpaws, persimmons, may apples and roots used for food. There was a bountiful supply of wild game such as the buffalo, deer, antelope, bears, and small fur bearing animals. The Creeks also raised some cotton, tobacco, and upland rice. In this same report Col. Chouteau mentioned the wild horses which grazed the prairies to the northwest in countless herds.¹⁵

In spite of the abundant supply of natural foods, the Creeks had a wretched existence for several years. They failed to receive the supplies and the necessities promised them in the removal treaty and in addition were afflicted with devastating epidemics.

The decade between 1830 and 1840 comprised the most tragic years for the Creek Indians. Cholera, smallpox, and malarial fevers caused

¹⁵"I have seen the face of the country covered with horses as far as the eye could reach and often I have been obliged to keep out guards to fire at them to keep them from breaking upon my camp or traveling line. The same is still more applicable to the buffalo." Grant Foreman, The Five Civilized Tribes (Norman, 1934), p. 147.

much suffering and loss of life but even more suffering, heart breaks and hatred during this period resulted from the lack of interest on the part of government officials in Washington and the theft and fraud practiced by the men who contracted to furnish rations to the Indians. Volumes of reports in regard to the suffering and lack of supplies were made to officials in Washington who continued to ignore them. Many of these accounts were probably exaggerated to suit the desires of the person reporting but many true and honest reports were made also.

In 1841 Major Ethan Allen Hitchcock was directed to prepare a report covering all charges since the arrival of the Creeks.¹⁶ The evidence he included in his statement demonstrated that the fraud consisted mainly in the use of false weights and measures by the contractors. When the Indian complained that he did not receive a full measure of corn or got a cow or hog that proved to be only half the weight claimed by the contractor, he might not be allowed any rations at all.

The Osage, who had not yet moved into the Kansas country in accordance with the treaty of 1825, and the Delaware Indians were a continual threat to the welfare of the Creeks. The Delawares pastured cattle on the Creek lands and hunted the game which was badly needed by the Creeks for food. The Osages not only hunted and pastured the Creek lands but stole their hogs, cattle, horses, corn, and property. Unfortunately the government gave very little protection from these Indians.

Not having the guns and supplies promised them by the government the Creeks were not able to defend themselves, and for several years after removal were clustered under the protection of Ft. Gibson because

¹⁶Grant Foreman, The Five Civilized Tribes, pp. 157-59.
United States House Executive Document No. 219 (Hitchcock Report, 1843), 27 Cong., 3 Sess.

of their fear of the Osage and Delaware Indians.

After the United States government established Old Fort Arbuckle at the mouth of the Cimarron river in 1834,¹⁷ the Creeks felt safe in moving farther up the Arkansas and Verdigris rivers, where they would have more room to engage in the type of farming they had practiced east of the Mississippi. They would also be able to organize their towns as they had in Georgia.

The Broken Arrow Creeks¹⁸ set up their council and ceremonial grounds near the intersection of Captain J. L. Dawson's Road and the Big Osage Hunting and War Trail.¹⁹ Dawson's Road extended from

¹⁷Grant Foreman, The Five Civilized Tribes, p. 135.

¹⁸Mildred McIntosh Childers, Private Letters and Papers (Broken Arrow, Oklahoma).

In Georgia and Alabama whenever a town became too large to gather around one campfire, the people divided and part of them found a new location and took a new name for their town. One year some of the Indians of Muskogee town, with their wives and children, made a long journey to the Chattahoochee river bottom, where grew a particular tree suitable for arrow making. They were gone several months gathering arrows for the whole town. Since the branches of the trees were broken off and not cut, they were referred to as broken arrows. When the Indians returned to the Muskogee camp, they decided to go back to the place where the arrows were gathered and establish a new campfire of their own. Since names descriptive of the town's location was customary among the Creeks, it was natural for them to name the new town Thlikachka (Broken Arrow).

Eloise Childers Boudinot, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscence, July 9, 1951.

Mildred McIntosh was the daughter of Roley McIntosh III, second chief, during Isparhecher's term as chief of the Creeks. She was Chief Isparhecher's private secretary and for two days was officially chief of the Creek tribe. Chief Isparhecher and second chief McIntosh were away from the capitol on business and Mildred was invested with temporary authority to sign papers and deal with all matters officially referred to the chief executive by the council then in session. She is the only woman ever so honored by the Creek nation.

¹⁹James H. Gardner, "One Hundred Years Ago in the Region of Tulsa," Chronicles of Oklahoma (Oklahoma City, 1933), Vol. XI, No. 2, p. 772.

Ft. Gibson to Old Fort Arbuckle along the north side of the Arkansas river and the Big Osage Hunting and War Trail ran southwest from the Claremore country.

During the 1830's much friction and controversy arose from the fact that the Creek and Cherokee claims along the Verdigris river overlapped. This dispute between the tribes grew out of the decisions and actions of officials in Washington, who had unwittingly granted both tribes the same territory, on which the Creeks had located, built homes, and cleared for cultivation. The leaders of both tribes met in council with the Stokes Commission at Ft. Gibson in 1833.²⁰ Montford Stokes, governor of North Carolina and chairman of the commission, was in charge. An agreement was reached which divided the area between the Verdigris and Grand rivers allowing the Creeks to keep the lands they had improved.

The spring of 1840 found practically all of the Creek tribe located on their new domain in the west and most of the Lower Creeks had, to a certain degree, adjusted themselves to the new surroundings. The agents on tours of inspection noted many fine well-fenced orchards, and frequently reported the spinning wheel and the loom in common use. The Creeks excelled as corn-growers and in 1846 they raised and sold one hundred thousand bushels.²¹ They also produced large numbers of hogs and cattle.

The Creek Indians were an industrious people. As soon as their town was located and the official campfire established, they began the

²⁰ Kappler's, Laws and Treaties, Vol. II, pp. 388-91.
Thoburn and Wright, Oklahoma, Vol. I, p. 156.

²¹ Angie Debo, The Road to Disappearance, p. 141.

construction of their houses and clearing of the land. Some towns had a public or common field, which was fenced and cultivated by the combined efforts of the town. In addition each family had its individual lands and crops to cultivate and care for. Other towns preferred to work their lands individually.

Most of the Creek women knew how to spin and weave. They also made practically all the clothing worn by the family; however, part of the clothing was made from brightly colored cloth purchased from the traders.²² There were men in the tribe who became experts in the manufacture of spinning wheels and looms. Since many of the Indians were not mechanically inclined, such work as blacksmithing was carried on by the white men or free negroes and slaves.

The Creeks were slave owning Indians, and brought with them to the Indian Territory several hundred slaves. The life of a Creek slave was comparatively easy except for those owned by a few wealthy mixed bloods. The Indian slave was not required to give all of his time to his master but had the privilege of working for himself and earning money. Quite often they earned enough money to buy their family's freedom. Even inter-marriage was not unusual, except among the mixed bloods.

The Creeks took their tribal ceremonies seriously but were not particularly interested in the Christian religion, as it interfered with their entertainment such as ball games, busk, and dances. However, they did permit missionaries to come into their territory. Most of the preachers were of the Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian faiths. By 1836 these three denominations had established several churches in the

²²Angie Debo, The Road to Disappearance, p. 114.

Arkansas and Verdigris settlements.²³

Although the missionaries as a rule carefully avoided any mention of the abolition of slaves in their sermons some of the slaveholders objected to their work among the negroes. Just as the missionaries felt that the old hostility toward them was disappearing, the chiefs held a council and decided to expell all of the missionaries from the Creek nation. The superintendent of Indian affairs issued an order for them to leave because he was afraid disturbances might develop among the Indians. The chiefs later imposed a penalty of fifty to one hundred lashes upon anyone who attended Christian services.

This act of hostility against the missionaries slowed down the slight progress that had been made toward educating the Creek children, since the missionsries in the mission houses had done most of the teaching. In general, even the mixed bloods opposed the missionaries, though most of them favored educating their children.

Some of the Creek leaders approached the agent with the idea that the money allowed the Creeks by their removal treaty for educational purposes should be used at home rather than to send a few of the Creek boys to some state boarding school. The agent approved this idea and persuaded them to contract with some missionary society to establish a boarding school in their community.

Immediately the Presbyterian mission board was contracted and in 1843 sent young Robert M. Loughridge and his wife to establish a boarding school at Coweta, near present Broken Arrow, Oklahoma.²⁴ The Indians agreed to accept his proposition with restrictions. He and his wife

²³Ibid., p. 117.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 119-20.

might conduct the school but no preaching would be allowed outside the mission building. However, the following year Rev. Loughridge persuaded the chiefs to lift the ban on preaching.

Lifting the ban was more or less a matter of local acceptance and local custom. Reports of lashings for attending church services came from other communities. Missionaries were not welcomed into the Creek territory for several years although the ban was officially lifted in 1848, when Chilly McIntosh and several Creek chiefs united with the Baptist church.²⁵ In 1853, a Baptist missionary, Rev. R. H. Buckner, reported that three years earlier he had not been allowed to preach in the Broken Arrow community but now he had a church of about fifty members and a church house.²⁶

By 1846 Rev. Loughridge had overcome the prejudice of the Indians, who attended his services in larger numbers. More students applied for admittance to the mission school than could be accepted. Other small schools were established by the Methodist missionaries.

On the eve of the Civil War the Creeks were once more prosperous and happy in their new homes. In spite of the miserable existence during the early years after their removal, these Indians had reestablished their homes, government, schools, had learned a more effective method of farming and were replacing their ancient methods of worship with the Christian religion. But just as they had reached this stage of development, they were again to be reduced to misery and starvation by the white man's war, from which they tried desperately to escape.

²⁵Grant Foreman, The Five Civilized Tribes, p. 208.

²⁶Ibid., p. 208.

With the outbreak of the Civil War the old feud between the Upper and Lower Creeks again became a dividing line on the question of national policy. Since a large portion of the Lower Creeks were mixed bloods who were wealthy and owned more slaves, they naturally sympathized with the Confederate States.

Broken Arrow, being one of the Lower Creek towns, followed the McIntosh faction and approved the treaty with the Confederacy negotiated by Albert Pike, representative of the Confederate States. No battles were fought in the Broken Arrow community, but the country was in ruin by the end of the war.

When the southern Creek sympathizers heard that the Union forces were moving toward the south during the 1863 offensive, they fled in terror across the Red River into northern Texas. These refugees suffered not from the intense cold as those loyal Creeks, who fled north into Kansas, but from insufficient and unsanitary food which made their stay a time of sickness and death. The Arkansas and Verdigris settlements were deserted except for a few old men, women, children, and some slaves.²⁷

To say that chaotic conditions existed in the Broken Arrow community at the end of the Civil War would be stating it too mildly. Farms had been completely abandoned, buildings had been destroyed, fences torn down and stock driven off or confiscated by Confederate or Union raiding parties. Churches and schools had practically ceased to exist, and social and business conditions were generally demoralized. Added to this was the presence and activity of the "bushwackers" and outlaw renegades

²⁷Ohland Morton, "Reconstruction of the Creek Nation," Chronicles of Oklahoma (Oklahoma City, 1931), IX, pp. 171-79.

who knew no feeling of respect for any person. The Civil War was another tragic chapter in Creek history.

CHAPTER II

BROKEN ARROW AREA, 1865-1905

By the end of the year 1866 the southern Creeks, including the Broken Arrow band, had all returned to their homes except some of the mixed bloods from the Three Forks community who refused to live among the slaves collected in that area. After the ratification of the treaty of peace the inhabitants of the Creek Nation were able to turn their attention to the restoration of their devastated country. Short crops the first two years were caused by insects and droughts. Rebuilding was hindered on account of the scarcity of lumber and building equipment, but houses, schools, and churches were rebuilt at a comparatively rapid rate.¹

The educated mixed-blood Creeks took steps to establish a new code of laws and a better government, which resulted in the adoption of a constitution in 1867. By this constitution the Creek Nation was divided into six districts. Broken Arrow was in the Coweta District, which was located northeast of the Arkansas River. The Coweta District included the following towns: Big Springs, Choska, Kowita (Coweta), Lochapoka (Tulsa), Tullahassee, and Thlikachka (Broken Arrow).²

¹Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Government Printing Office (Washington, 1866), p. 10.

Ohland Morton, "Reconstruction of the Creek Nation," Chronicles of Oklahoma (Oklahoma City, 1931), IX, pp. 171-79.

²Angie Debo, Tulsa: From Creek Town to Oil Capitol (Norman, 1943), p. 2.

Although the law forbade unauthorized entrance into the Creek Territory the white population of the Creek Nation was continually increased by intruders. After the Civil War, several white men came to the Broken Arrow community and began farming and grazing thousands of acres of land. Chauncy A. Owens, a white intermarried citizen was the leading farmer of the Broken Arrow community in the early 1870's. He planted fruit trees and raised peaches by the wagon load, cultivated many acres of the rich land and owned large herds of cattle. His ranch house was known as the "Big House."³

Another early white settler who lived in the Broken Arrow community was William P. Moore. In an interview, James A. Moore, Tulsa, Oklahoma, gave the following information about his father:

In 1874, father established a store at the trading post of Broken Arrow in the Creek Nation, Indian Territory. The old town was about two miles (others place it about five miles) south of the present town of Broken Arrow and the old town well has only recently been filled up. The person owning the farm is yet using some of the old foundation stones which were under the buildings.

To this new home our family moved in May, 1874. There was one other white family in the community, and that was the Owens family. There were many prominent Creek families. The Childers family operated the ferry crossing on the Arkansas River. I knew Mataloka, Robert Fry, David and Allen Hodge, and in fact numerous Creek families. Daniel Drew was interpreter.

Our Store was a two-story building, framed and built of native lumber, which was cut near there. We lived above the store.

The trading post was a regular camping ground for travel between Texas and Fort Scott and Coffeyville, Kansas. Quite frequently throughout the day there would be only a dozen people in the place. Then, as night came on, freighters, hunters, traders, and cowboys would arrive until there were two hundred or more people, and it would be a busy place with

³Angie Debo, Tulsa, p. 50.

all kinds of people in it. But with all that, there was little to fear and I consider personal safety far greater than at the present day.

Our merchandise was hauled from Fort Scott and Coffeyville, Kansas. A great deal of the freighting was done with oxen and trail wagons.⁴

The outstanding cattlemen in and around the Broken Arrow community were the Perrymans, Lewis and his sons Thomas, Josiah, Legus, and George. The Perryman family had pastured large areas for many years but George became a prominent figure in the cattle business. His father, Lewis Perryman, moved his family from Adams Creek six or eight miles northeast of present Broken Arrow to the vicinity of Thirty-first Street and Riverside Drive in Tulsa, where he established a store in 1848 and started his herd of cattle. When the Civil War began Perryman had a large ranch well stocked with cattle and hogs. George had always helped his father with the store and ranch. During the war George and his father fled to Kansas with the loyal Creeks. After the war he returned to the home place and operated the ranch himself since his father had died in the Kansas refugee camp.⁵

In the 1870's George Perryman moved from the old homeplace to a new home he had constructed near the present Forty-first Street and Peoria in Tulsa. He operated the ranch so successfully that he became the cattle king of the Creek Nation.

By 1889, so many Texas cattle drifted or were driven into the Creek country that it became profitable, in fact almost necessary for

⁴Grant Foreman Collection, Indian Pioneer History, Indian Archives (Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, 1937), XXXVII, pp. 114-15.

⁵John B. Meserve, "The Perrymans," Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. 15, pp. 166-84.

the citizens to enclose thousands of acres along the border, for which they paid a small fee to the tribe. After the pasture was fenced it was leased to Texas cattlemen.⁶

George Perryman obtained control of all the Creek country from South Lewis Street in present Tulsa east to the Cherokee line and extended about ten miles to the south. Only Creek citizens could enclose and utilize such large areas of tribal land.

James M. Daugherty of Texas leased the area north of Broken Arrow and east to the Verdigris River from Perryman and Jay Forsythe leased the area west and northwest of Broken Arrow. A third large pasture southeast was operated by E. L. "Ed" Halsell. Perryman retained for his own use the area south of Tulsa along the Arkansas River.⁷

The present Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, is located near what was then the southwest corner of the Daugherty pasture, where thousands of cattle grazed during the spring before being driven to market. Most of the cattle were shipped from Texas to Muskogee, then driven to the Broken Arrow community. The ranchers used the present townsite for their round-up ground, because the gentle slope just south of the high mounds made this an ideal place. It would be difficult for a newcomer to Broken Arrow to visualize the entire townsite covered with a vast herd of Texas steers.⁸

By 1900 the Daugherty and Forsythe pastures had been considerably reduced in size by the excessive holdings clause of the Curtis Act

⁶Angie Debo, Tulsa, pp. 69-70.

⁷Ibid., pp. 69-73.

⁸Angie Debo, The Road to Disappearance, p. 261.

of 1898.⁹ However, the Daugherty pasture still included all the area between Broken Arrow and the present junction of highways 66 and 33, where the old ranch house and store stood.

A number of small land holders had moved into the Broken Arrow community in the last years of the 19th century, although there was no town closer than Catoosa to buy supplies. In 1901, four industrious young men, W. T. Brooks, N. L. Sanders, W. N. "Newt" Williams, and his brother M. C. "Mac" Williams, came from Huntsville, Arkansas, to the Creek Nation in search of a suitable location for a general store and a cotton gin. According to Newt Williams the place selected was in the middle of a cotton patch on land owned by Elam Hodge, a member of the Perryman family. The men named the little settlement Elam in his honor. Hodge could not give them a clear title to the land, so it was agreed that he would receive his pay when a legal title could be made and conveyed.¹⁰

These four young men made their plans and constructed the buildings for their store and gin. Both businesses operated under the firm name of Brooks, Sanders and Williams Brothers. Elam seemed to be ideally located, the soil was fertile, there was an abundance of native timber and a store of future wealth in gas and oil in the area. A few miles northeast some coal was being taken from shallow pits.

⁹Joseph B. Thoburn, A Standard History of Oklahoma (Chicago and New York, 1916), II, p. 802.

Sections 15 and 16--Excessive Holdings. These sections state that it shall be unlawful for any citizen of the tribe to inclose in any manner, or to hold any greater amount of land belonging to tribe than that which would be his approximate share of the lands. He may hold his wife and minor children's share.

¹⁰W. N. Williams, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, June 22, 1950.

Coal mining in the Broken Arrow community began on a small scale before the town of Elam was established. Practically every issue of the Broken Arrow Ledger from the first until 1946, when the mines were abandoned, had a few lines about the Broken Arrow coal. The first pits were located in the Evans community five miles east of Broken Arrow and were operated by the Adams Creek Coal Company a subsidiary of the Arkansas Valley Townsite Company.

Early in 1903, good quality coal was being mined in abundance and delivered in Broken Arrow at two dollars and fifty cents per ton and by 1905, the mine payroll reached \$3,000.00 for the month of November.¹¹ For several years the coal was taken from the pits by plain hard labor. The miners had nothing to work with but dynamite, picks, shovels, a common road slip and a mule to drag it from the pit. Production rapidly increased after the railroad reached Broken Arrow and in a few years the increased demand for coal required faster and more modern methods of stripping. Soon the steam shovel and other power equipment replaced the mule and the road slip.

By the Creek treaty of 1866 the United States Congress made provision for the building of one north-south and one east-west railroad across the Indian Territory.¹² The Missouri, Kansas and Texas railway company acquired the north-south franchise and constructed a road near the east boundary line of the Creek Nation. Even though it did not pass through the Broken Arrow community, a branch line was built, in 1903, from Wybark, a station just north of Muskogee, along the north

¹¹Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, April 30, 1903, December 28, 1905.

¹²Oklahoma Red Book, I, 358.

side of the Arkansas to Osage Junction, passing through the Broken Arrow community.

During the construction of this branch of the "Katy," the workers did not have the lawless element following them as they did during the construction of the main line thirty years earlier at Gibson station and Muskogee. However, there were several shooting incidents and drunken brawls while they were camped near Broken Arrow.

Construction of the "Katy" depot was completed early in June but the track did not reach Broken Arrow until April 16, 1903. Train service was not available immediately but on June 10, the construction crew brought in six cars of lumber for S. F. Donaldson, which was the first freight received at Broken Arrow over the new railroad.¹³

Mrs. M. C. Williams, who was a passenger on the train that made the first official run to Broken Arrow, still remembers the excitement and hundreds of people who had gathered at the station to celebrate its arrival. The train's arrival at 1:18 p.m., Saturday, July 4, 1903, was the highlight of Broken Arrow's first Independence Day celebration. The conductor was W. W. Jones from Junction City, Kansas.¹⁴

The arrival of the first train was not the only time the people gathered at the station. It became a custom, especially on Saturday and Sunday, for the young folk as well as some older ones to meet each train that carried passengers, just to see who came to town or left.

Many humorous stories have been told about the early day trains with their uncertain schedules and accommodating crews. Mrs. M. C. Williams likes to tell about the time she and some friends were going

¹³Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, June 11, 1903.

¹⁴Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, July 9, 1903.

to Tulsa and got off the train to gather some persimmons near the track while it was stopped at Alsuma. At another time a number of passengers were delayed eight hours at Broken Arrow while several cars of stock were being loaded.

Since no automobile appeared on the streets of Broken Arrow until 1905, the young folk had to take drives into the country by horse and buggy or take advantage of the many excursions offered by the railroad companies for entertainment. Weekend excursions at special rates were offered to groups who wanted to take pleasure trips to Muskogee, Ft. Smith, St. Louis, or Kansas City, and came to play a big part in the social life of the community.

CHAPTER III

ESTABLISHMENT AND EARLY DAYS OF BROKEN ARROW

When the Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma Railway Company secured the right-of-way to construct a railroad from Wybark to Osage Junction, they were also granted the townsite privileges along the road. In 1902 the company sold three townsites between Wybark and Tulsa to the Arkansas Valley Townsite Company.¹

W. S. Fears, secretary of the townsite company, was allowed to choose one of the three locations. After carefully inspecting the proposed route of the railroad between the two towns, Fears selected a place near two high mounds eighteen miles southeast of Tulsa and named it Broken Arrow because the site was located in the old Broken Arrow Community.²

¹Corporation Records, Western District, Indian Territory (Muskogee, 1902), II, pp. 8-9.

²W. S. Fears, Tulsa, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, July 6, 1951.
It would not be possible to give a complete history of Broken Arrow without giving proper credit to W. S. Fears.
W. S. Fears was born in Atlanta, Georgia, September 25, 1869. His father was a Confederate soldier, an orderly in General Robert E. Lee's command. The Fears family moved to Grayson County, Texas, when Fears was four years old. His mother died when he was fourteen. He became a cowboy, going up the Chisholm Trail in 1887, then a professional baseball player part-time in the Texas League. His family moved to Muskogee, Indian Territory, in 1889. After spending several months in New York attending a commercial school, he returned to Muskogee to become court reporter for William M. Springer, United States judge for the Northern District, Indian Territory. At the termination of Judge Springer's term of office, He became secretary to Pleasant Porter, principal chief of the Creek Nation.

The quarter section on which the principal part of the town is located had been allotted by the Dawes Commission to Stephen Franklin, a freedman, and Billy Adkins, a Creek Indian.³ The townsite company made arrangements with Franklin to purchase his one hundred and twenty acres for the sum of \$3,000 and platted the land for townsite purposes.

The plat and survey was made by S. A. Cobb and approved by the Federal Court at Muskogee October 16, 1902, one year before the secretary of the interior approved the deed for the townsite, October 22, 1903.⁴ The delay had been brought about by a change in the government's procedure for buying Indian land.

At the time the town was platted, warranty deeds could not be given to the property since it was restricted land allotted to a freedman of the Creek Nation. Fears gave each person who bought lots a written agreement or quit claim which promised a legal title to the property as soon as permission had been received from the secretary

He left Chief Porter's office to join J. T. Darby and Guy Bowman of Rock Island, Illinois, in the real estate business. They organized the Rock Island Trust and Investment Company, The Arkansas Valley Townsite Company, The Verdigris Valley Oil Company, The Adams Creek Coal Company, and the Arkansas Valley State Bank, which is still doing business at its original location in Broken Arrow with K. M. Rowe and Murphy Laws in charge. In 1907 the holdings of Darby, Bowman and Fears were divided and Fears returned to the farm to engage in the breeding of registered beef cattle. For the past several years he has been living in Tulsa, Oklahoma, engaged in the real estate business and managing two farms which he owns. Even though Fears does not live in Broken Arrow, he is very proud of the part he has played in its establishment and growth. W. S. Fears, Tulsa, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, August 5, 1951.

³Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1904 (Government Printing Office, Washington, 1905), Part I, p. 112.

⁴Record of Deeds, Western District, Indian Territory (Wagoner, 1902), I-D, p. 509.

of the interior. Fears sold lots amounting to \$75,000 under this plan giving nothing more than a slip of paper as security.⁵ The buyers knew they were taking a gamble on losing all they invested.

The purchaser's check and the quit claim prepared by the townsite officials were sent to the Indian agent at Muskogee, Indian Territory, who forwarded them to the department of the interior for the secretary's approval. This was the legal procedure at this time for buying allotted Indian land. Before these claims could be approved, the procedure was changed.

Fears made a special trip to Washington to see what could be done about getting legal title to the townsite. Fortunately for Fears, Creek Chief Pleasant Porter introduced him to Mathew Quay, a Delaware Indian and senator from Pennsylvania.⁶ After the problem had been presented to the senator, he promised to look into the matter and as a result Senator Quay succeeded in getting a rider attached to the Indian appropriation bill which unrestrictedly alienated Indian allotted lands for townsite purposes. The provision of the Indian Appropriation Act, March 3, 1903,⁷ which applied to Broken Arrow, stated that

Nothing herein contained shall prevent the survey and platting at their own expense of townsites by private parties where stations are located along the line of railroads, nor the unrestricted alienation of land for such purposes, when recommended by the commission to the Five Civilized Tribes and approved by the Secretary of the Interior.⁸

⁵W. S. Fears, Tulsa, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, July 6, 1951.

⁶Ibid.

⁷United States Statutes at Large, 57 Cong., 1901-03 (Washington, 1903), XXXII, Part I, p. 996.

⁸Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs (Government Printing Office, Washington, 1904), Part II, pp. 23-25.

After the new procedure had been established for purchasing allotted lands, Stephen Franklin decided that the townsite company had not paid him enough for the land and would not appear before the Dawes Commission to receive payment until the company agreed to pay him \$5,000 more.⁹

The fertile soil, coal mines, and grazing lands brought hundreds of people to Broken Arrow during the first three months after it was established. The lots sold so rapidly it was necessary to add two hundred acres to the original townsite in less than one year.¹⁰ On some days as many as twenty-five people would arrive in town looking for a business or a farm. The editor of the local newspaper estimated the population to be over eight hundred people by the end of the first year. After 1905 the growth in population leveled off to a slow steady growth until 1920. The government census for 1907 lists the Broken Arrow population at 1383.¹¹

Most of Broken Arrow's early pioneers came from the four states of Arkansas, Tennessee, Missouri, and Kansas. The Hurds and McKennas came from Kansas, the Law brothers from Tennessee, and the Brooks, Sanders, and Williams families from Arkansas.

Since Broken Arrow served a large agricultural community, in addition to the Adams Creek Coal Company, it became a very active business center from the beginning. Within six months after the town plat was completed more than two blocks of business houses had been

⁹W. S. Fears, Tulsa, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, July 6, 1951.

¹⁰Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, October 22, 1903.

¹¹Census of Population: 1920. United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census (Washington, 1921), Vol. 1, p. 579.

opened for business. The first business houses established were the K. C. barber shop, owned by J. D. Shipman, and the office of the Hammond Lumber Company. These buildings were opened October 16, 1902.¹²

However, the Brady brothers' O.K. restaurant began serving people before any other business. They stretched a tent on south Main Street near the railroad right-of-way the day before the town plat was completed and began serving meals to the people who came looking for lots.

By the time Broken Arrow was six months old, the Ledger's list of business houses included: Nichols-Raupe, hardware; Charles A. Nichols manager; Sprague and Parker, hardware; Brooks, Sanders and Williams Brothers, drygoods and groceries; Lancaster and McAnally, drygoods, groceries and hardware; Simmons Hotel; G. L. Holt, pharmacy; L. Waller, drugs; Broken Arrow Drug, operated by Lewis and Ash; First State Bank, L. D. and S. W. Marr; Traders' and Planters' Bank, F. S. Hurd cashier; Dickason-Goodman Lumber Company, A. L. Wilson manager; Hammond Lumber Company, J. H. Hill, manager; Hill Mercantile Company; Coweta Coal and Gin Company; Williams Brothers Gin; C. Nagel, blacksmith; G. H. Trusler, blacksmith; Sol Jamison, elevator; M. K. O., restaurant, Dr. S. C. Parsons; Doctors, R. S. Plumlee, A. J. Pollard, and F. H. Hollingsworth.¹³

Two business houses listed above deserve special mention since they are the oldest businesses in the same locations in Broken Arrow. They are Dickason-Goodman Lumber Company and The First National Bank.

¹²Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, April 23, 1903.

¹³Ibid.

Mr. Dickason and Mr. Goodman came to Broken Arrow from Tulsa in a buggy to pick out the site for their present store. The buggy was equipped with a pair of wire cutters which they had to use twice in order to reach Broken Arrow. They selected the northeast corner lot at the intersection of Ash and A Avenue (Dallas) and began their lumber business October 20, 1902, under the management of A. L. Wilson.¹⁴

The Traders' and Planters' Bank opened its doors to the public December 23, 1902, and in February, 1904, it was granted a charter to become the First National Bank of Broken Arrow.¹⁵ F. S. Hurd, the first cashier and later president of the bank, carried on practically all of the bank's business by himself. While the bank building was being constructed at its present location, he started business in a little building about eight by ten feet, which had been used for an office by the Arkansas Valley Townsite Company. The bank's first deposit, \$184.00, was made by the Dickason-Goodman Lumber Company. Before the bank vault was installed, Hurd carried the bank deposits with him and kept them in a large room at the Simmons Hotel where he slept on the floor with several other men.

M. "Mike" McKenna, editor of the Broken Arrow Ledger, expressed his opinion of Broken Arrow in an editorial in the first issue of the Ledger, April 23, 1903, as follows:

Pleasantly located in the Arkansas River valley, about twenty-five miles from the east line of the Creek Nation and about ten miles from the north line, is Broken Arrow. It is in a beautiful, productive, healthful locality and standing on a picturesque mound half a mile to the northeast of the village, one may gaze over one of the most beautiful agricultural portions of the United States.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, February 18, 1904.

To the west, the river comes into view at a distance of but a few miles and meanders in a general southeasterly course on and on until lost in the hazy distance. It has a belt of timber along the entire distance and beyond the river seems to be considerable hilly land, while on the Broken Arrow side, for several miles back, is a broad, level valley dotted with beautiful wheat fields. Standing on this vantage ground, hundreds of farm buildings, which have been erected during the past six months, can be seen, while nestled cozily at the base of the mound, is a collection of buildings all of which have been placed there within less than half a year and which today is the home or business place of about a thousand human souls, and which will beyond question, contain two or three times as many when its first annual birthday shall have been reached. This collection of buildings is Broken Arrow.

As the reader can see the editor was a typical loyal booster and advertiser for his community but in his enthusiasm overestimated the future growth of Broken Arrow as well as its population at that time.

The man who established this weekly paper was Mike McKenna from Stockton, Rooks County, Kansas. Mr. McKenna had previously published a paper in Kansas but learned through friends about the new town of Broken Arrow and became impressed with the possibilities for a paper here. He arrived in town early in 1903 and set up his plant in a small back room of the First State Bank building which occupied the present site of Quigg's Drug store.¹⁶

The plant's equipment consisted of practically the same type and machinery used by Benjamin Franklin, according to the editor. The Ledger, which started with forty subscribers, has remained in continuous publication to the present time and has a circulation today of 1,850.

After a few months McKenna moved the Ledger office to a small building at the rear of the Traders' and Planters' Bank (First National)

¹⁶Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, April 23, 1903.

where he continued as publisher until 1905 when he sold it to George Foster.¹⁷

Foster served as editor and publisher of the Ledger three years and then moved to Wagoner, Indian Territory. Before leaving he purchased a new Diamond Cylinder press, which was the "latest improved press." It took almost six hours to print the Ledger with the old press but with the new one the editor could run a thousand copies in one hour.¹⁸

The Ledger has had many editors during the fifty years it has been in publication but none has had more experience in the print shop than its present editor, Harry Kates. Kates literally grew up in a newspaper print shop. His father, Albert Linnwood Kates, established the Claremore Progress and The Rogers County News in 1893, and Harry began helping his father in his early teens. After his father's death in 1942, Harry took over the job of publishing the Claremore papers and continued until August, 1947, when he bought the Broken Arrow Ledger and began its publication with the September 1, 1947, issue.¹⁹

The first and only competitor of the Ledger was the Broken Arrow Democrat, edited and published by John E. Wells, who had previously been in the newspaper business at Miami and Afton, Indian Territory. September 8, 1905, was the date of the first issue of the Democrat and the office closed about five years later.²⁰

¹⁷ Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, September 10, 1903.

¹⁸ Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, August 9, 1906.

¹⁹ Harry Kates, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, July 12, 1951.

²⁰ The Democrat, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, September 8, 1905.

The last of the early establishments to be discussed in this chapter is the United States Postoffice. The exact location of the first postoffice in the Broken Arrow community, Creek Nation, Indian Territory, is not known. William P. Moore owned and operated a store in the community and the postoffice was in his store. This store was located approximately five miles south of the present Broken Arrow, Oklahoma. The office was established June 9, 1881, and was discontinued August 21, 1882. Charles H. Thomas was postmaster and Thomas W. Perryman was the assistant postmaster.²¹

People living in the Broken Arrow community prior to the establishment of the present Broken Arrow office received their mail at the old Weer postoffice (1894-1906) or at the Elam postoffice (1901-1906).²²

W. T. Brooks, postmaster, and his daughter Ora, the assistant, opened the present Broken Arrow postoffice December 17, 1902. According to Mrs. Floy Greene, daughter of the first postmaster, the first office was a very crude affair. Her father gathered up some cracker boxes, partitioned them into small pigeon holes, lettered them alphabetically, and Broken Arrow's new postoffice was ready for mail service.²³ The postoffice was first located in a frame building on the west side of Main Street, block 42, lot 12, where Bynum's grocery store is presently located.²⁴

A star route was established from Catoosa, Indian Territory, the nearest railroad town, to Broken Arrow. This route delivered the mail

²¹Angie Debo, Tulsa, p. 50.

²²Grant Foreman, "Early Post Offices of Oklahoma," Chronicles of Oklahoma (Oklahoma City, 1926), Vol. 6, p. 23.

²³Mrs. Floy Greene, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, July 29, 1948.

²⁴Ibid.

until the railroad was completed and began delivering mail to Broken Arrow November 16, 1903. The train service was very unsatisfactory for some time. The mail was made up at Muskogee and thrown off at the different stations by the train men. Since there was no mail clerk on the train to separate the mail some of it was often missent and delayed several days. After many complaints had been made, the postoffice department added a mail clerk to the train service.²⁵

The Broken Arrow postoffice has steadily increased its business from December 17, 1902, to the present time. Jesse Walker worked untiringly after he became postmaster January 9, 1948, to get city mail delivery. Through his efforts and aided by the Chamber of Commerce, the Lions Club and other organizations the people of Broken Arrow received their first mail by city carriers July 1, 1949. The first carriers were Guy Kinkeade, Robert Parks, and Paul Harsen.²⁶

²⁵Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, November 19, 1903.

²⁶Jesse Walker, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, July 6, 1950.

CHAPTER IV
POLITICAL ISSUES

The petition for the incorporation of the city of Broken Arrow was filed at the United States Court room in Muskogee, Indian Territory, at 9:00 A.M., March 30, 1903, and was granted by the court May 4, 1903. The petition designated W. T. Brooks, F. S. Hurd, and G. L. Holt as authorized agents to act on behalf of the persons signing the petition.¹

A mass meeting of people of Broken Arrow was called on Friday evening, June 26, 1903, for the purpose of placing in nomination candidates for the city offices. Dr. Bradley was chosen chairman of the meeting and F. S. Hurd, secretary.² A complete ticket, named the Citizens Ticket, was nominated. Some people pointed out before the meeting was over that it would be desirable to nominate another ticket. It would not be an election with only one candidate nominated for each office.

The following Saturday a call was issued for a caucus of the legal voters of the city to be held Saturday evening. At this meeting another ticket was nominated. It was called the People's Ticket. Three of the names of those candidates for aldermen appeared on both tickets.

The candidates did not have time to make speeches or to do

¹United States Court Records, Western District, Indian Territory (Muskogee, 1903), Book 16, pp. 403-404.

²Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, July 2, 1903.

extensive campaigning since they were nominated only two days before the election. Party politics played a smaller role in this election than in any contest since, not only because of the limit of time but also because the people were more interested in setting up a strong government for the new town of Broken Arrow, than in parties and party platforms.

Monday, June 29, 1903, was election day. H. Galbreath and J. F. Smith were chosen as election judges; F. A. Whitmer, T. A. McAnally and T. S. Higgins, clerks; and J. A. Booher, constable.³

The results of Broken Arrow's first city election were as follows: Mayor, J. B. Parkinson; recorder, Luther Gideon; aldermen, W. T. Brooks, Charles Nichols, R. S. Plumlee, R. A. Waller, and M. L. Fife. Fife did not qualify and G. L. Ash was appointed to fill the vacancy.⁴

The newly elected members of the Broken Arrow city council were duly qualified by Attorney Z. I. J. Holt, at their first meeting Friday, July 10, 1903. The council members organized and appointed a committee to write city ordinance number 1, which established rules and regulations for the city government of the town council and officers of the town.⁵ Ordinance number 1 was approved by the council at their next meeting, July 15, 1903.

City ordinances numbers 2 and 3 were passed and approved, July 22, 1903, creating the offices of town marshal and town treasurer, respectively. T. S. Higgins was appointed marshal and F. S. Hurd

³Ibid.

⁴City Council Minute Records, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, 1902, Book 1, p. 1.

⁵Ibid.

treasurer.⁶ Mr. Higgins received a salary of twenty dollars per month.

The first money contributed to the city treasury, was a fine collected from one of the local citizens for being drunk on bay rum and disturbing the peace by shooting his gun into the air a number of times on Main Street. When Marshall Higgins brought the gentleman before Mayor Parkinson he was promptly fined ten dollars and cost.⁷

⁶City Ordinance Records, City of Broken Arrow, 1902, Book 11, pp. 6 and 7.

⁷F. S. Hurd, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, July 15, 1951. F. S. Hurd was born near Grantville, Kansas, four miles east of Topeka, Kansas, June 26, 1867. He attended the village school until he reached the fifth reader class, when he left school to help his father on the farm. Grades were not known in school at that time.

At the age of twenty-two Mr. Hurd took a job as butter maker in a creamery and in four years he was made manager of the Menden Creamery Company with six branch creameries. In a few years the Menden Company consolidated with the Prairie Rose Creamery in Kansas City with thirty-nine branches under his management.

Disgusted with city life Mr. Hurd sold his creamery interest and in 1902 on the advice of his Kansas City friends, visited the Indian Territory looking for a location to establish a bank. He visited Vinita, Nowata, Claremore, Okmulgee, Sapulpa, Tulsa, Broken Arrow, and Coweta. He chose Broken Arrow because of its location, better agricultural land and an abundant supply of fuel coal.

Mr. Hurd arrived in Broken Arrow in December, 1902, and bought the lots where the First National Bank now stands and the lots now occupied by his residence. He opened his bank known as the Traders' and Planters' Bank December 23, 1902. In February, 1903, the bank was made a national bank as it is today. Mr. Hurd was president of the Broken Arrow First National Bank until he retired from the banking business in 1941. He still holds an interest in the bank.

Mr. Hurd's chief interest is in farming. He has never held a political office. In 1937 he helped organize the first soil conservation district to get into operation in Oklahoma. In 1940 the Department of Agriculture appointed him chairman of the Oklahoma State Farm Debt Adjustment Committee. He was First Vice-President in organizing Friends of the Land, First Vice-President in organizing the Magic Empire Live Stock Show, twice elected president of the Broken Arrow Chamber of Commerce and served eleven years as chairman of the Oklahoma Banker's Association Agriculture Committee. At present, June, 1953, Mr. Hurd has his own real estate office as well as many agricultural interests to manage. Mr. Hurd is a small man physically, has a warm friendly smile and the energy of a man of fifty years of age.

The business men of Broken Arrow were conscious of the many problems in and around their town. The absence of adequate streets and roads presented one of the immediate problems, since the farmers would soon be hauling their crops to market. In general the roads followed the cattle trails over the surrounding prairies. Very little roadbuilding had been done during the years of Indian occupancy and control, and a number of small bridges were needed over the ravines and creeks.

In order to publicize the road problem and other much needed improvements the citizens of Broken Arrow organized the Commercial Club, which was the town's first Chamber of Commerce. The officers of the Commercial Club were: W. T. Brooks, president; Thomas Blair, vice-president; M. McKenna, secretary; and Dr. R. S. Plumlee, treasurer.⁸

Broken Arrow's present day Chamber of Commerce, with its annual Cotton Jubilee and Rooster Day, can find its counterpart among these early day business men. As was generally true of western communities, the Fourth of July was "the big day," a day for patriotism and celebrations. July 4, 1903, produced Broken Arrow's first Independence Day celebration. The newly organized Commercial Club organized the program and the most unusual event on it as compared to present day attempts at celebrating Independence Day was the public reading of the Declaration of Independence by Mrs. W. T. Brooks.⁹

No Fourth of July could be complete without a baseball game, calf roping contest, and a square dance. The prize for the winner of this

⁸Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, June 4, 1903.

⁹Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, July 9, 1903.

first roping contest was a choice of any fifty foot corner lot in the Fears addition to the town of Broken Arrow, given by the Arkansas Valley Townsite Company. Montie S. House of the Blue Springs Ranch was the winner.¹⁰

The square dance, which brought to a close the day's festivities, was attended by approximately fifteen hundred people. A number of the men, who had been celebrating with sizable quantities of strong drinks all day, had reached the point of saturation by midnight and it was decided the dancing should stop.

Another early civic event, sponsored by the Commercial Club, was the farmer's parade. Rural folk, led by members of the various Farmer's Union local met in Broken Arrow for a parade on December 1, 1905.¹¹ The parade was headed by the Broken Arrow cornet band, followed by fifty-one cotton wagons, thirteen corn wagons, one load of hogs, and a buggy. The Commercial Club sponsored these parades to create interest among the rural people as well as publicity for the town. The present chamber of commerce sponsors two similar affairs each year—Rooster Day in the spring and the Cotton Jubilee in the fall. These festival programs include the street carnival, terrapin derby, queen contest, dance revues, the parade with floats, high school bands and round-up clubs from a dozen different towns, the Broken Arrow high school band concert, wrestling match, and the street dance. Each of these events attracts fifteen to twenty thousand people to Broken Arrow.

Many towns have existed for years without an adequate water, gas, or electric system, when it was within their reach, due to an uncooperative

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, December 7, 1905.

city government and unprogressive civic organizations. The spirit of cooperation and belief in Broken Arrow fostered by active civic organizations and local officers has been her greatest assets. The town was not two years old when the first franchise to provide public utilities was granted and others followed within a few years.

The first franchise granted by the incorporated town of Broken Arrow was the telephone franchise, granted to George Cress and Company, March 2, 1904. The Company agreed to have the telephone system in operation within six months from date of franchise.¹²

Broken Arrow was proud of her first local telephone service and felt it a definite indication of a bright future for the town. The telephone rates were claimed to be more reasonable than the rates in many of the Indian Territory towns. Charges for residential phones were one dollar per month and for business phones were one dollar and fifty cents per month.¹³ Broken Arrow's modern dial telephone system was the third dial system established in Oklahoma.

The Home Oil and Gas Company sought a gas franchise in Broken Arrow, but were unable to qualify. The city council did not grant a gas franchise until September, 1906, when the Minshall Oil and Gas Company was authorized to lay the pipes to furnish the town with natural gas.¹⁴

During the first few years of Broken Arrow's history, the bucket

¹²City Ordinance Records, City of Broken Arrow, 1902, Ordinance Book 2, Ordinance 18, p. 31.

¹³Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, March 10, 1904.

¹⁴City Ordinance Records, City of Broken Arrow, Ordinance Book 2, Ordinance 56, p. 61.

brigade served its purpose as a fire department, but by 1906 the town had too many buildings to depend on their neighbors to put out a fire. The first fire department was organized in June, 1906, consisting entirely of volunteer workers.¹⁵

The city soon purchased a fire wagon, which was drawn by horses. This equipment was much more effective than the bucket process, but very inadequate when compared to modern fire fighting methods.

The firemen soon discovered that the city fathers in naming the streets had not considered how difficult it would be to locate a fire without any designated streets to divide the town into north-south and east-west sections. Since the houses were not numbered a fire on A Avenue may be on the east side or on the west side of town. The east-west streets were named alphabetically beginning on the north with A Avenue. The north-south streets were given numbers beginning on the east side of town with First Streets.

The firemen proposed to the city council, the following plan for locating fires in Broken Arrow. The city was to be divided into four fire wards. The northeast area of town was ward 1, northwest ward 2, southwest ward 3, and southeast ward 4.¹⁶

If the fire broke out during the day Mayor W. F. Taylor promised to pay one dollar to the owner of the team of horses that got the first fire wagon to the fire. If the fire was at night the amount was two dollars. This applied to any team, town or country.¹⁷

¹⁵Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, June 21, 1906.

¹⁶Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, January 3, 1907.

¹⁷Ibid.

Dividing the town into fire wards did not completely solve the problem of locating homes after a few years' growth. The city council and the firemen decided to rename practically all of the streets. Main Street became the east-west dividing line and Broadway the north-south dividing line. The streets south of Broadway were given names of southern cities arranged alphabetically, such as Dallas and El Paso. The streets north of Broadway were named for northern cities. There were two exceptions. The first street north of Broadway was named College, because Haskell College was located at the east end of this street. The first street south became Commercial Street. The streets east of Main are numbers and those west are the names of trees, in alphabetical order.¹⁸

Though Broken Arrow is today supplied with excellent water, this has not always been true. The original water supply came from the city well located at the intersection of Main and Commercial streets. Members of each family carried or hauled water to their home. According to Mrs. Mary McAnally the water was so salty it was almost impossible to use. A small boy with his sled, barrel and mule would keep the family water barrels replenished for a small fee. Since there was no ice in Broken Arrow, during the first year or two, securing satisfactory drinking water during the summer months was a real problem.¹⁹

After using salty water for seven years the citizens of Broken Arrow began to feel that their town should have a more satisfactory water system. In September of 1909 the City Council began discussing the

¹⁸F. S. Hurd, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, July 27, 1948.

¹⁹Mrs. Mary McAnally, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, July 14, 1951.

problem of procuring a more adequate supply of water but were not able to settle on any definite plan until a year later.

The City Council called an election for the purpose of submitting to the tax paying voters the proposition of issuing \$70,000.00 in negotiable bonds for the water system. The election carried and the bonds were issued, but it was another year before the water system was completed.²⁰ The city water is piped from a large spring about seven miles south of Broken Arrow. It proved to be soft and excellent drinking water.

Today when the most remote rural areas have electricity in their homes, it does not seem possible that a town of approximately one thousand people could do business without electricity, yet the pioneers of Broken Arrow burned their kerosene lamps for four years before the electric plant was installed. In June, 1906, the Broken Arrow Electric Light Company, J. H. Rhyne, Manager, was granted a twenty year franchise to furnish the city with electricity. The City Council reserved the right to buy the light plant at the end of ten years if a majority of the citizens wished to purchase it. The power was turned on early in September, 1906.²¹ When the ten years had passed, the people decided that the city should not acquire the power plant. The next year, 1917, the plant was purchased by the Public Service Company of Oklahoma and they have continued their service to the present time.

In 1905, when leaders in the Indian Territory began their campaign to have the territory admitted to the Union as the separate state of

²⁰City Ordinance Records, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, 1910, Ordinances 81, 82, and 84, Ordinance Book No. 2, pp. 107, 110, and 117.

²¹City Ordinance Records, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, 1906, Ordinance 54, Book 2, p. 52.

Sequoyah, Broken Arrow, immediately put in her bid for one of the county seat towns in the projected state. C. N. Haskell had shown an interest in Broken Arrow for some time and the people felt certain that with his support they would be able to make Broken Arrow a county seat.

Broken Arrow and Coweta were the largest towns in the proposed county as divided up by the Sequoyah convention. Broken Arrow citizens were quick to accept Coweta as the name for the new county since this would be conceding one point to their neighbors and might weaken Coweta's claim to the county seat town.

After a vigorous campaign, Broken Arrow easily won the election November 7, 1905, to be the county seat of Coweta County, State of Sequoyah.²² There was plenty of excitement in the town when the final outcome of the election was announced, for to become a county seat town had been part of the founders' plans.

Only one obstacle now stood in the way; namely, would Sequoyah become a State? It was not long afterwards until it was decided that the "twin territories" would become the State of Oklahoma and there would be no state of Sequoyah.

When the delegates were elected to the Oklahoma State Constitutional Convention, W. T. Dalton of Broken Arrow, was elected to represent the sixty-ninth Constitutional District.²³ The question of county boundaries, county seats, and related issues had to be threshed out again. Broken Arrow had two points in her favor when the constitutional committee on

²²Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, November 9, 1905.

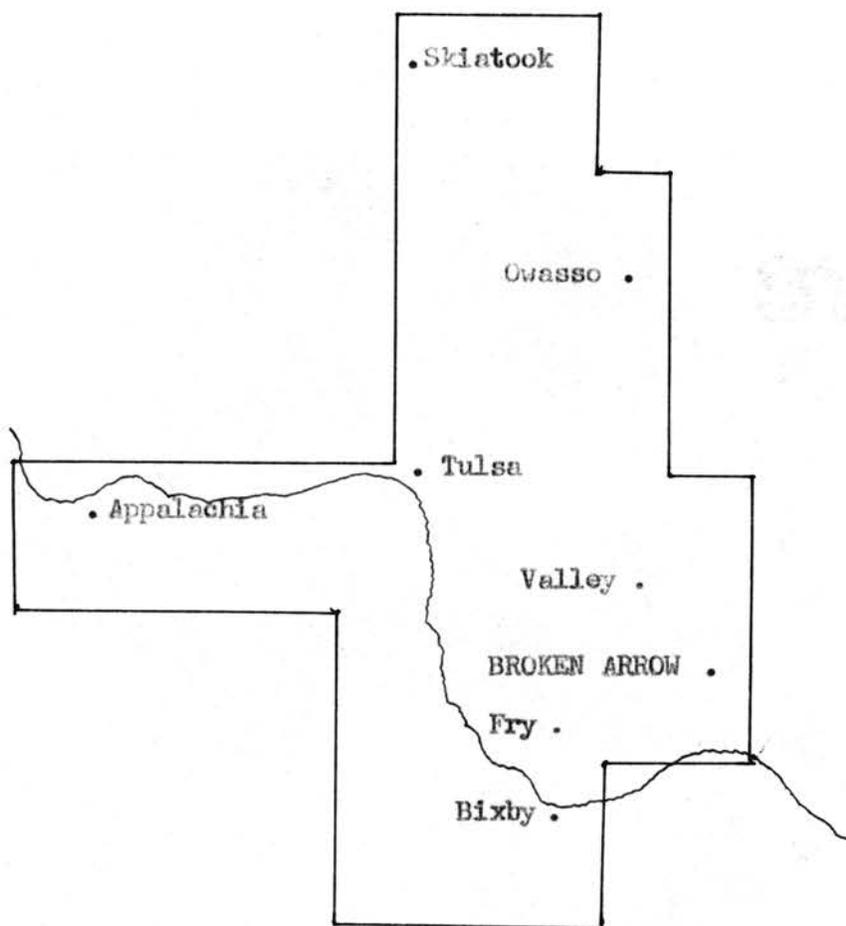
²³Mrs. Dora Esslinger, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, July 14, 1951.

county boundaries met to form the new counties for the State of Oklahoma. The Indian Territory leaders favored leaving when possible the county boundaries as they had been drawn for the State of Sequoyah, and Broken Arrow offered a new two-story brick building, which it was willing to donate to the county to serve as a court house.

In this political fight, Tulsa was the opponent instead of Coweta. Even though Broken Arrow was somewhat smaller than Tulsa, this did not dim her hopes. The following statement by George H. Foster, editor of the Broken Arrow Ledger, November 29, 1906, well expresses the over-confidence of the Broken Arrow citizens: "Tulsa is a regular Ishmaelite in the State Convention as no delegate in any of the districts surrounding that town will lift a finger for her."

In a few weeks word arrived that the prize had been won by Tulsa, and editor Foster was headlining the Ledger with, "Governor Haskell is a traitor."²⁴ His over-confidence had turned to despair, and as a final stab at Tulsa, the editor printed the following outline map and sarcastic remarks:

²⁴Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, December 20, 1906.



TULSA COUNTY

Look at the brute, with its arms stretched out like the tentacles of an octopus. Tulsa, this is your county, made to order by your beloved Nelson.²⁵ Don't lose this pattern as there is none other like it on earth. If this fearful weight of your greatness should tip that corner a little you would sure, like McGinty, go to the bottom of the Arkansas River, and become food for the channel cats. It's true it is not very pretty, but that convention puts forth nothing but "economic measures" and that thing happened to get into the hopper and, of course, had to come out.²⁶

Broken Arrow citizens became only temporarily discouraged when they lost the county seat battle. When it was announced that a state normal

²⁵Nelson Flowers, delegate to the State Constitutional Convention from the sixty-eighth constitutional district, Tulsa.

²⁶Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, January 3, 1907.

school and a state agricultural college would be located in this section of Oklahoma, Broken Arrow citizens were determined not to lose the opportunity. For two years politicians and civic leaders worked tirelessly and succeeded in getting the Haskell State Agricultural College, which was named in honor of Governor Haskell.²⁷

Nothing unusual happened in the local political life of Broken Arrow for a number of years. In 1931 the women took advantage of their privilege to vote and elected Mrs. Phenia Ownby, mayor. When Mrs. Ownby took the oath of office March 4, 1931, Broken Arrow became the first town in Tulsa County to elect a lady mayor.²⁸

After thirty years many of the city ordinances were no longer applicable to the needs of a modern city. With the consent of the city council, Mayor Ownby secured the services of W. C. Bryant, municipal counselor, from Norman, Oklahoma, to revise the city ordinances.²⁹ After they had been studied by the council and Bryant, the obsolete ordinances were declared null and void. For several years after the town was incorporated, the council minutes and the ordinances had been written in longhand and Mayor Ownby's revision was Broken Arrow's first complete typewritten city records.

Mayor Ownby persuaded the city council to take over the public library, which had been sponsored by the Self Culture Club, since it was organized in 1908. Through contributions from individuals, civic

²⁷ Mrs. Dora Esslinger, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, July 15, 1951.

²⁸ City Council Minute Records, City of Broken Arrow, 1930-1935, Book 11, p. 224.

²⁹ Mrs. Dora Esslinger, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, July 15, 1951.

organizations, and the city council, Broken Arrow has a better than average public library.

Broken Arrow had made considerable progress under the mayor-council form of government, but some of the citizens believed a city manager, with special training in city government, would be able to introduce newer and more progressive ideas. In 1947 the proposition for a city manager form of government was placed before the people, but they rejected it. On April 13, 1954, for the third time the question of a council-manager form of city government was brought to the people of Broken Arrow and was authorized by a narrow margin of the voters.

CHAPTER V

CHURCHES, SCHOOLS, FRATERNAL AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

The people who settled Broken Arrow came from communities where churches and schools were an integral part of the cultural life of the people. Within two months after the town was surveyed the population was large enough to establish a church, but the residents were too busy building homes and business houses to erect one immediately. However, those people who were used to worshipping regularly did not feel that church services and Sunday school should be neglected just because there were no church homes. Therefore, Mrs. William Sprague invited a group of her neighbors to hold Sunday school at her home and a Reverend Morris held the first church service in the home of F. A. Whitmer on Christmas day, 1902. A union Sunday school was soon organized and met on Sunday afternoons in the Orcutt building, with people of all denominations participating.¹

According to W. S. Fears, the Arkansas Valley Townsite Company promised to give a lot to the church denomination having the largest number of members present and attending the union Sunday school. The Methodists had the largest attendance and were given the lot where their church now stands.²

¹Mrs. Josie Sprague, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, July 18, 1951. Ledger, July 16, 1903.

²W. S. Fears, Tulsa, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, July 6, 1951.

Reverend Morris visited friends in Broken Arrow quite often to help with the church work. His home was in Tulsa where he was later killed by a police officer as he rode along the street in his buggy. It was late in the evening and the officer thought Reverend Morris was an outlaw, whom he had been ordered to shoot on sight.

Religious services were held in any available place during the first few years after Broken Arrow was founded. The meeting place for most denominations was the hall over the Hill Mercantile store. After the Methodist church and the school house were built services were held in both of these buildings.

The Methodist congregation was the first to erect a church in Broken Arrow. Plans for constructing the building were laid in July, 1903, but it was not completed until early in the fall. The church was a plain, long, one-room frame affair with double doors facing Main street. The lumber was hauled on wagons from Catoosa, by Joe St. Clair, John and Will McGechie.³ One of the leaders in the organization of the Methodist church was Revend W. C. Ricketts, a resident minister who took an active part in the church as well as other civic groups.

The Methodist conference sent Reverend M. L. Cole of Alton, Illinois, to serve as pastor of the church. He remained with the congregation only one year. Because of the housing shortage Reverend Cole lived in Catoosa for a short time and rode his bicycle the twelve miles to Broken Arrow to hold services.⁴

The church membership was composed of the two Methodist factions,

³Mrs. Mary McAnally, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, July 14, 1951.

⁴Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, October 22, 1903.

the Methodist Episcopal and the Methodist Episcopal South. They continued as one church until 1904, when the former members of the south church became dissatisfied and decided to build a church of their own. Reverend Brannon of Tulsa helped with the organization of the south church and held services twice each month in the school house until their church was completed.

The members of the south church purchased four lots from D. B. Fishburn, September 28, 1904, and after considerable trouble with the contractor and other delays completed the church in September, 1905. The first regular pastor sent by the church conference was Reverend Joe B. Hedgepath who arrived in time for the dedication services September 25, 1905.⁵ This building continued to be the home of the south church until the early 1930's, when the two branches of Methodists were reunited. Since the north branch had a larger building both groups agreed to use it and sell the south church. This building was purchased by members of the Church of Christ in 1932.

The first Missionary Baptist church was organized in Broken Arrow March 19, 1904, by Reverend J. S. Thomas of the chapel car "Evangel." There were nine charter members and the following men were the first church officials: G. L. Holt, E. V. Allen and N. Henry trustees, E. V. Allen, church clerk.⁶ The chapel car was a railroad car used by Reverend Thomas as a place of worship and living quarters. If there was no church building in the towns he visited services would be held in the car.

⁵Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, September 14, 1905; September 29, 1905.

⁶Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, March 24, 1904.

In April following the organization of the church the Baptist Board of Missions sent Reverend G. C. Harris from Sallisaw to hold services for the Baptist congregation at Broken Arrow. The services were held in the Methodist church for a short time; then for several years the Baptist people used various buildings as a place of worship with the public school being used most of the time until their church home was completed in 1907. In 1910 a new addition was made to the church, which was located on the southeast corner of First Street and Broadway.⁷ This addition accommodated the congregation for the next thirty years but then it became necessary to convert the parsonage next door into Sunday school classrooms. These two buildings served the people until 1951 when they completed a beautiful native stone structure.

Two other denominations, the Christian and Presbyterian, established churches in Broken Arrow at an early date but unfortunately very little information is available in regard to their activities. Reverend Morton H. Wood, an evangelist, came to Broken Arrow in November, 1903, and held a series of meetings in the Corbut building on North Main Street in the interest of the Christian Church. Their first church building was erected in 1905.⁸

Reverend Kerr, a Presbyterian minister from Tulsa, organized a Sunday school in April, 1904. They met at the Methodist church in the afternoons for a short time then moved to the Orcutt building. The Presbyterians erected their first building in 1905 on the site of their present church.⁹

⁷Church Records, First Baptist Church, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma.

⁸Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, November 12, 1903.

⁹Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, April 14, 1904.

Most of the leading religious denominations have a place of worship in Broken Arrow at present. After the Lutheran (in 1912) and the Assembly of God (in 1916) congregations were organized, there were no more churches established for several years. Then came branches of the Holiness faith, the Catholic, Nazarene, and Freewill Baptist groups. At present the Assembly of God has the largest membership as well as the most spacious church structure in Broken Arrow.

There was no school in Broken Arrow during the first year of its existence because the town was not established until late in the fall and there was no building available for classroom nor money to erect one. This does not mean that these pioneer people were not interested in schools. To show their interest in the educational needs of the town the ladies of the community went to work early in the spring of 1903 to raise money for the coming school year. They organized the Ladies School Aid Society and did everything possible to raise money for school purposes. Mrs. W. T. Brooks, president of the society, and the members served sandwiches, ice cream, plate lunches, gave entertainments, presented plays and other things that would add a little money to the fund.¹⁰ The large bell heard at the grade school each morning during the school year was presented to the school by the Ladies School Aid Society October 27, 1904.

An election was held August 25, 1903, for the purpose of electing a board of education. The following men were elected: I. M. Thompson, Thomas Blair, S. E. Orcutt, H. L. Pierce, N. L. Sanders, and G. L. Holt.

¹⁰Mrs. Mary McAnally and Mrs. Josie Sprague, Reminiscences, July 18, 1951.

The members then elected Holt president of the board and Sanders secretary.¹¹

Since the ladies had not raised enough money to carry on the full term of school it became necessary for the board to prepare a subscription paper which was circulated asking the people to subscribe approximately five mills on the dollar on the total value of their personal property. This promised little more than \$700.00. With this amount added to the sum raised by the ladies the first free public school in Broken Arrow opened on October 5, 1903. The board of education employed P. C. Skaggs of Wagoner, Mrs. J. H. Wertz and a Miss Patterson to teach in the school. One hundred forty-three pupils enrolled the first day and within two weeks the enrollment had reached one hundred and seventy. Prior to statehood there were no school districts in what was then Indian Territory, and all children who lived outside the city limits had to pay a tuition fee which was one dollar each for grade pupils and one dollar fifty cents for high school students.

The first school was held in the Methodist church since it was the only building available. In fact other denominations contributed to the building of this church with the understanding that it could be used by the school the first year. The faculty was forced to close the school in January 1904, for lack of funds but Mrs. Wertz and Miss Patterson continued their classes on a subscription basis.¹²

Mayor J. B. Parkinson set aside Arbor Day, March 18, 1904 as a day to plant trees on the public square, which later became the school

¹¹Ledger, Broken Arrow, Ind. Ter., August 27, 1903.

¹²Ledger, Broken Arrow, Ind. Ter., October 1, 1903; January 21, 1904.

ground. The mayor had a number of trees brought in from the country where they had been dug up along the creeks since there were virtually no trees within the city limits of Broken Arrow in 1902. On Arbor Day the people gathered at the square and planted the trees where some of them still stand.¹³

The City Council, June 20, 1904 voted a two per cent tax on the property holders to raise money to erect a school building.¹⁴ Although the committee had not selected a site for the building it had hopes of getting the "Public Square," block 30.

On June 23, 1904, Guy Bowman, President of the Arkansas Valley Townsite Company, signed a warranty deed to all of block 30, the block now occupied by the grade school.¹⁵ The deed was given to the school district with provisions, that should there ever be a county seat established in Broken Arrow it should be deeded by the district to the county, and if not, it should remain the property of the school district. A further stipulation provided that a stone or brick building must be erected, not less than two stories high.

The school board let the contract for the school building to M. B. Sanders and W. F. Waller for the low bid of \$4,345. The building was constructed to meet the specifications set forth in the deed when the lots were given to the school. It was a two story structure of brick, two rooms on the ground floor and two on the second floor. The

¹³Mrs. M. C. Williams, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscence, July 18, 1951.

¹⁴Ledger, June 23, 1904. City Ordinance Records, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Ordinance 26, p. 53.

¹⁵Record of Deeds, Western District, Indian Territory, Wagener, Oklahoma, Book 4, p. 468, 1902.

cornerstone laying ceremony was conducted by the Masonic Lodge, the Odd Fellows Lodge and the Ladies School Aid Society, August 7, 1904.¹⁶

Classes first met in the new building on November 9, with an enrollment of 261 pupils, which increased to 300 by the first of December. G. W. Horton was principal, Mary Talbot in charge of the grammar room, Dora Sullivan (Esslinger) taught intermediate department and Mayme Burch directed the primary grades. Fannie Lacy and Lela Dalton were added to the faculty in December.¹⁷ The rapid influx of population into Broken Arrow raised the school enrollment beyond the capacity of the four rooms and in order to house the pupils four new rooms and an auditorium were added in 1905.¹⁸

The Broken Arrow public school has made much progress since Superintendent A. R. Williams and Mrs. Fern Sizer, principal, planned the first graduating exercises at the Opera House in May, 1908. There were only three graduates in the class, Nellie Brumbaugh, Annie May Crenshaw, and Charles Edwin Foster.¹⁹ Foster, manager of the Oklahoma

¹⁶Ledger, Broken Arrow, Ind. Ter., August 11, 1904.

¹⁷Ledger, Broken Arrow, Ind. Ter., December 1, 1904.

When Mrs. Dora Sullivan Esslinger of 304 West Broadway, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, closed her desk and the door upon the familiar room in May 1951, she brought down the curtain on a fruitful thirty-five years in the teaching profession and became the first teacher of the system to retire under the state retirement system.

Mrs. Esslinger came to Broken Arrow in 1904 from Alabama where she was graduated from the Gurley High School and a Methodist supported girl's college in Athens, Alabama. She has always had the youth of Broken Arrow deep within her hopes and dreams. Like most people who work for the public, it is possible that too few have stopped to pay homage and respect and to say how they have appreciated her guidance.

¹⁸Ledger, Broken Arrow, Ind. Ter., June 15, 1905.

¹⁹C. E. Foster, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, July 10, 1951.

Tire and Supply store, is the only member of the first class living in Broken Arrow. He has seen the school grow from a four room building with five teachers and 300 pupils in 1904 to a school system with eleven buildings, fifty-three teachers and over 1400 pupils in 1954.

The Broken Arrow school district continued to grow and consolidate with other districts so that by 1954 it comprised fifty-nine square miles of territory and operated seven school busses connecting adjacent territories and bringing rural students from six rural schools in Wagoner County and one in Tulsa County to the city school system.²⁰

The physical properties of the school by 1954 consisted of eleven buildings valued at \$527,000. The school also has a football stadium which will seat approximately 2000 people and one of the best baseball fields in northeast Oklahoma. The baseball field was equipped with lights for night games in 1951.

The school program is planned around activities and classes which will interest the student and "prepare him to live." Diversified occupations, commerce, homemaking, shop and agriculture are offered to prepare students to go directly from high school into an occupation. The recently organized student council and other extra-curricula activities offer each pupil a chance to participate in some physical, mental or social activity.

When the news spread in 1907, that three state normal schools were to be established in eastern Oklahoma, the Broken Arrow Commercial Club went to work. They felt that Tulsa had cheated them out of the county seat and were determined that no town would get the jump on

²⁰Annual Statistical Report, Superintendent of Schools, Dist. No. 3 Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, 1954.

them this time. The Commercial Club appointed a committee of five: W. N. Williams, R. C. Rhyne, Dr. Haggard, P. A. Fox, and W. T. Brooks to handle the business.²¹ At their next meeting it was decided to send Rhyne to Guthrie for two weeks to promote Broken Arrow's interest in the school.

Before Tulsa's Commercial Club or the papers knew what was going on, the Broken Arrow committee had prepared a petition and circulated it over the county, asking that the normal school be located at Broken Arrow. The unusual and discouraging part for Tulsa was that the petition had over one thousand names on it from the city of Tulsa. These signatures caused Tulsa to give up her hopes for having the institution located there. The petition, before it was submitted to the legislature, was signed by 2400 voters.²²

David M. Hodge, the noted mixed-blood Creek Indian, and a delegation of eighteen women representing the Self Culture Club led by Mrs. Brooks, went to Guthrie and laid their claims before the legislature. They made a good impression on the legislature and the locating committee and this fact, together with some effective work by local legislative representatives resulted in the fact that although the normal school was given to Tahlequah, the Haskell State School of Agriculture, named for the State governor, was located in Broken Arrow.²³

The news of the decision of the legislature was announced to the people by the ringing of the fire bell, the church bells, and the

²¹Ledger, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, January 9, 1908.

²²Ledger, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, February 27, 1908.

²³Ledger, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, April 16, 1908.

blowing of whistles.²⁴ The president of the Commercial Club called a special meeting that Monday evening, September 13, 1909, to vote resolutions of thanks to the governor and the locating committee. A large crowd was present and the following resolutions were passed:

Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, September 13, 1909

To His Excellency,

The Governor and Honorable Locating Committee Guthrie, Oklahoma

SIRS:

We, the Commercial Club of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, hereby extend to you our thanks for the locating of the District Agricultural School at Broken Arrow, and also for the selection of our townsman, Mr. J. H. Esslinger, as Superintendent of the same.

And we bespeak for the school, managers, and teachers, our most hearty support and approval.

ATTEST:

W. N. Williams
Pres., Broken Arrow Commercial Club

K. M. Rowe
Secretary.²⁵

The people of Broken Arrow agreed to furnish enough land to accommodate the college and a citizen's committee of twenty-one men put up bond to secure a loan from the town of \$3,406.77, with which to purchase a site of eighty acres for the school. The site was approved but the building would not be ready for occupancy until the next school year. The old Opera House which occupied the second floor over the Quigg Drug and the adjoining building was rented for classrooms the first year. Classes were also held in the brick building now occupied by L. & H. Implement Company which is one half block farther west. The

²⁴Ibid., September 10, 1909.

²⁵Ibid., (same issue as 24).

rentals on these classrooms were paid by the town of Broken Arrow. The faculty employed by the board of directors was J. H. Esslinger, of Broken Arrow, superintendent, A. H. Wright, Stillwater, agriculture, W. E. Kinder, Warner, mathematics and English, Gertrude Braden, Waleska, Illinois, domestic science, and Ella Haskell, Abbeyville, South Carolina, history.²⁶ The faculty enrolled one hundred and three students the first day of school November 9, 1909.

The corner stone for the Haskell Agricultural College was laid on May 25, 1910 under the auspices of the Masonic Lodge, in the presence of one of the largest assemblies ever held in Broken Arrow. Governor and Mrs. C. N. Haskell as well as many prominent people from Tulsa, Muskogee, and other parts of the state were present. After a basket dinner had been served Governor Haskell gave the principal address.²⁷

The school offered a practical form of education to all, the only expense being an enrollment fee of one dollar and fifty cents. Experimental work was carried on with special reference to the needs of the farmers of the district. An up-to-date creamery encouraged dairying and the farmers with their families were entertained frequently with banquets, dinners and programs, thus keeping them in touch with the school.

The first class was graduated from the college in 1912, several of whom went to Stillwater in the fall, entering the sophomore year. The class consisted of Angie Harsen Wyatt, Nettie Goddard Martin, Anna McGeachie Sutton, Ada Ward McGeachie, Leone Webb and Howard Webb.²⁸

²⁶Ledger, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, October 28, 1909.

²⁷Dora Esslinger, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, July 19, 1951.

²⁸Ibid.

There was some feeling around the state capitol that there were too many state-supported colleges and both Governor Lee Cruce and Robert L. Williams believed that some of the smaller ones should be disbanded. In 1917 Governor Williams refused to sign the appropriation bill for the maintenance of the Haskell Agricultural College. By an act of the State Legislature March 24, 1917, the school was officially closed and the eighty acres of land together with the buildings and equipment were transferred to the Broken Arrow School district, giving the town a badly needed high school building.²⁹

One pioneer citizen remarked that there was too much work to be done for the men to have time for social activities in the early days. No doubt there was plenty of hard work but the men found time for a very interesting social life. Hunting, round-ups, picnics, barbecues, singing schools, candy pulls, play parties, literary societies, hayrides, fish fries, box suppers and dances were factors in the social life of the Broken Arrow citizens.³⁰

Several wolf hunts were recorded in the Ledger, but the most interesting one centered upon the "daddy" of all the coyotes that had been giving the farmers trouble for several years. A number of friends from Muskogee were invited to the hunt in the spring of 1905. On the set date about sixty people gathered at a farm house north of town with several wolf hounds and the chase began. The hunting party standing on the high mounds could see the chase from beginning to end

²⁹Senate Joint Resolution No. 23, Sixth Legislature, State of Oklahoma, Session Laws, 1917 (Oklahoma City, 1917), p. 513.

Miscellaneous Record of Deeds, County clerk's office, Tulsa, Oklahoma, Vol. 233, p. 74.

³⁰W. N. Williams, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, July 8, 1948.

as the dogs raced across the open prairie. In a short time "daddy" coyote was no more.³¹

In the early days of Broken Arrow, cowboys would often ride down the main street staging an informal weekend party all their own. Whooping, yelling, and shooting into the air were favorite diversions.³²

Several different social organizations were active at various times in the early days. If the "Good Times Club" or the "Jinglers" is mentioned, a knowing smile comes over the faces of those who were in the community in those days and still remember the parties and how they would go down to the Katy depot to dance on the platform.³³

The outstanding social organization in the early days came about in a rather unusual way. A lady from the neighboring town of Coweta boasted of having two literary clubs in her city. This was too much, Broken Arrow could never allow this to happen. The following week a number of ladies gathered at the home of Mrs. Newt Williams, April 27, 1900, for the purpose of organizing a literary club. The Broken Arrow Self Culture Club, a name suggested by Miss Mary Talbot, was established with a charter membership of seventeen ladies. The constitution provided for twenty-five members. At the next meeting nine new members were accepted as charter members since one had moved away and the organization had not been completed at the first meeting.³⁴

The election of officers was as follows: Mrs. Fern Sizer, president; Mrs. George Foster, vice president; Mrs. A. E. Benson, secretary; and

³¹Ledger, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, March 2, 1905.

³²Mrs. Josie Sprague, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscence, March 15, 1949.

³³Mrs. Viola Middleton, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscence, July 9, 1952.

³⁴Mrs. W. N. Williams, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscence, July 8, 1948.

Mrs. John Tenny, treasurer. Mrs. G. W. Horton was appointed chairman of a committee to prepare a permanent constitution. Other charter members were: Mesdames J. N. Shippey, M. McCoy, W. N. Williams, Ed Dalton, E. T. Neibling, M. McKenna, Wm. Sprague, N. L. Sanders, C. L. Robertson, Misses Olive Spurr, Dora Sullivan (Esslinger), Mary Talbot, Fannie Lacy, Daisy Lopp, Ora Brooks and Lela Dalton.³⁵

The first year's work consisted of a study of the masters of American literature and music. The club became active in civic affairs during the years and established a public library in 1908. As a means of getting the library started the ladies gave a tea to which each person was asked to bring one or more books to donate to the library. Plays and membership fees helped buy new books and pay a librarian. The city took over the library in 1932 during Mrs. Phenie Ownby's term as mayor.

Another civic project of the Self Culture Club was the promotion of a paved road to the cemetery and the tending of the cemetery by a caretaker. They also sponsored the building and beautifying of Seiling Park in the northwest part of town. Once a year the ladies entertained their husbands, but the high light of the year always was the banquet given by the husbands for the members.³⁶

One outstanding social event, which is remembered more than any other by the early pioneers, was the Blue Springs Barbecue. The account of the barbecue by C. M. Click will give a more complete picture of

³⁵Club Yearbook, The Broken Arrow Self Culture Club, (Broken Arrow, 1907.)

³⁶Mrs. M. C. Williams, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, July 18, 1951.

those early settlers' social life and of the journalistic style of this era than would be possible for the writer:

Mr. & Mrs. C. M. Click chaperoned the jolliest crowd in the Territory to a barbecue given by the cowboys of the Blue Springs Ranch last Saturday, May 16, 1903.

The party started early in the morning and arrived there in sections, the last reaching there about 12:30, after having one runaway, being stuck in the mud very often and barely escaping being turned over. They were met at the ranch by Messrs. Johnston, Baldrige, Jolly, House, and Burns, who were ideal hosts and never were guests more royally received and made more welcome. They were all elegant, polished gentlemen and were quite a revelation to some of the ladies who had an idea that cowboys were only partially civilized.

First a visit was paid to the pit where the calf was being barbecued and, after one glimpse no one could center his mind on aught save dinner, for the odor was so savory and the meat looked so tempting as it lay spread out on a huge barbed wire griddle resting over a natural pit in the rocks where there was kept a slow fire. A bucket sitting near, containing a mixture of vinegar, pepper and salt, which was frequently applied with a mop to the cooking meat, revealed the secret of its delicious flavor.

Then, in order, came the inspection of the boy's garden and the boast of the ranch - "The Blue Springs." The water clear and cold, trickled from the bank of rocks and ran down to a nearby pool. Back in the banks and near the spring was a refrigerator finished with a door and was the envy of all the ladies.

Dinner was then announced, having been spread on tables under the trees and never was festive board more heavily laden with "good things" and never were there more gallant gentlemen than the cowboys who pressed one dish after another on their guests, fearful lest they went for anything. We dare not say how long dinner lasted but feel that all felt satisfied. The ranch house was then cleared of everything, the musical instruments were tuned up and a happy crowd tripped the light fantastic until supper was served. The boys are all elegant dancers and in fact seem to excel in everything. But the climax was reached when after supper all decided to return to Broken Arrow bringing their hosts with them.

After getting started the rain began to pour and, but for the brave cowboys the crowd would never have reached home, for they were pilots, guards and rescuers. Following the piloting cowboy came Mr. Click's buggy, the open wagon and the four mule stage with the other boys riding on either side as escorts. The wagon soon stuck fast and the faces of the ladies looked serious for they were then sitting in a bed half full of water. The expression was soon changed for the valliant cowboys, with ropes to their saddle horns, pulled wagon and team out as if it had been a steer. Then rose three cheers for the cowboys and some lady said, "I'd rather be a cowboy than president of the United States."

The stage next had to be pulled out and this too was child's play to the heroes of the evening. The roads were more than terrible and the darkness pitchy, so when the stage lurched and leaned over a sidling place a cowboy was instantly on the step of the high side or it would have tipped over many times.

When plunging into one ditch deeper than the rest, the driver was thrown from the high box down on the mules, dragging Val Click with him, and Mr. J. D. Thomas was violently flung from the rear of the stage into a deep mud hole and dragged about ten feet. After all, the party reached Mr. Click's in safety about nine o'clock and, after having some hot coffee and cake, danced until midnight. The cowboys were Mr. Click's guests for the rest of the night and after breakfast Sunday morning they saddled their horses, donned their chaparejos, tied their slickers on behind their saddles and rode off five abreast, followed by admiring glances and the toast then and now is, "The Cowboys of Baldrige's Ranch."

The party was composed of C. M. Click and wife, Harry Cook and wife, Mesdames Sprague, Sanders, Plumlee, Williams and Brooks, Misses Eva and Nellie Wyatt and Miss Click, Messrs. Thomas, Johnston, Baldrige, House, Burns, Jolly, and Click.³⁷

During the past fifty years, fraternal organizations have played an important part in the social and civic life of Broken Arrow. The first fraternal organization to be established in Broken Arrow was the Modern Woodmen of America. Since that date, practically all the major fraternal organizations have formed branches in the city of Broken Arrow.

In the horse and buggy days, "lodge night" was a red letter date in the calendar of the average citizen. Lodge members often traveled many miles in order to be able to attend lodge meetings. The lodges of Broken Arrow have thrived under the most adverse circumstances, supplying a genuine need for fellowship, service and achievement within the order.

The Broken Arrow Modern Woodmen of America lodge was organized Monday, April 13, 1903, just six months after the founding of Broken Arrow.

³⁷Ledger, Broken Arrow, Ind. Ter., May 21, 1903.

Thomas Blair, deputy head consul of the Modern Woodmen of America for this district, organized the camp in Broken Arrow with nineteen charter members. The officers chosen at the meeting when the camp was organized were: Thomas A. Blair, consul; A. L. Wilson, worthy advisor; R. A. Waller, excellent banker; Cyrus Bromley, clerk; C. J. Abbott, escort; Charles P. Richardson, watchman; George Ball, sentry; Dr. R. S. Plumlee, physician; L. D. Marr, William Simmons and William Brady, managers. The camp met each Tuesday evening in the hall over the Hill Mercantile Company's store.³⁸

A number of the members of the Masonic order, who resided in Broken Arrow, met Monday, May 11, 1903, in the hall over the Hill Mercantile Store and made the preliminary arrangements for organizing a Masonic lodge at Broken Arrow. They appointed a committee to correspond with the grand lecturer with the purpose of getting someone to come to Broken Arrow to institute the lodge and give the necessary instructions.³⁹

The committee was not successful in getting a traveling representative of the Lodge until late in November. Dr. R. S. Plumlee made arrangements with B. G. Martin, Grand Lecturer of the Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, to give a series of Lectures.⁴⁰

The Broken Arrow Lodge was organized under dispensation while awaiting the action of the Grand Lodge. The dispensation was issued on December 10, 1903, and the Lodge was chartered by the Grand Lodge of the Indian Territory on August 10, 1904, as Broken Arrow Lodge Number 141.⁴¹

³⁸ Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, April 23, 1903.

³⁹ Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, May 14, 1903.

⁴⁰ Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, November 19, 1903.

⁴¹ Records of Grand Secretary, Masonic Order, C. A. Sturgeon, Guthrie, Oklahoma.

There were seventeen charter members of Broken Arrow Lodge Number 141. The officers under dispensation were: Roscoe S. Plumlee, Worshipful Master; Josiah B. Parkinson, Senior Warden; Richard A. Waller, Junior Warden; Hiram L. Pierce, Treasurer; Granville L. Holt, Secretary; Lemuel P. Hooks, Senior Deacon; James T. Darland, Junior Deacon; Oscar Crawford, Senior Steward; W. G. McGeechie, Junior Steward; Wm. C. Adkison, Tiler. Their first regular meeting was held on December 25, 1903, in the Orcutt building.⁴²

After statehood, the Lodge became known as Broken Arrow Lodge Number 243. The new charter was granted February 2, 1909, in lieu of the old Indian Territory charter of August 10, 1904.⁴³

The local Lions Club is one of the most recent social organizations in Broken Arrow but since its formation has been one of the leading civic groups.

A number of men interested in Lionism met March 15, 1943, with the purpose of organizing a Lions Club in Broken Arrow. The following officers were elected; President, Lawrence Brewer; First Vice, A. L. Graham; Second Vice, F. O. Stacy; Third Vice, Amos Mizell; Secretary and Treasurer, C. W. Young; Lion Tamer, R. D. Patterson; Tail Twister, Jimmy Marlin.

According to the rules and regulations of Lions International the organization is not legally in effect until charter night, which was April 26, 1943.⁴⁴

⁴²Ledger, Broken Arrow, Indian Territory, December 17 & 31, 1903.

⁴³Secretary's Records, Charter Lodge #243, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma.

⁴⁴Official Report to Lions International For May 1943, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma.

The Broken Arrow Lions Club has sponsored or actively supported such worthy causes as; the cancer drive, march of dimes, Boy Scouts, Jr. Patrol and playground improvement programs. They have also sponsored local representatives in the Miss Oklahoma Queen contests, tennis tournaments for the boys and girls of Broken Arrow and the annual home decoration contest each Christmas.

In June, 1947 the Lions placed gum machines in the business houses of Broken Arrow, to raise money for their welfare fund. The main purpose of this fund is to buy glasses for needy school children. Eight or ten children have received glasses and many others have had their eyes tested.

The two major projects completed by the Lions are the street markers, house numbering and lighting the baseball park.

The street marker project was completed in June, 1948. It took them about three months to complete the work. The markers were set up by members of the Lions Club, evenings after their regular work hours. The lights were turned on the high school baseball diamond June, 1951. The Lions and other local business men spent many hours building the bleachers, putting up the fence and installing the lights to make the baseball field one of the best ball parks in northeast Oklahoma for any town the size of Broken Arrow.⁴⁵

The Big Brothers Club was founded in December, 1934, by the late R. C. Beaty, who at the time was a member of the Broken Arrow School Board and was Secretary to the Seneca Coal Company. As this was during the dark days of the depression, Beaty saw the destitute circumstances

⁴⁵Secretary's Report, R. W. Balltusser, Secretary, Broken Arrow Lions Club, June 1951.

of some of the local citizens and he sympathized with their needs. He, therefore, decided and was determined to do something about it because he could not bear to see so many little children suffer and do without the things they needed.

Charter Directors of the Big Brothers Club were as follows:

R. C. Beaty, J. W. Walton, R. D. Patterson, Claude Lowery, R. L. Hickman, A. M. Laws, Mrs. A. B. Hubble, Paul Miller, T. M. Hunsecker and Gerald Hudson.

At the beginning, under the leadership of Beaty, this organization was to buy glasses for children who were unable to buy them if they were found to need them by the county nurse. Clothing and medical aid were also furnished to needy children, and baskets of food and toys were given to needy families at Christmas.

The biggest project launched by this organization was the School Kitchen. This plan was inaugurated by Beaty in 1934, and free lunches were served to undernourished children.

When Beaty moved to Kansas City in 1940, T. M. Hunsecker was elected President and with the same directors, with the exception of Haskell Jones, a new director, the Club carried on in an active manner until 1944. At that time, there no longer seemed to be any great need for assistance of this nature and only on special cases since then have any of the funds been used. The money contributed to this Club was donated by businessmen of the town, school teachers, doctors, lawyers, employees of the Senaca Coal Company. A special tribute should be paid Kelce, as he was always willing to help in any way possible and helped greatly in the financial support of this organization. No solicitations for funds have been made since 1941.⁴⁶

⁴⁶Tracy Hunsecker, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Reminiscences, July 15, 1952.

There are other recent organizations which are taking a leading place among the social and civic groups of Broken Arrow such as; the Parent Teacher's Association, Beta Sigma Phi, Junior Chamber of Commerce, and Business and Professional Womens Club. The B. & P. W. in particular have done some wonderful work since they organized in 1947. Their continuous project is dental care for children whose parents are financially unable to have the dental work done themselves. They sponsor annually the bicycle safety program in cooperation with the city schools and the state highway patrol and the March of dimes drive for polio. In 1954 the B. & P. W. helped surpass Broken Arrow's quota for the march of dimes. The citizens of Broken Arrow are rightfully proud of the churches, schools, social and civic organizations.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The history of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, differs from that of many western communities of similar size primarily in that it was located on lands which were not a part of the public domain of the United States prior to settlement. Unlike most municipalities Broken Arrow was located on land allotted by the United States government to a Creek Indian and a Creek freedman, and as a result the government required certain land policies to be observed. All lands allotted to Creek Indians were restricted and before the allottee could sell the land it was necessary to secure permission from the department of the interior through the commissioner of Indian Affairs. In addition special legislation which would be applicable to towns similar to Broken Arrow had to be passed by Congress, specifically, laws giving private parties the right to establish new towns along railroads. In order to get permission to plat the property for a townsite the townsite company had to go through the same procedure it did in buying the land. Since Broken Arrow was established during the time the government's procedure for buying Indian allotted lands and for townsite privileges was being perfected, the land policy was different from most towns.

Unlike most towns Broken Arrow did not grow gradually from a cross-roads store to a city over a period of time but was well planned and platted on an open prairie where there was not a single house within a mile of the townsite when it was platted. Before the plat was completed

the Arkansas Valley Townsite Company had widely advertised the opening and sale of lots in the proposed town bringing hundreds of buyers to the community. Some who bought lots made arrangements to begin erecting their buildings the day the plat was completed and within three weeks a small town had appeared as if by magic.

The anticipated economic basis on which urban growth could develop did not materialize during the town's early years. In 1903 the people of Broken Arrow had hopes of developing a rather profitable oil business in the area, but so far activity has been limited to small producing wells. Oil in limited quantities has been found in all directions from the town and there are still several producing wells in the community. Production was never large or spectacular enough to create an "oil boom" such as aided the growth of other Oklahoma communities.

Coal mining was a profitable venture for forty-five years after the town was established but the veins gave out and the mines were closed. There is little possibility of finding another vein of coal in sufficient amount to mine in this area.

The greatest disappointment to the citizens of Broken Arrow was their failure to get the county seat located here. The locating committee seemed to be in favor of Broken Arrow since it had been chosen for one of the county seats in the proposed state of Sequoyah and had offered to give the county one city block with a building on it suitable for a courthouse but as is often the case in politics the scene changed over night and Tulsa took home the prize.

Loss of the Haskell State Agricultural College was another unpleasant event. However, this was not considered a complete loss due to the fact that ownership of the eighty acres of land and the buildings reverted to

the city, which was in need of a high school building. Yet, it was undoubtedly true that the loss of such a state institution was an economic loss of some importance.

For two decades after 1920 the population remained static and in this respect the town's experiences were similar to those of many Oklahoma communities of similar size. From 1920 to 1930 Broken Arrow's population decreased about 200 people and during the next ten years gained back the number lost. By the government census the population in 1940 was twelve less than in 1920. With the coming of World War II and the defense plants located in nearby towns, Broken Arrow's population has doubled during the decade from 1944-54. When the new additions now being developed in Broken Arrow are completed another two thousand inhabitants will be added to its population.

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