

Oklahoma CENTENNIAL

1907 & 2007



Cherokee Outlet a Diverse Stretch of Land

Background — The Cherokee Strip extends 226 miles from east to west and 58 miles north to south. Thirteen northern counties and 9,400 square miles make up Oklahoma's portion of the Cherokee Strip, historically designated as the Cherokee Outlet.

This area is as diverse as America itself, with rolling Osage prairies in the east to gypsum sand dunes and the rugged Glass Mountains in the west.

1828 — The United States guaranteed to the Cherokee Nation that this seven million acres of land would be their perpetual outlet west for tribal hunting grounds. The "assigned lands" for the Cherokees were in northeastern Oklahoma (then Indian Territory), so they never actually

lived in the Cherokee Strip area.

1866 — The United States asked the Cherokees to sell portions of the Strip to "friendly" Indians. Tribes, or parts of tribes settled in the region, including Osage, Pawnee, Kaw, Ponca, Tonkawa, Otoe, and Missouri.

1883 — The Cherokee Strip Livestock Association was formed. They wanted to fatten their cattle on the rich grasses in the Strip before taking them to railheads in Kansas, so they leased six million acres from the Cherokees.

1890 — Land hungry settlers viewed the cattlemen's use of the area as a waste of fertile farmland and pressured the government to purchase the Cherokee land from the tribe. Congress eventually paid

\$8.5 million (about \$1.40 an acre) to the tribe and President Benjamin Harrison ordered the ranchers to remove all cattle from the Strip. Plans were being made to open the expansive ranchlands for settlement by eager pioneers.

1893 — In August, President Grover Cleveland made a proclamation, pursuant to an Act of Congress, that the Cherokee Outlet would be opened for settlement at high noon on Sept. 16, 1893. The president and Secretary of Interior H.R. Smith set several new regulations and guidelines, hoping to avoid the troubles and confusion that accompanied the 1889 land rush into Oklahoma Territory.

The Strip was to be settled by the horse-race method. To eliminate "sooners," they set

up makeshift offices just outside the Cherokee Strip borders.

Pre-race registration sites in Kansas were Arkansas City, Cameron, Caldwell, Hunnewell and Kiowa, and in Oklahoma Territory, at Goodwin, Hennessy, Orlando, and Stillwater.

Homesteaders were to register and produce filing fee affidavits to be eligible for the

run. They then waited for the cavalry soldiers' gunshots to start the land rush. Each person who staked a claim would receive 160 acres. Tribes living in the outlet area were sold individual allotments not to exceed 80 acres, half of the allotment amount offered to settlers who made the run.

Prior to the run, the government also established county seats. The seven original

counties were O, L, K, P, Q, M and N. They were later renamed Garfield, Grant, Kay, Noble, Pawnee, Woods, and Woodward. Four land offices were opened in what are now Enid, Perry, Alva and Woodward. After they staked their claim, homesteaders were to go to these offices and pay a filing fee ranging from \$1 to \$2.50. The fees were based upon the quality of land.

Poncas Moved to Territory From Homeland in Nebraska

1876 — In 1876, The U.S. government formulated a policy to consolidate as many Indian tribes as possible in the Indian Territory of Oklahoma. At that time, the Ponca Tribe was located in Niobrara, Neb. A government agent approached eight tribal leaders from the Indian Bureau, and asked them to accompany him to Oklahoma to look over several alternative sites for a new Ponca Reservation there.

The Ponca chiefs made the journey and visited many different land reserves that were equally barren and unsuitable for agriculture. The chiefs refused to select any of the sites and, after informing the government agent of their decision, requested to be allowed to return home to Nebraska. The agent, angry at their lack of cooperation, left the Ponca chiefs, some of whom were advanced in years and ill. The chiefs were then forced to make the journey home in the middle of winter, without money, food or an interpreter. About 50 days later, the Ponca chiefs reached the Otoe Reservation along the Kansas/Nebraska border. The Otoes provided them with enough food and horses to make their way back to Nebraska, Neb.

1877 — When the Ponca Chiefs reached their homeland, they found that since the Ponca had refused to go to Indian Territory of their own free will, a government order had been issued on April 12, 1877, to force their removal. Federal troops were called in to enforce the removal orders, and by May, the Ponca began their forced migration to the "hot country."

The long march took a heavy toll on the tribe, over half of whom were women and children. Storms, along with poor road and traveling conditions, greatly impeded their journey, causing much suffering and deaths. Chief Standing Bear's daughter was among those who died along the way.

It was not until July 9, 1877, that the party passed through Baxter Springs in southeastern Kansas and crossed the line into the Indian Territory on the lands of the Quapaw Tribe. They were quartered in teepees they had brought with them, as the government had made no other provisions for their accommodation. Discouraged, homesick and hopeless, the 681 Ponca Indians found themselves on the lands of strangers, in the middle of a hot summer, with no crops and no prospects for any presented.

1878 — The Ponca were not happy in southeastern Kansas, so a new area was found for them on the west bank of the Arkansas River, covering both sides of the Salt Fork River in north central Oklahoma, near what is now Ponca City. This land was part

of the Indian Territory purchased from the Cherokee by the U.S. government in the Treaty of 1866. In July 1878, the Ponca were moved again to this new parcel of 101,894 acres, and it was set apart as the Ponca Reservation. The Ponca suffered from malaria in this new country and many died from it. Food was also scarce.

1879 — When the 12-year-old son of Chief Standing Bear died, the Chief was unwilling to bury him in this strange country. So, Standing Bear and 66 followers left the Ponca Reservation in January 1879, on foot.

They followed a wagon containing the body of his dead son, as they headed north to the traditional Ponca burial grounds in Nebraska.

Because the Ponca were not to leave their Reservation without permission, Standing Bear and his small group of followers were labeled as a renegade band. Gen. George Crook was then given orders by Secretary of the Interior Carl Schurz to arrest the runaways and return them to Indian Territory.

By March, 1879, Standing Bear and his followers had reached the Omaha Reservation in Nebraska. The Omaha Chief Iron Eyes took pity on them, and offered food and asylum. However, Gen. Crook caught up with Standing Bear and his Poncas, took them into custody without incident, and began escorting them back to Indian Territory.

On their way back south, the Ponca camped at Fort Omaha near the city of Omaha, Neb., and their story was made known to the citizens there.

The Omaha Daily Herald newspaper publicized the plight of the Ponca group, and many other newspapers across the country carried it.

As a result, two prominent attorneys decided that a writ of habeas corpus, asking for 14th amendment protection, could prevent the Ponca from being forcibly returned to their reservation in Oklahoma. (The 14th Amendment affirms that no State shall deprive anyone of life, liberty or property without due process of law.) The U. S. Government denied the right of Standing Bear to obtain a writ of habeas corpus on the grounds that "an Indian is not a person within the meaning of the law."

The case of Standing Bear vs. Crook was brought before Judge Elmer S. Dundy in U.S. District Court on April 30, 1879.

By May 12, 1879, Judge Dundy had filed his now famous decision in favor of Chief Standing Bear, ruling that "an Indian is a person the same as a White Man, and similarly entitled to the protection of the Constitution."

Standing Bear and his followers were set free, and they were able to return to the

Ponca tribal burial grounds on the Missouri Bluffs of Nebraska, where he buried his son with tribal honors.

1879 — Col. George W. Miller, a Confederate veteran, founded the 101 Ranch in northern Oklahoma. He and his wife, Molly, sons Joe, Zack and George Jr., along with daughter, Alma, helped establish the ranch. It was a sprawling 110,000 acres of leased Indian lands that spread across four counties.

A city within itself, it was a self-sufficient showplace, employing thousands of people. They had a school, show grounds, general store and cafe, hotel, blacksmith shop, leather shop, dairy, saddle shop, meat packing plant, and oil refinery.

The ranch had its own newspaper, magazine, and even its own scrip (money). They built homes for employees along with guesthouses and a "Dude Ranch." The 101 Ranch became one of the largest diversified farms with cross breeding of animals and agricultural products.

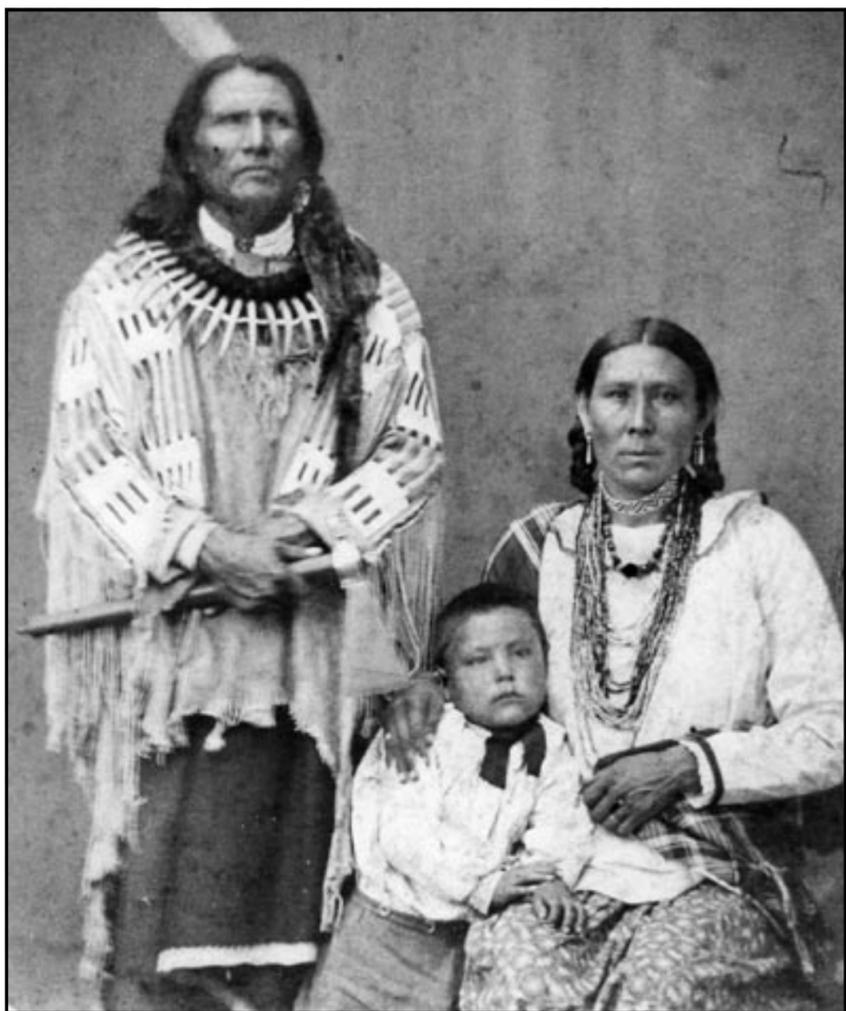
1880 — In January 1880, the editorial page of the Arkansas City Traveler commented that a bill had been introduced in Congress for the organization of the Territory of Oklahoma.

The newspaper encouraged all who believed that the Territory should be open to white settlement to sign a petition that would create an organized government for the Indian Territory.

"With the Territory organized for settlement, our farmers would find an excellent market for their produce, and our towns on the border would receive trade and activity that nothing else can supply."

The editors were concerned that there were people who wanted to force the question in Congress by organizing the Territory for their particular benefit, or by going in as "squatters."

1880 — In October 1880, the population of the Ponca in Oklahoma was 530, under the leadership of White Eagle, Black Crow, Rush into Battle, The Chief, Big Bull, Big Soldier, and Child Chief. It was recorded that they had built 80 houses and they owned 350 head of cattle and 600 horses along with wagons that had been provided. In addition, 350 acres had been planted with corn and other vegetables.



STANDING BEAR with wife and child. Chief Standing Bear was the leader of the Ponca Tribe when it was moved to Indian Territory from the tribe's native home in Nebraska. Standing Bear addressed the Supreme Court in one of the first major civil rights debates, forcefully arguing that Native Americans were persons within the meaning of the law. (Photo from the Nebraska State Historical Society)

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1881 Thanksgiving 'Decidedly Unique'

1881 — More than 200 Indians attended Thanksgiving services at the Ponca Agency, all of whom "manifested deep interest in the proceedings," according to the Arkansas City Traveler. The "decidedly unique" program included instrumental music, a song, "Coronation," an address by White Eagle, a prayer by Standing Buffalo, a song by the school children, "Hallelujah," a prayer by Fire Shaker, the song "America," a prayer by Stands Yellow, and the doxology.

1881 — In the fall of 1881, there were more hunters in the Indian Territory than ever before.

Every day, wagons were going to and coming from the Nation by the dozens. Most of them brought back deer and turkey, as the game were very wild and scarce compared with the previous winter. Deer were chased from river to river until they had left their usual hiding places, and many had migrated into Kansas. The Indians were beginning to complain about all the intruders, and some of their Agents were threatening to arrest the hunters.

an amendment to the general Indian appropriation bill, adding \$25,000 for an Indian Industrial School, which became known as Chilocco. The bill required the school to be located in the Indian Territory, near the south line of the State of Kansas, convenient to the Ponca and Nez Perce reservations. The site selected was on the banks of the Chilocco, near the place where three large springs flow into that stream.

\$15,000 of the appropriation was to be used in erecting buildings, and \$10,000 to run the school for the first year. According to the Arkansas City Traveler, the school location was convenient to all the Indian agencies, so students wouldn't have to travel very far. The students would also have the advantage of observing first-class farming in the immediate vicinity of the school. This large area was virtually unoccupied land, so the Indians could utilize the land to become first-class farmers and stock raisers.

In addition to the benefits for the Indians, southern Kansans were encouraged by the potential increase of commerce in their area.

1882 — Congress approved



THIS DELEGATION of Ponca tribal elders and leaders traveled to Washington, D.C., in 1881. (News File Photo)

Lots of Activity in Oklahoma Before Land Runs

1886 — Trains began to run from Arkansas City to the Ponca station, now White Eagle, a total of 31 miles. The citizens of Ark City raised more than \$10,000 to build a depot and have land to build railroad shops. They were prepared for a large railroad center.

1888 — The Arkansas City depot was completed. Built of red brick, it had a train weather vane atop its roof and ornate fireplaces and mantels inside. The station had two waiting rooms, one for men, and one for women. In the south end of the depot was an elaborate dining room with a lunch counter that became known as the Harvey House. It featured a magnificent tile mantle and fireplace centered by a stained glass window showcasing an urn heaped with fruit.

One of the famous travelers who came through Arkansas City was Wa-shun'gah, tribal chief of the Kaw Indians, who made it a habit to frequent the Harvey House. It

was ,Wa-shun-gah who told of an old Indian belief that tornadoes never strike in the area between the junction of two rivers.

Other well-known visitors to the Arkansas City depot included William Jennings Bryan who was one of the nation's leading orators. He supported child labor regulations and women's suffrage, and later became a Democratic presidential candidate. Charles Curtis, vice president of the United States and George W. Miller, founder of the 101 Ranch, were other famous men who passed through on the train.

The Cherokee outlet was in the form of a rectangular strip lying south of and along the Kansas border, approximately 225 miles east and west, and 60 miles north and south. From its shape it became known as the Cherokee strip or "The Strip." It included the counties now known as Kay, Osage, Pawnee, Noble, Grant, Garfield, Alfalfa, Major, Woods, Wood-

ward, and Harper, plus portions of Ellis and Payne counties.

While driving their cattle across the Cherokee outlet, cattlemen grazed their cattle for long periods due to the abundance of good water and grass. At first they did so without authority, but later made arrangements with the Cherokee Indians to pasture their cattle in the outlet at 25 cents per head, which later increased to 45 cents.

Soon, a cattlemen's association was formed, with government approval. The group leased the Cherokee outlet from the Cherokees for five years at a rental of \$100,000 a year.

In 1888, they obtained a second lease for five years at \$200,000 per year.

There was considerable agitation regarding the opening of the Cherokee outlet to settlement.

The United States government negotiated with the Cherokee nation for the purchase of

the outlet in order to open it for settlement. In earlier years, the government had purchased other eastern portions of the outlet as reservations for the Pawnees, the Kaws, and some other tribes located near the Kansas state line.

1891 — Prior to the "run" of 1893, there were thousands of home seekers who were looking forward to the opening of the Cherokee outlet. Since no official date had yet been announced, they watched the newspapers closely for any announcement.

The favorite topic of conversation was speculating when the government would make the date known. As the time passed, hundreds of covered wagons kept the roads dusty as they moved toward the "New Country," the land of promise where those who qualified hoped to homestead a quarter section of land. These folks wanted to be close to the line in case of any sudden development.

A Dissenting Opinion

Editor's Note: Sherman Bold Warrior, a member of the Ponca Tribe, gives a Native American's perspective of the Centennial Celebration.

By SHERMAN BOLD WARRIOR

As a member of the Blood Clan of the Ponca people, I speak only for myself and for no one else.

I, for one, will not celebrate the Centennial of Oklahoma, there is nothing for me to celebrate. To understand my position, one must understand and be aware of the factual history of the Ponca people. This is an abbreviated account of our history.

The Ponca are aboriginally from what is now northcentral and northwest Nebraska and southcentral and southwest South Dakota. In this area the Ponca claimed, owned, defended and lived on several thousand square miles of land. According to our annals of history and spiritual beliefs, Our Creator brought us to and gave to us that land with the promise that one day Our Creator would return for us. In that location we developed our culture. We honed a distinct expertise in each of the arts of warfare, ceremony, trade, government, spirituality, agriculture and the hunt. We possessed a well defined social system which included a distinct kinship system and a social order which gave each person a well defined place in the society and a sense of duty and obligation to their fellow Ponca.

The Ponca people's establishments and accomplishments rivaled any from the American and European cultures of the period. The first white people to come into contact with the Ponca people quickly knew us to be steeped in a wealth of history and far advanced in government, mili-

tary, philosophy, spirituality, art, trade and music. However today, the Ponca people are stereotyped by the main stream American belief that the we are one of the "Plains Indians," meaning that we were a "nomadic tribe" following buffalo herds and subsisting on berries, roots and grubs and whatever game we might find, ensnare or shoot with an arrow. A very romanticized notion but very misinformed.

The Ponca people, before the confiscation of our lands, maintained approximately 16 towns and an earthen fort which were centuries old, established throughout our lands, each populated by at least a thousand people. Although the buffalo hunt was an integral part of our culture and livelihood, we were also expert, proficient farmers, initially, our knowledge of agriculture and the land kept starving White settlers alive, and assisted the Mormons as they were being forced west. The Ponca also negotiated military alliances and economic trade with many Native nations encompassing and spanning the entirety of the North American continent. To this day, the Poncas and generally all Native peoples' knowledge of botanical roots and herbal medicines have enormously contributed to modern pharmacology. There was never a "nomadic band of Indians" perpetually fending off starvation, scurrying over barren land scrounging for berries, roots and grubs to eat. In the picture painted by American history and literature, it is easier to rationalize the taking of land from nomadic savages than it is to steal from sophisticated citizens of a prosperous nation.

Anthropologists and Ponca historians estimate that the

Ponca people came into contact with White people around the year 1700. Contemporary Ponca historians estimate that at this time the Ponca numbered approximately 25,000 people.

By 1876, brought on by outside forces, the Ponca people were severely weakened by starvation, warfare and disease. At this time, at the demand of the invading settlers/colonist, the U.S. government simply claimed the thousands of square miles of land which historically and rightfully belong to the Ponca people. The Christian-born concept of "Manifest Destiny," supported by a larger White population and a larger military, rationalized, excused and encouraged this tremendous theft of Ponca land.

By 1900, according to the records of the Department of Interior, there were less than a thousand Poncas left alive. This a population decimation of approximately 25 times, far greater than what happened to the Jews in World War II. (See VERSION, Page 11E)

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Burton Seymour Barnes

Barnes Had a Dream For New Community

Background — Burton Seymour Barnes was born on a farm in Michigan in 1844. Growing up in a large family of farmers, he observed his relatives regularly buying and selling sections of land in four Michigan counties. They would invest in land, subdivide it, and resell it, or trade it. In 1869, when he was 25, he played a role in the founding of Longmont, Colo. His knowledge of buying, dividing, and selling land helped him a great deal in the governance and daily management of the new community.

Barnes believed that towns should have guiding principles. He felt that land ownership not only gave security to each family, but also increased their desire to participate in the building of a community. A community could be built on trust if based on common ownership of water resources and utilities, the establishment of progressive education in schools, and active participation in civic affairs. A lifelong Republican, he believed that owning land was a key element in assuring that the community would thrive.

Barnes owned a furniture manufacturing plant in Adrian, Mich., for 23 years. He also served on the city council. The nationwide depression of 1892 caused him to sell the business, and he came south to Oklahoma Territory.

1893 — On March 3, Congress authorized the opening of the Cherokee Outlet to settlement. The government drew up specific areas and platted them as locations for towns. Like 100,000 other people, Barnes caught land run fever. Arkansas City, Kan., was one of the communities chosen by the government as an area for settlers to gather for a race to claim a 160-acre farm site. In June 1893, Barnes rode into the Cherokee Outlet, driving a surrey drawn by two fine black horses, looking for a suitable location to start a city. Barnes selected the site of Ponca City because of its ample water, a river crossing, and the near access to the railroad. The land designated by the government for one of the towns in Kay County was known as Cross, located northwest of Mr. Barnes' chosen area. He avoided the government platted townsite, mostly because he saw little chance there for profit.

Returning to Arkansas City, Barnes organized and became president of the Ponca Townsite Company. He sold chances on town lots and business lots for this "new town" that was

being created. The lot locations were to be determined later by a drawing.

Barnes must have been quite a salesman. When he and his partner, James W. Dalton, sold the anxious new settlers a chance for a lot in the new town of Ponca, they pulled off a great scam. He did not own the land, he hadn't even made the run yet, and he had no idea whether he would be lucky enough to stake a claim. Still, they sold 2,300 two-dollar certificates in the Ponca Townsite Company.

At noon, Sept. 16, 1893, a shot rang out and more than 100,000 determined settlers raced for 42,000 land claims. By sunset, there were many tent cities, endless lines at federal land offices and more losers than winners. The Cherokee Outlet Land Run was a tumultuous finale to what many have called the last American frontier.

Barnes made the run into the Cherokee Outlet on that eventful day, and staked his claim to the land that is now the southeast quarter of the city. Fifteen people claimed the same land, but Barnes bought or negotiated them all out. Appropriately, he named his division of the city "Bluffdale."

The Ponca City Democrat was printed in Arkansas City on Sept. 14 for distribution on Sept. 16. The newspaper's first office was in a tent at what is now First Street and Cleveland. It was barricaded with bales of hay to stop the stray bullets that flew fast and furious.



AT HIGH NOON on Sept. 16, 1893, a shot from a soldier's carbine signaled the start of The Greatest Run. Other soldiers stationed along the line repeated the signal and 100,000 or more dashed across the Kansas line. Another 75,000 streamed north from the southern boundary of the Strip. There were estimates that placed 30,000 to

50,000 at Arkansas City, 15,000 at Caldwell, 3,000 at Kiowa and at Hunnewell, and a lesser number on west where the Strip land was considered less desirable for agriculture. There were probably 25,000 at Orlando on the south, while roughly 10,000 raced from the vicinity of Stillwater and an equal number from Hennessey.

Sun, Dust Greeted Visitors On the Day of the Great Run

Editor's Note: The late Gareth Muchmore, longtime editor of The News, was a student of history who wrote a great many stories about the Ponca City area and the days of the Cherokee Strip Run. Here is an article he wrote in 1983 which was published in the Sept. 16 edition — the 90th anniversary of the Run.

By GARETH MUCHMORE
Write about the Great Run for years and pretty soon you think you were there. This is a product of those years of reading, of interviewing and of writing about the opening of 90 years ago. — Gareth Muchmore, Sept. 16, 1983

Dust. Sun and dust. And the powdery grass. Then a shot. And the pounding hooves. Tens of thousands of hooves. The scream of a man as his horse fell, a tiny scream in the thunder of sound as the horde of men and women and horses rushed south into a New Land.

This was Sept. 16, 1893. That was the opening of the Cherokee Strip to new white settlement. That was the Last Great Run for homes.

Does anyone survive who took a claim in the massive experiment 90 years ago? But many remember the Run and the harsh realities of pioneer life that followed.

On the eve of the birth of the New Land, 6,391,000 acres of virgin soil, 20,000 or more campfires blazed along the southern Kansas border. Nearly 100,000 waited, some for weeks, until noon of that hot and dusty day. An army of soldiers, pitifully small against the straining, eager throng, attempted to order, to hold back the impatient unwilling to await the signal.

First there were endless lines of men and women forming to register for the Run. Border towns of Kansas were packed with seething mobs for many days. Highways, river banks and the outskirts of villages were dotted with tents. From all over the nation, from all walks of life, the tempting dream of a home in the New Land drew men to the Cherokee Strip.

Absent was the man whose fanatic, almost mystic belief in

the future of Oklahoma helped lead to the opening of the Strip to settlement. Capt. David L. Payne, messianic leader of the Boomers, had died nearly nine years before the land he sought many times to claim finally was opened to settlement.

Payne's battle was against the government, against the Cherokee Indians who held title to the Strip, against the cattlemen whose herds fattened on the succulent grass.

But the Cherokee treaty, dating from 1828 when two groups of Cherokees were joined to make a single Oklahoma tribe, and were given the Strip as an outlet to the buffalo hunting grounds, was preserved. Settlement in the Cherokee Strip — formally known as the Cherokee Outlet — was forbidden.

As the buffalo vanished, the usefulness of the Strip dwindled. A few Cherokees traversed it seeking game to

the west. As white settlement spread into Nebraska and Kansas, other Indian tribes — the Osages, Kaws, Poncas, Otoe and Missouri, the Tonkawa who replaced the Nes Perce and the Pawnees were moved to areas in the Strip territory.

By 1865 Texas cattlemen seeking markets of the east were driving great herds of Texas cattle north across the Strip to railheads in Kansas. Abilene, Wichita, Caldwell, Hays, Dodge each had its day as rails penetrated west. Many stockmen stayed in the strip, leased land from the Cherokees, and developed huge domains which were bigger than some European countries. Business methods slowly replaced the carefree life and in 1883 a group of cattlemen meeting in Caldwell formed the Cherokee Strip Livestock Association.

(See RUN, Page 11E)

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Kansas City Star Reported On 'Race Day' in 1893

Editor's Note: Reproduced below in its entirety is the story of the Cherokee Strip opening clipped from the Kansas City Star of Sept. 16, 1893. This was first reproduced in The Ponca City News Sept. 16, 1955.

Today At Noon 278,000 Boomers Will Jump Into the Cherokee Strip. TO RACE FOR LAND. Last Night the Glow of Their Smoldering Campfires. Marked the Boundary Line From Whence They Start. ALL ARE REGISTERED

Some Will Start on Horseback, Some on Bicycles and Some On Foot — The Families to Bring Up the Rear — Closing Scenes Around the Registration Booths — A Kansas City Man Falls Dead While Standing in Line — A Texan Who Would Not Be Buncoed All Ready.

ARKANSAS CITY, KAN. September 15 — Saturday, September 16, 12 M., the hour long anticipated by the Cherokee boomers, is almost at hand. At noon tomorrow the Cherokee strip passes from the government to the homeseekers. At that hour the strip will be without a single white inhabitant. Two minutes afterward it will have a population of 78,000 and by nightfall it will have an equal number of members of the families of those who actually make the race for homes will be within the borders.

All Will Have Certificates
Thanks for the relief afforded by the interior department — a little late, it is true, but not too late to be of avail — there is now every prospect that all homeseekers and townlot holders gathered at the various registration booths will be made happy in the possession of certificates, without which they will not be permitted to enter the land, and if they escape the vigilance of the guards, will not be allowed to file on a claim at the land offices.

Yesterday, the demand for certificates became so urgent at Arkansas City, Caldwell, Orlando and Hennessey, as to convince the officers in charge that thousands of applicants could not be supplied with facilities then offered. A statement of the facts in the case in urgent telegrams to Secretary Hoke Smith of the interior department brought quick replies and authority to meet

the demand at whatever cost. When it became known that the various booths that additional facilities were to be provided, the despondency of the homeseekers was transformed into the utmost joy. New booths were opened at Arkansas City and Orlando and the forces of clerks were increased at Caldwell and Hennessey. All the booths will be kept open all night, if necessary and up to noon tomorrow, when the Strip will be opened for settlement.

Taking Places to Start
There has been a steady exodus today and tonight of certificate holding homeseekers from towns and camps to convenient places along the border, where an advantageous start can be made in tomorrow's great race. The farmers have about all secured certificates and they have loaded their prairie schooners and sailed away with their families. The speculators, townsiters and gamblers still remain in town and will go to their chosen county seats or townsites on tomorrow's railway trains. The Santa Fe will run six trains for the boomers on the Arkansas City line. Three will start from this side of the line and three from the Oklahoma side. On the Kiowa line one train will run in each direction. The Rock Island will run six boomer trains, three south from Caldwell, Kan., and three north from Hennessey, O.T. These trains will be run under the supervision of the interior department and will make a speed not exceeding 12 miles per hour.

These trains will be used mostly by townsiters. The farmers and men seeking homestead claims will make the race on horses, while some will even go on foot. A few will go on bicycles.

Seventy-Eight Thousand Will Race
The crowd that participates in tomorrow's race far outnumbered that which raced into Oklahoma. The entries for tomorrow's race are now established at 78,000. Twenty-five thousand will go in from Arkansas City and vicinity, 15,000 from Caldwell, 3,000 from Kiowa, 3,000 from Hunnewell, 11,000 from Orlando, 9,000 from Stillwater and 5,000 from other places. Half of the

homeseekers, it is estimated, have families and the total population of the strip tomorrow night will doubtless be 150,000. Oklahoma territory, according to the census of 1890, had a population of only 61,834. Last year the enumeration, made by a special act of Congress, showed a population of 133,100. In one day, therefore, the people will settle upon the Cherokee strip, which as been attached to the Oklahoma territory, will more than double the territory's population.

Closing Up for Registration
The registration progressed rapidly during the day at the booths in town and on the border. The line on the border decreased rapidly during the day and at nightfall only about 1,500 awaited the opportunity to register. The booths in town are besieged all day. Double lines were formed, each containing about 5,000 people. The lines were divided into squads of 12 men each and two squads were admitted at a time. In this manner they turned out rapidly. At 6 o'clock, 8,200 certificates had been issued, but the lines still contained fully an equal number of men. The booths will be kept open all night and all applicants will be served.

The run on the booth down on the border was much less severe. Only 5,800 people had appeared for registration at 6 o'clock. Many who had passed two or three days waiting in line hurried to town when it became known that a new booth was to open there, thus greatly relieving the pressure. At 6 o'clock, 1,500 people were still in line but only a few newcomers were joining its ranks and a will be enabled to procure the much coveted and highly priced certificates.

From the Towns to the Line
There is as great a desire to get out of town as there was a week ago to get into town. Before noon tomorrow all arrangements and preparations for the great race must be completed and the time is short.

An advantageous place whence to start must be selected, and many of the best places along the line are already occupied by those who obtained certificates early in the week.

(See REPORT, Page 11E)



IN THE WINDSWEEP prairies of early Oklahoma, sod houses provided shelter for settler families where wood was in short supply. Many "sod busters" lived in dirt homes until more substantial structures could be built.

Many Ways To Make Run As Thousands Entered

1893 — At the opening of the Cherokee Outlet on Sept. 16, not all of the home seekers rode horses or were in wagons. The Santa Fe railroad carried thousands of home seekers into the assigned areas. Stopped at the crossing, the engines puffed impatiently as the engineers awaited the signal shot at noon for the land run to begin.

Men and women were on top of the cars, up on the engine tender and coal car, hanging on to platforms and sticking their heads out the windows, all yelling like mad. The trains moved no faster than a horse can run, and homesteaders dropped off the cars at various intervals along the route to seek their claims.

Once B.S. Barnes secured the land he needed, he then carried out his plans to organize the new city.

With the money raised by the Ponca Townsite Company, he hired surveyors to lay out the town, staking the four corners of each city lot. The prospective city was located on four separate quarter sections of land, each of which had been homesteaded as a farm.

Five days after the run, the land survey was finished. A drawing for lots was then organized.

A platform was erected on what had become the main street, and two young girls stood on the platform, each holding a box. One box held the names of the certificate holders, the other held the legal descriptions of each available lot.

A residential lot cost one dollar, a business lot was two dollars. As the girls each drew a card, secretaries recorded the certificate owners' names and lot selections in large bound books. It took two days to complete the drawings, and then, Ponca City became the only city in the 1893 Cherokee Strip Land Run to be founded by a lottery.

The night after the drawing, a mass meeting was held to elect provisional officers and Barnes was elected mayor. Through his efforts and leadership, the city gained supremacy in its rivalry with the neighboring town, Cross.

The remaining townsite money was used to drill a water well in the business area, grade all the streets, build crosswalks, erect coal oil street lights, and employ a city marshal.

The city was eventually incorporated on Dec. 19, 1893, three months after the run, and the first official city election was held. Barnes was again elected mayor. According to the Ponca City Democrat, "Barnes was elected Chairman of the Board of Trustees, which virtually means Mayor."

By the first week in October, Ponca City had organized the Board of Trade, forerunner to the Chamber of Commerce.

Memberships were six dollars a year, payable monthly, giving the organization an annual budget of \$2,000 to advertise the city and promote its welfare.

It was largely through the efforts of the Board of Trade that the first schoolhouse was opened, Nov. 16, 1893, just two months after the run.

It was a two-room building with a movable partition, 2,050 square feet, and was built at a cost of \$1,400.

The Board of Trade arranged a big celebration to dedicate the schoolhouse. There were "athletic sports,"

horse races, Indian war dances and barbecue, concluding with a grand ball and banquet in the evening.

1893 — Many people who made the famous land run became famous in their own right as they helped build Ponca City.

J.W. Lynch staked his land claim on the southwest quarter of what would become Ponca City.

Afterwards, he went back to his native Texas to settle some business affairs. When he returned to Ponca a few weeks later, Lynch discovered his claim had been laid off into town lots that were dotted with tents, houses, and even some business buildings.

Instead of opposing those who had settled on his claim, Lynch set about to complete his title to the land and then transferred the whole quarter section of the claim to the Ponca City Land and Development Company to be deeded to the settlers at the bare costs of securing titles to their lots. Jim Lynch named his section of deeded land "Lynchville."

William H. Vanselow came from Kansas, and originally staked a claim near Enid, but sold it to his brother Tom for a horse.

On his way back to Kansas, he found a claim south of Blackwell, liked it and bought it. His first year, he planted thirty acres of onions while others were mostly planting corn. He made very good profits, selling his onions all over the area. Bill and his wife, Viola, had four children: Beulah, Grace, Kay (named after Kay County), and Okla, born in 1907, the year Oklahoma became a state.

Robert Maxwell and Lee McCord started a small flourmill in 1893.

This mill was one of the main anchors of early-day Ponca City. The original facility consisted of a small wooden shanty with minimum equipment and only five employees. Upon its

completion, a celebration was held for the townspeople. A long rope was tied to the whistle atop the mill, and the citizens lined up to take turns blowing the whistle. The first sack of flour was ground on April 4, 1894, and that night, the merchants of Ponca City held a banquet in honor of the mill owners. The first sack of flour was put up for auction and was purchased by Mayor B.S. Barnes for \$150.

Oscar F. Keck left his wife in Colorado and came to Arkansas City for the land run. He boarded a train in Arkansas City, and jumped off at the present site of Ponca City while the train was traveling 25 miles per hour. He soon staked his claim and, since there was no one else around, Keck held the title of "Ponca City's first citizen." When the Ponca Townsite Company held the drawing for city lots, Oscar Keck drew the lot now known as 210 North Sixth Street.

He built a small two-room structure, the first house built in town.

Keck opened a carpenter shop in a tent and was soon hired by the Townsite Company to build a school building. The early days in Ponca City were very wild and dangerous.

Cowboys would get drunk and start shooting up the town. When they rode past Keck's "tent shop," the workmen had to hide under their work tables to protect themselves from the flying bullets.

Richard Hudson came to the opening of the Cherokee Outlet with a group of citizens from Michigan. After the run, he received a business lot and two town lots.

He opened the Midway Saloon, which apparently did a thriving business.

Located on the corner of Third Street and Grand Avenue, it was referred to as a "Lallapoloosa" style of architecture. Hudson built it himself out of tropical plants and pitch pine.



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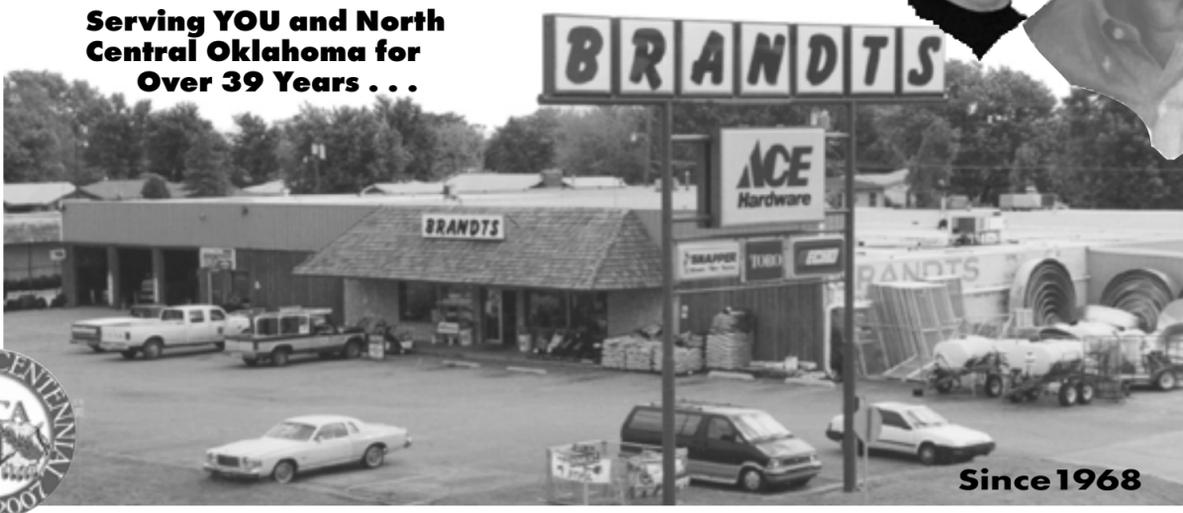
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Longtime Publisher Witnessed Run as a Youth

Editor's Note: Clyde E. Muchmore was the publisher of *The Ponca City News* from 1919 until 1959. His eyewitness account of the Cherokee Strip Run is reprinted from the 1939 Progress Edition, only the third major supplement published by *The News*, celebrating the 46th anniversary of The Run.

By **CLYDE E. MUCHMORE**
News Publisher, 1919-1959

For weeks men and women along the Kansas border had been watching preparations, or making preparations themselves, for a great adventure. It was the opening of the Cherokee Strip, when the promised land of Oklahoma would be available to citizens for homesteading. Times had been hard, work scarce and wages low. Any change that promised improvement was doubly welcome.

The movement from older states to the Oklahoma line began early. By the first of September, 1893, towns were already filled. But still they came, individuals and whole families, by train and by wagon, buckboard and cart, came with their horses, their cattle, their chickens and the inevitable dog, household goods crowded into wagons, farm implements tied along side, came to take up residence in a new land and there to pioneer as their fathers and forefathers had pioneered during the past hundred years in the western movement that

had peopled a continent. The spectacular manner of passing out claims by a "run" appealed to some, disgusted others. Quite a number had participated in the run of '89 and had returned to Kansas without a claim. They were going to try again and feeling that they knew the ropes, were making elaborate preparations.

Experience Had Benefits
Those who had lived along the border knew the Strip. They had on numerous occasions passed through it, hunted there, perhaps herded cattle, or made hay in the summer and cut posts in the winter. They knew where the choice claims lay, had located surveyor's corners, could distinguish school land from that which was open to settlement and thus were proof against mistakes, which later proved to be common. They purchased and trained fast horses, prepared to "go light," stake their claims and then return for equipment. Later developments proved that careful preparations usually meant a claim.

All summer long blue-coated soldiers patrolled the border. They were under orders to keep out all persons and as the hour approached they tried to enforce orders strictly. Frequently these soldiers would visit our little town of Kiowa, just a mile and a half from the border, and there they

enjoyed along with cowboys and others the entertainment provided by eight saloons. It was not unusual to see a soldier or a cowboy indulge in the harmless pastime of firing a few rounds into the air as they dashed out of town, and a few had difficulty sitting on their horses.

Father had used his homestead right but a friend, who had no horses, wanted him to make the run with him. Consequently early in July a hunt was planned down into the Strip.

The direct purpose was to locate a particular claim and discover its corners. The hunt was, however, not neglected.

Already the grass was dry from the excessive heat of another drought year. Since it had not been pastured, buffalo grass stood several inches high, making good cover for numerous prairie chicken and quail. Even on the first day the kill was sufficient for our needs. Along toward evening we camped at a well-known spring and there shot a lingering duck.

We drove on south for several days, finally arriving at the timbered Cimarron river, which to our young eyes appeared to be a mile wide, but it wasn't even an inch deep. There was no water in the river as far as one could see. It was necessary to dig down in the sand to find enough water for the horses.

Across the river a beautiful sight, one that we had anticipated with unusual pleasure, greeted our eyes. It was our first view of mountains, for we had lived most of our life on the plains of western Kansas. There were the "Glossy" or Glass mountains, a low line of hills that shimmered and sparkled in the burning sun.

A bluish haze hung about them, making it possible for childish imagination to people them with all sorts of animals and Indians. Because of the lack of water, father and his friend decided not to go farther. This was a bitter disappointment.

The disappointment, however, had been somewhat relieved during the morning by an exciting event. This friend, armed with a shotgun, had killed a young deer. The dressing of the deer and packing some of the meat down in salt in a large crockery jar proved most interesting.

Not during the whole trip, which lasted about two weeks, do we recall seeing a single cloud that suggested rain. Daily the sun beat down, drying up creek and spring and parching vegetation. We car-

ried a small amount of water for man and beast and found it difficult to make watering places in a day's drive. Father and his friend were glad that they had turned back, for there were tales of much suffering from lack of water. The heat was too intense to make that kind of travel pleasant and the horses showed the effects of rough trails, short water rations, and parched grass for food. But game, such as quails, prairie chicken and plover, remained plentiful. We recall getting home with a good supply of salt pork, taken along, but which had not been needed.

The July hunt but whetted our appetite for more excitement. We watched local citizens in their preparations, eyed closely all comers and their outfits. Whenever a new comer appeared on vacant ground about the city, we managed to go near enough to see what he had. Outfits were much the same, although varied according to the owner's ability to provide for his needs. Many carried slogans painted on the sides of wagon covers. The most popular was "Oklahoma or Bust."

Frequently on the opposite side were the words, "In God We Trust."

August Saw Blistering Heat
All during August covered wagons moved in along highways. The wind was blistering hot, sweeping in across parched prairies. Frequently a black smoke cloud accompanied the wind, as soldiers burned haystacks.

Kansans couldn't resist the temptation to slip down into the Strip and mow the unpatented grass lands.

Orders to keep all persons out were now being more strictly enforced and soldiers burned haystacks were they found them, took posts from intrepid Kansans who slipped down to the wooded hills of Oklahoma to cut them and turned back those who might have become Sooners.

The coming of September failed to bring the much needed rain.

The sun continued to beat down and the dust became thicker, as those preparing to make the run powdered the roads with constant travel. But even the heat could not check suppressed excitement.

(See WITNESS, Page 10E)

Businesses, Churches Sprang Up in Ponca City

1894 — Population was 2,000.

Two churches were built, the Presbyterian and the Methodist.

The first electric lights in the Cherokee Strip were turned on in Ponca City.

By the first anniversary of the town, three schools had been built.

A steam flour mill was operating and milling 100 barrels per day.

A contract had been let for the water works.

The early citizens of Ponca City made every effort to convince Santa Fe to build a station at Ponca City, but the railroad officials refused. There was already a depot in Cross and that's where the train stopped. Rivalry between Ponca City and Cross was intense and many hard feelings developed. The citizens of Cross were rude to the people from Ponca City when they went there to board the trains and many altercations resulted. Every trick known was used to persuade the railroad officials to change their minds. With the help of some men of the territorial legislature, Santa Fe finally relented and, in September 1894, the railroad authorized the rails to be cut, a spur put in and a boxcar depot placed just south of the Grand Avenue railroad crossing on the east side of the tracks.

There is a story that the first boxcar station in Ponca City was "obtained" one dark night by some civic boosters who pulled it from Cross with their horses, and set it next to the tracks.

Everyone in town prepared to celebrate the first day that the train stopped in Ponca. Small cards were printed with

the proud boast: "The trains stop here just the same as at Chicago. Come and see us when you can." As souvenirs for the men on the train, a complimentary cigar was attached to the card, and the ladies received a bouquet of wildflowers, with the card. Two boys and two girls met the first train and handed out the souvenirs to the passengers. The significance of this event was so unusual that the Associated Press published it in newspapers all over the United States.

The closest post office was in Cross, and the citizens had to pay a carrier to deliver the mail from Cross to Ponca City. The people of Ponca City realized that they needed their own Post Office, not only so they could receive their mail earlier, but also because of the economic impact. Some citizens did travel to Cross for their mail, and would buy their groceries and supplies while they were there.

One of the main stumbling blocks was the name: Ponca City. The Indian agency south of town had a post office known as Ponca Post Office. The U.S. Government preferred the use of a prefix when any part of the name was already an existing office. So the Ponca City Board of Trade decided to apply for a post office to be called New Ponca Post Office. A petition with over 500 names was carried to Washington, D.C. Citizens learned of the approval and gathered downtown for an impromptu celebration. The band played and "every man in town" started shooting off his gun. Every store in town piled boxes in the middle of Grand Avenue to create a blaze of glory.

The Ponca City Courier reported on the successful venture. "If the friends or the enemies of Ponca City ... beg pardon, New Ponca ... think she is sleeping, they are mistaken. She is right up and coming and will win the balance of her fight just as certainly as she has won the preliminary skirmish. As to the name, while the post office will be New Ponca, the town will doubtless continue to be known as Ponca City and mail addressed in that way will reach its destination just as well."

1895 — The first city general election was held, pitting B.S. Barnes against John Richard Hudson. Hudson was chairman of the local Democratic Party. The "Town Party" (B.S. Barnes et al) developed a split that resulted in most of the Democratic ticket being elected, including Hudson for mayor.

He won his seat by one vote that was supposedly cast by a regular bar customer at Hudson's Midway Saloon.

It is not clear whether Hudson was elected to the council by the public, and then voted mayor by members of the council, or whether the public voted him in as mayor. Nonetheless, his shenanigans while he was mayor, duly reported in the local newspapers, while not illegal, were so embarrassing to the city leaders that his name is left off the "official" lists.

Hudson's position as mayor was an empty honor. He had nothing to do, only to run his "booze emporium" and occasionally call for the sheriff's force in Newkirk to "come down here and read the riot act to untamed galoots who were shooting up the town."



OTOE CHIEFS and tribal women pose for the camera in approximately 1876 in this photograph provided originally by Bill Cleghorn. The Otoes were among the several tribes moved to the Cherokee Outlet prior to the opening for White settlement.

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Buildings Sprout Up in Early Days

1895 — Dan, Ed, and John Donahoe purchased the flourmill at a sheriff's sale. The Donahoes added new buildings, new grain elevators, and new equipment to the mill, making it one of the finest of its kind in the area.

Mayor B.S. Barnes purchased the large L-shaped Midland hotel in the west part of Cross and moved it to the northeast corner of Fourth and Grand in Ponca City. This helped start the move of Cross citizens into "Peerless Ponca." Barnes and Dave Donelson organized a new business. As moving contractors, they moved houses from Cross to Ponca City. At the end of a month, the prairie was dotted with houses moving south, and at the end of six months, nearly all of the business buildings and residences had moved into Ponca City.

There was a certain amount of social life in early Ponca City. The Bois D'Arc Dancing Club was in the Chase Opera House, which was on the second floor of a grocery store downtown. Dr. Fred Sparks was the dancing master and W.E. Scott, designated as chief musician, played the violin.

John Calloway built a livery stable at the corner of Second Street and Central, and Owen and Art Stacy constructed a blacksmith shop on the opposite corner. The Stacy building had forges in the front and a wheel repair shop in the back. The back end, which had a dirt floor and was partitioned off from the main shop, was a favorite gathering place for Indians. The second story became a woodwork and paint shop.

A water well was dug on Grand Avenue and hitch racks were placed up and down the street.

There was not much law in town. Many cattlemen, big ranchers, tough cowhands, horse thieves, and bandits came into town to patronize the many barrooms and gambling houses.

1896 — The Northern Oklahoma Telephone Company opened for business in Ponca City with thirty customers and a 100-phone capacity.

Eugene Wetzel had a grain and feed business in Cross, at what is now Union and Comanche. He moved his business into Ponca City from Cross.

A new limestone school was built on Grand Avenue between Sixth and Seventh Streets.

The Bachelor Girls Club was one of the earliest social organizations. They met every two weeks in members' homes. Their first social event was a ball given in a downtown hall.

The St. Louis Dispatch reported "The real distinguishing feature of Ponca City, its greatest pride and most cherished institution, is the Bachelor Girls Club, made up of dashing and popular young society girls which sets the town people a merry pace in the social whirl."

1897 — The original Arcade Hotel was a two-and-a-half-story frame structure located in the township of Cross. It was relocated to Ponca City, to the southwest corner of Grand Avenue and First Street. The 25-room hotel was owned by Mrs. Annie Rhodes and was first known as the Rhodes House. It became the grand lodge of a soon-to-be booming oil town.

Soldani Heads for Oklahoma

1898 — Anthony Godencious (Godance) Soldani and his wife, Amelia Catherine, came to Ponca City. He and his brother, Sylvester, had come to Indian Territory from Kansas City in 1872, and settled on the Osage Reservation. They were engaged in farming and ranching and owned over 14,000 acres. In 1885, they married the Fronkier sisters who were members of the Kaw Indian Tribe. Godance and his wife, Amelia Catherine, moved to Ponca City in 1898, and built a large red brick house at Central and Ninth Street, where they raised ten children.

1899 — Dan Donahoe bought out his brothers' shares of the flourmill and became the sole owner. The tops of the grain elevators were lined with lights that could be seen as a landmark and a "lamp in the window" to Poncans returning home. The tall elevators also bore the legend "Ponca City — the Best Place in the World."

On September 19, the headline read "Ponca City Becomes First Class City." A special election was held, authorized by proclamation of W.M. Jenkins, then acting governor-secretary of the Territory of Oklahoma. At this election, the following

officers were elected, one of each: Mayor, Police Judge, City Marshal, Street Commissioner, City Attorney, City Clerk, City Treasurer, and School Board Treasurer. There were also eight Ward City Councilmen, two from each of the four wards. One was elected from each ward for one year, and one from each ward for two years.

In the mayoral election of 1899, there was a nominating convention. H.B. Owen was made chairman of the convention and L.F. Michael and W.S. Thomas, secretaries. An informal ballot listed four candidates for mayor: Charles DeRoberts, W.J. Sullivan, B.S. Barnes and H.C.R. Brodboll. Barnes and Brodboll withdrew their candidacy in favor of DeRoberts, who was nominated on the first formal ballot. About 350 voters were present at the convention. The Ponca City Courier front page story cited: "We hope to see every voter in the city turn out and vote, not that his vote is needed, but to make a showing of your appreciation of the good men nominated for the various offices. Now for Ponca City, the only first-class city in Kay County, put your shoulder to the wheel and push. Let's double our population in the coming year. We can do it. Will you assist?" Charles DeRoberts was elected mayor and served until 1901.

1900 — It was decided to build a city hall and \$4000 was appropriated. The money came from saloon licenses and fines that had been collected for drunkenness. The City Hall stood at the southeast corner of Fifth Street and Grand Avenue. Built of red brick with limestone trim, the building was quite imposing in a city whose business district included a few other one-story brick buildings and many false front frame structures.

In June, a fire destroyed the entire north side of Grand Avenue between Second and Third Streets, leveling twelve buildings and fifteen businesses. By October, every building in this block had been rebuilt with brick. Pabst Brewing Company, owner of one of the burned buildings, donated two hose carts with six-foot wheels to the city fire department.

Ponca City Oil and Gas Company was organized, and Mayor DeRoberts became an officer in the company.

Bittersweet Garden Club

Bittersweet Garden Club members voted to purchase five redbud trees in 1957 to assist the garden council with the redbud lane project in the North Woodlands Park.

Club officers in 1957 were Mrs. Frederick Smith, president; Mrs. J.F. Pace, vice president; Mrs. Ella Cobb, secretary; Miss Marie O'Neill, treasurer; and Mrs. G.G. Martin, parliamentarian.

In 1978 Wilma Myers hosted a meeting of the Bittersweet Garden Club. Dried and silk floral arrangements were created and then taken to local nursing homes.



PONCA CITY FLOURING MILL.
First mill in the Cherokee Strip.

THE PONCA CITY Flouring Mill was the first mill built in the Cherokee outlet. This photo was taken in the late 1890s. (News File Photo)

Schools Important to Growth

1901 — The original frame schoolhouse was cut in half. The front part was moved to the "new territory" in the northwest part of town that had just been taken into the school district. The rear half was moved to the 600 block on South Sixth Street for Negro children. J.W. Lynch gave one of the lots for that building and the school board paid \$50 for the other lot.

James Hutchison was elected mayor. He and his family had made the 1889 land run into Guthrie, and relocated to Ponca City in 1896. A baker by trade, he was very active in the community and identified with its growth and prosperity.

Ponca City's population totaled 2,500. The first Electric Light Plant opened. It was called a direct current system, and was owned by Mr. Catron.

Western Union telegraph came to Ponca City.

Citizens voted \$10,000 in bonds to improve the water system.

Three blocks of old dirt sidewalks on Grand Avenue were replaced with 12-foot wide sidewalks of stone, brick and cement. Stone street crossings were also added downtown.

Charles F. Calkins built a three story brick building at the corner of First Street and Grand Avenue to house his store. In the summer, the Calkins Mercantile would open its doors each morning between 5:00 and 6:00 so customers could shop in the cool of the day. Many arrived in wagons from towns as far away as Pawnee, Hominy, and Tonkawa.

George H. Brett built a fine home at 305 S. Fifth Street. It extended from East Oklahoma to East Walnut Avenues, and was the talk of the town. Mr. Brett was a very industrious merchant and rancher. He owned implement stores and harness shops in Ponca City and Newkirk, plus three cattle ranches in Osage and Kay Counties.

1902 — William Jenkins established the town of Kaw, Okla. It was located east of Ponca City, near the Kay-Osage county line on the banks of the Arkansas River. The city was named for the Kanza Indians, called Kaw by the local people.

The Farmers National Bank opened.

1903 — Dr. N.M. Baskett was elected mayor. Baskett was a

Democrat, and he was definitely supported by the Democrat newspaper, the Ponca City Democrat. Baskett had moved to Ponca City from Missouri, where he had served in the state senate. He was a partner in the firm of Rawlings and Co., druggists. He was identified as a "substantial businessman with a reputation above reproach." His Republican opponent was J.J. McGraw, a pioneer, cashier of the Farmers National Bank, and community leader, who was definitely supported by the Republican newspaper, the Ponca City Courier.

Women were allowed to vote for members of the school board. The Ponca City Democrat commented: "As these are important offices, the ladies should exercise the right of franchise and help select the best men to look after our schools. The Democrats present good men in the different wards for these places and

they should receive the support of the ladies."

Charles H. Ruby, Ponca City grocer, organized the Ponca City Oil, Gas, and Mineral Company and sold stock to local farmers and townspeople.

An iron fence was placed around the city building and the building was painted.

Local taxes were raised from 20 to 22 mills.

Col. George Miller died and the 101 Ranch was taken over by his three sons. Each son had a specialty that made the ranch pay off. Joe, the oldest, was an expert in grains and plants. The middle son, Zack, was a cowman. The third son, George, was a financial wizard.

The Vansalous family moved into their new home on the Big V Ranch, just west of the 101 Ranch. The three-story house had 20 rooms, which included a lobby, offices, four bedrooms, two indoor bathrooms, and two apartments.

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20th Century Club Organized in 1904

1904 — Mrs. George Brett and Mrs. F.D. Foutz invited 34 women to create a study club. The object of the club was intellectual improvement and a civic betterment, and they named it the "Twentieth Century Club." Their first project was to get the city park in condition for public use. The ladies received permission from the City Council to install seats and lunch tables, lights and water, along with a pavilion for band concerts.

The women of the Twentieth Century Club also organized a book exchange in back of the HCR Brodboll Insurance Company on Grand Avenue, thus beginning the city's first public library, consisting of 50 volumes. The clubwomen were the volunteer librarians.

J.W. Wiker leased the Rhodes House, later known as the Arcade Hotel, on the southwest corner of Grand Avenue and First Street. Wiker had previously been a manager for the famous "Harvey Houses." The hotel employed nine waitresses, four maids, three cooks, two dishwashers, a baker and a silver girl. The waitresses dressed in "Harvey House" style, with white starched pinafores, black long-sleeved sateen blouses, black shoes and stockings, and white headbands.

Ponca City's population was 2,000.

1905 — Col. Joe Miller started the 101 Ranch Wild West Show, an expansion of the yearly rodeos that featured roping, riding, bulldogging, Indian dancers, trick roping, riding and shooting. Many animals were featured in the show, including buffalo, elephants, camels, ostriches and elk. There were also monkeys, coyotes, and several bears.

The Miller Brothers presented an exhibition round-up for the National Editorial Association at the 101 Ranch. The group was holding its national convention in Guthrie. The crowd thrilled to the demonstration of cowboys recreating real life ranch work, from bronc riding and roping. Tom Mix appeared for the first time as a roper and rider. Most

of the people of Ponca City turned out to help feed and entertain the 60,000 visitors who arrived at the ranch in 30 special trains.

Charles H. Ruby discovered natural gas in Ponca City, and founded the town's first gas company, the Ponca City Oil, Gas and Mineral Company. Gas mains were laid throughout the city from the wells northeast of town so that the gas could be turned into commercial use. Initial acceptance was slow; many believed the gas was dangerous. There was also some controversy regarding gas rates. The gas company wanted 25 cents per thousand feet, while the city wished to pay 10 cents per thousand feet. A compromise of 18 cents was reached.

The two mayoral candidates in 1905 were R.P. Baughman, Democrat, and James Hutchison, Republican. Hutchison had served as mayor from 1901 to 1903. In the campaign for mayor, the partisan local newspapers each carried their respective candidate's banner, and used various ingenious strategies to editorialize.

The Ponca City Democrat wrote, "Mr. Baughman is young, ambitious, energetic and public spirited. He is interested in the future growth and development of our city. He is competent in every way to fill the position...He is progressive, broad-minded and business like and will be a mayor that every citizen will feel proud of regardless of politics." The Democrat had also printed some "mud slinging" allegations about Mr. Hutchison and his extravagance with the city treasury when he was mayor.

The Ponca City Courier wrote, "Now, we all live here, help pay the taxes that maintain the city and are entitled to know the true facts in the case, so let us for our own benefit and future guidance compare the two administrations, see what has been accomplished and to whom credit is due."

R.P. Baughman was elected. During his time as mayor, he was also the manager of the local Long-Bell Lumber yard.



THE 101 RANCH was known worldwide during its heyday. Celebrities from around the world flocked to the regal "White House," headquarters for the huge ranch. The 101 was not only a cattle ranch, but a diversified farming operation, movie production site, home for the traveling Wild West show, location of new Oklahoma oil fields and the center of cultural activities for the area.

Miller Brothers Take Show on the Road For First Time in Year Before Statehood

1906 — Mayor Baughman resigned his position as mayor. Until an election could be held to fill the vacancy, F.W. Wallace, president of the city council, was acting mayor. In March, the Democrats nominated Mr. Wallace as their candidate for mayor. His opponent was James S. Hutchins. In the April election, Mr. Hutchins was elected. Jim was always a Ponca City booster. He was one of the enthusiasts who raised the money for Ponca City's first schoolhouse, and he served on the school board. He was also instrumental in organizing the first Chamber of Commerce, known then as the Commercial Club, and served as its President.

The Miller brothers took the 101 Wild West Show on the road for the first time. Over the years, many famous people performed or were associated with the show. Among them were Buffalo Bill Cody, Tom Mix, Hoot Gibson, Lucille Mulhall and Bill Pickett, the black cowboy who invented bull dogging as a rodeo event. The show grew to 1,700 performers including a troupe of 300 Indians. Every ten days, while the show was on the road, 30,000 pounds of meat, fruit and vegetables produced at the 101 Ranch were shipped out of Ponca City in refrigerated rail cars to the people in the show.

Crankphones were replaced by a battery line, so all one had to do to reach the operator was to pick up the phone. There were two competing phone companies, so if you wanted to talk with everyone in town who had a phone, you had to subscribe to both companies.

On June 16, President Theodore Roosevelt signed the Oklahoma Enabling Act, which provided for the creation of a single state from the "Twin Territories." This act called for a convention in Guthrie to draft a constitution for the proposed state. The act also required that a population census be taken.

1907 — In the mayoral election, the Democrats and Republicans held a "harmonious convention" and joined together to unanimously nominate a candidate. City political leaders were praised for joining hands in the effort to do away with political strife. James Hutchison was the overwhelming, and only, choice for mayor. It required considerable persuasion to get him to consent to accept the nomination, but he finally yielded to the popular demand.

Mayor Hutchison issued a proclamation, urging the citizens to clear their premises of accumulations of rubbish and filth, and cart it from the city

to be properly disposed of, "to the end that our civic pride may be justified and that the stranger within our gates may realize in truth the contention of a greater and better Ponca City. Mindfully of the human tendency of forgetfulness, let me urge that no man be a laggard, but with faith and hope to go about his duty cheerfully and quickly."

The city passed a sewer bond. The decision was made to have the brick and tiling made locally.

Bill Vanselous, owner of the Big V Ranch, purchased an entire herd of 500 mules in San Angelo, Texas. They were range mules, wild and unbroken, but regarded as "splendid specimens and desired by mule dealers everywhere." He brought them back to the ranch and branded them on both jaws with a small "V". He built a special barn for the animals in which to break them and fatten them up, then he shipped them to St. Louis in carload lots. Vanselous became the best-known mule dealer in the country.

President Theodore Roosevelt invited the Miller brothers to participate in the Jamestown Exposition in Norfolk, Va. It was so successful that they organized their first regular traveling show and began playing all over the United States.

At the Republican state convention in August, Frank Frantz was nominated as the Republican candidate for

governor of the new state of Oklahoma. When the vote was put to suspend the rules and nominate Frantz by acclamation, every one of the 1,500 delegates stood in their seats and, waving hats above their heads, shouted aye for five minutes.

On Saturday, Nov. 16, 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt signed a proclamation establishing Oklahoma as the 46th state of the United States. This proclamation officially joined the "Twin Territories" — Indian Territory and Oklahoma territory — into a brand new state. The population census identified that the Indian Territory population was 681,115 and the Oklahoma Territory population was 733,062.

Included in the new constitution was an amendment that would prohibit the sale of alcohol within the new state. The amendment forced all 18 of Ponca City's saloons to close.

The Oklahoma Seal was the state's first emblem, as specified in the 1907 Constitution. It was designed by Gabe E. Parker, who was one-eighth Choctaw and served as federal superintendent of the Five Civilized Tribes. He also chaired the Constitution Convention. The seal is circular, with a field of 45 small stars, representing the other states. In the center is a large, five-pointed star. Each point of the star contains an image from the seal of one of the five tribes. Around the seal

is a band bearing the words GREAT SEAL OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA, 1907.

"Kay county is entitled to two representatives in the state legislature and the Democrats have nominated as their candidates Logan Hawkins of Tonkawa and Q.T. Brown of Braman. These gentlemen are both young men possessed with ability to properly represent us at the coming session of the legislature, and as the legislature is sure to be Democratic, it behooves Kay county, if we expect any favors in the line of one of the public state buildings or otherwise, to send Democrats down to represent us, because they will have some influence with the Democratic majority. And right here is where Ponca City wants to put in her bid for the state penitentiary." Excerpt from an editorial column in the Ponca City Democrat, Oct. 1907.

"The next legislature of Oklahoma will locate the public buildings in the new state. Ponca City wants to speak up now and ask for the state penitentiary. We have the building stone right at our door, we have natural gas for heating the building which would be a great saving in fuel, we have an inexhaustible supply of pure water and we could supply a few of the inmates if necessary, to help the cause along." Excerpt from an editorial column in the Ponca City Democrat, November 1907.



THIS IMPRESSIVE building located at Fifth and Grand served as the City Hall in Ponca City from the 1890s until approximately 1921. (News File Photo)

Marland, Wife Make First Home in Hotel

1908 — E.W. Marland and his wife, moved to Ponca City from Pennsylvania. Their first residence was a three-room apartment in the Arcade Hotel. Marland had no money, so the hotel manager, Mr. Wiker, extended him credit. A relative of Marland introduced him to the Miller Brothers. When Marland visited their ranch, the Millers gave him a tour of the area. When E.W. saw the old Ponca Indian cemetery on a hilltop, he was convinced that it was a perfect geological dome that could produce oil.

The first sewers in Ponca City were laid.

The Miller Brothers took their rodeo show on the road throughout Oklahoma and the surrounding states.

Ponca City's population was 2,529.

Lester Cann built a nine-room frame house at the edge of town at Fourteenth Street and Grand Avenue. The residence was a showplace, reminiscent of a 19th century farm home.

Louis Barnes, son of Ponca City's founder, B.S. Barnes, owned a grocery store in the 300 block on East Grand. A representative of Kansas City

Oil Refinery visited Barnes and offered to sell him a carload of coal oil ... 120 barrels, 50 gallons each. It was inspected and stamped, and would only cost nine cents a gallon, half the standard price. Barnes agreed to buy it, even though 6,000 gallons was more oil than he would ordinarily sell in two years. The oil was to arrive on a Thursday, which was the day both weekly newspapers were printed. Barnes ran a half page ad in each paper, proclaiming "Louie Barnes cuts prices of coal oil, Saturday, to 10 cents a gallon. Bring your jugs, bring your kegs, bring your cans, bring anything that will hold coal oil. And buy all you want for 10 cents a gallon." The farmers came to town with every type of container imaginable. That Saturday was the biggest trade day Barnes ever had. He sold 4,000 gallons of coal oil, and had enough left to supply his store for a year.

1909 — E.W. Marland and the Miller Brothers organized the 101 Ranch Oil Company.

William McFadden met Marland in Hot Springs, Ark., and came to the 101 Ranch for his health.

(See MARLAND, Page 11E)



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MRS. W.T. OATES, a member of Twentieth Century Club, wrote a letter to Andrew Carnegie, requesting a grant for a new library. Carnegie delivered a check for \$6,500. The new public library was built on the southwest corner of Fifth Street and Grand Avenue, at a cost of \$6,500, exactly the amount of the Carnegie Library Fund grant. It opened with 840 books, all of which were gifts. (News File Photo)

1912 Tornado Destroyed 161 Homes Plus Racetrack

1912 — Brett Implement was the largest business of its kind in northern Oklahoma. In addition to a full line of farming and ranching supplies, they also sold Studebaker buggies and Buick automobiles.

In April, a tornado (known then as a cyclone) damaged 161 homes and destroyed a fairground and racetrack on the west side of the city.

E.W. Marland began construction on the first refinery to be built in Ponca City, located at the south end of First Street. He formed the Marland Refining Company, absorbing the original 101 Ranch Oil Company. Marland had at least 20 wells producing oil. He was drilling in the Ponca field and at Newkirk. He was out in the fields with his men, eating out of dinner pails and working alongside them. The Kay County Gas Company, which E.W. controlled, took over natural gas distribution.

The 101 Ranch Wild West Show toured through 22 states and three Canadian Provinces, staging 421 shows. In August, as they traveled through Wisconsin, the train derailed,

demolishing five cars, killing 10 horses and injuring 30 more.

Ponca City administrators made a key decision by voting to approve \$30,000 in general obligation bonds to construct a steam generated electric plant and distribution system, owned and operated by the city.

The United Sash and Door Company in Wichita, Kan., needed a new location, since there was a shortage of natural gas in Kansas. The Chamber of Commerce encouraged the glass plant to locate in Ponca City. The city donated 15 acres of land adjoining the Santa Fe railroad and added a switch track to the property, at a cost to the city of \$10,000.

1913 — The whole town turned out for the 20th anniversary celebration of the Cherokee Strip land run.

At the age of 20, Ponca City had 500 phones and a population of approximately 5,000. The city had four blocks of brick streets and 1.5 miles of "macadamized" streets. The city limits were from South Avenue to Highland, and Tenth Street to the railroad,

with a few streets west of the tracks and two blocks south of South Avenue between Third and Seventh Streets.

The city boasted six churches, three lumber yards, nine hotels or boarding houses, and four movie houses.

William McFadden was elected mayor. McFadden was associated with George L. Miller of the 101 Ranch, Lew Wentz and E.W. Marland in the oil business, which made him wealthy. He came to Ponca City from Pennsylvania, where he had been in the steel business. McFadden loved being mayor and enjoyed participating in fire and police activities.

The 101 Ranch Wild West Show toured in 13 states, mostly in the northeast area. They then took the show to Rio de Janeiro on a ship. The ocean was rough and many people were seasick. One man contracted smallpox, and begged to be thrown overboard. He survived, but four of the Indians died of smallpox. The stock became ill with glander, a very contagious and deadly equine disease. All of the horses had to be shot and burned.



"PROBABLY" the elevator that once stood beside the Santa Fe tracks at the old White Eagle railroad station.

Gas Well, New Library Mark Top Events of 1910 in P.C.

1910 — The 101 Ranch Oil Company brought in a large gas well on the famous ranch.

The new public library was built on the southwest corner of Fifth Street and Grand Avenue, at a cost of \$6,500, exactly the amount of the Carnegie Library Fund grant. It opened with 840 books, all of which were gifts.

On Dec. 16, a statewide election and a special session vote of the Oklahoma Legislature officially declared Oklahoma City the permanent state capital.

Christmas at the 101 Ranch was quite a large and festive occasion which included 300 ranch employees, and nearly 1,000 Indian landlords that the Millers leased land from. There was a buffalo hunt (but they had to be very careful not to kill a buffalo), a polo game, played on specially trained ponies, and exhibitions of lariat-throwing, shooting, and rough-riding. The girls were there, too, exhibiting a few stunts in bronco-busting, fancy riding, and shooting. At night, there was certain to be a dance.

1911 — Lew Wentz arrived in Ponca City to look after the interests of a Pennsylvania investor in the 101 Ranch Oil Company. His first (and only)

home in Ponca City became the Arcade Hotel.

On July 27, the 101 Ranch Oil Company struck profitable amounts of oil at the "Willie Cries for War" well. This area became known as the South Ponca Field, just west of U.S. 177 between Ponca City and White Eagle. Partners in the oil company included E.W. Marland, Col. George L. Miller, Lew Wentz, and William McFadden.

This discovery was the beginning of the oil boom days in Ponca City. The company's office was a small one-story frame shack on First Street, with a 25-foot frontage on the west side of the street.

Dr. Fred Sparks was elected mayor. His opponent was Henry Bucker, a city commis-

sioner. Dr. Sparks was a dentist, and became supervisor of the Dental Department of the Marland Oil & Refining Company.

The Bois d'Arc Dancing Club was a popular form of entertainment. Dances were held in the Chase Opera House, located on the second floor above a grocery store.

Dr. Sparks was the dancing master, and William Edgar Scott, a pharmacist, played his violin.

The "limestone" school on East Grand Avenue was severely damaged by fire. A new gray stone building was erected in its place, and it served as the High School until 1928, and as the Junior High until it was condemned in 1938.

Mt. Pleasant School Began in '12

Mt. Pleasant School, district 26 in Kay County, also called Rock School, was built in 1912 and is still standing on the Peckham-Dilworth Road. The school was made of concrete blocks.

Dilworth was an oil boom town in the early 1920s and two oil wells sat in the school yard. The school became so full that a frame building was purchased from the disbanded town of Dilworth and became a second building in the district. Both buildings housed four classes.

The school closed in 1950.

As was printed in The Ponca City News on Sept. 12, 1993, Kathleen Wathor of Newkirk said, "The school yard was unique as there were oil wells on the property." Dilworth was an oil boom town for a short while. My grandfather, Julius Fester, staked his claim in September 1893, and all of his children and six of his grandchildren went to school at Mt. Pleasant."

When the town of Dilworth disbanded, Wathor's father was on the board of education at Mt. Pleasant School. She said the Wentz Gasoline Plant production was in full business at that time and the school house was full of children.

Wathor said her father bought a frame building from the town of Dilworth and moved it into the district. "I think we were the only school in Kay County to have two school houses, having four grades in each building." She said the school was closed in 1950.

Wathor said, "The pupils still remember three county superintendents, A. D. Kersey, W. R. Clift and Floyd. When we knew they were coming for a visit, we spruced up the school rooms, combed our hair and wore our best clothes. You would have thought the president was coming to visit."

She continued, "Ruth Jones was a teacher in 1919-1920, drawing wages of \$50 per month. The second year she received \$75.00, and her third term was raised to \$90 a month."

A Good Sign For Ponca City . . . and Northcentral Oklahoma

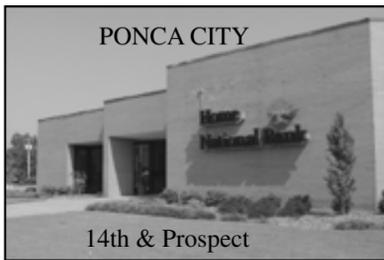


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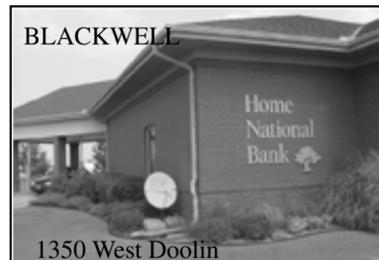
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Witness

(Continued From Page 6E)

Everywhere there was activity, as homemakers and spectators made last-minute preparations.

September 16 came, dry, hot, dusty. Early crowds moved down toward the Kansas state line. Mother took us children down in the farm wagon, for father was making the run for and with his friend. We managed to get a place of vantage on the line road and from our seat in the wagon we could see the black, swaying line of vehicles, horses and men in either direction. Soon the view to the west was blotted out beyond a half mile. A long train of passenger cars came bearing down to the state line. The engineer's whistle was blowing, the bell was ringing. Men and women were on top of the cars, upon the engine tender and coal car, hanging onto platforms and sticking heads from windows, and all yelling like mad. The train stopped at the road crossing where the engine puffed impatiently, as it along with its human load awaited the signal shot that was to set the line in motion.

The hour was approaching. The line involuntarily tightened up. Soldiers on horseback patrolled the area in front, waving back the impatient. A shot was heard. The line surged forward as a unit and then began to expand, as slow equipment gave way to fast. Men on horseback took the lead with light carts close behind. The came buckboards, buggies, springwagons and farm wagons, all hurtling forward over the bumpy, virgin prairie at top speed. There were even men afoot, who hoped to get the close-in claims.

To our left a cart tips over and man and contents strew the prairie while the frightened horse dashes ahead. A short distance to the front a bronco is trying to unseat an unsteady rider. We had notice him earlier in the day, a huge, bearded, good-natured fellow who was enjoying the excitement of the occasion. But the bronco soon won and the rider rolled over and over, while the horse caught up with the leaders and was soon out of sight.

A Kiowa breeder of race horses was just disappearing over the horizon, well in advance of the main line. He was riding one horse and leading three. It was his plan to change horses as one gave out, turn the tired animals loose and proceed to the claim where the famous spring was, the scene of our first night's stop on the July hunt. He not only made the claim but later recovered all of his horses.

In a remarkably short time the line, now stretched to a width of 200 or 300 yards, disappeared in the distance. Only an occasional wreck remained to mark the passing through. Prairie fires set by the soldiers, it was said, had burned off all grass and now the black ashes mingled with the dust. It was a desolate and discouraging prospect that greeted our eyes. One might well wonder why men and women would rush pell-mell into a blackened desolation. We didn't then understand the land hunger that often seizes men.

Some Take the Close Ones

Here and there individuals were moving about driving stakes. They were claiming the quarters that bordered the Kansas line. Of course there were conflicting claims, for it would be impossible to tell who had stepped across the line first. One such individual was a well-known Kiowa citizen, a Civil War veteran. He wore a blue serge suit, the type worn in those days by veterans. His beard was long and black and his form sturdy. He asked mother and the neighbor woman with her to witness the fact that he was first on the claim. This man was D.R. Streeter, who died just a few years ago at the age of 94. He was the grandfather of Mrs. Fern Pickrel. He became undisputed owner of the claim when a contestant, discouraged by the following year's drought, returned "back east."

Slowly mother drove the wagon back to Kiowa. That mile and a half road seemed interminable. The only life left was the occasional vehicle carrying spectators from

the scene of the run. The air was full of dust and churned blackened grass. The sun bore down heavily. The town appeared deserted and the vacant land about the town was entirely deserted. Only small piles of burned ashes from camp fires and refuse from picket lines remained as reminders of the hundreds who had been there the night before. Stores and streets were empty. Even many of the houses were without dwellers as their owners or occupants had left Kansas for new homes in Oklahoma. Life had gone out of southern Kansas.

At home again, we eagerly awaited word from father. He was to return the second day. The claim which his friend desired was about 25 miles from the line. They had fitted up a cart, stored just enough provisions for a few days and were driving Bess.

Along toward night of the second day father drove in. He was smiling. We knew then that that had made the claim. Bess was tired but coming home on a trot. She was a

deep bay but now was almost white from dried sweat. In a few words father told about the run.

She had started at the signal. At first Bess dropped behind, for she had a long distance to go. She was trotting as she always did in pasture or when hitched up. There was something unusual about Bess. She had a rather large frame and legs, made to look larger by long hair that disclosed a stain of Clydesdale breeding. Even when a colt, and we had owned her since she was a yearling, she had showed remarkable ability to trot. While other horses ran she trotted and kept up.

But it was not only her trotting ability that endeared her to the whole family and made her a special favorite of mine. It was her sense of duty. We never knew her to falter when given a task, no matter how hard. If her team-mate balked, father merely hooked her staychain shorter and Bess took out the load. If he was breaking a colt, Bess moved out, taking wagon and

colt along. She never kicked, never bit, seemed to show appreciation for the curry-comb and for her feed. In the 20 years she served the family there was never a failure.

And she didn't fail the day of the run. When other horses tired, old Bess continued strong. She passed up wagon, and buckboard, cart and men horseback.

Long before the clam was reached, she had left all behind. But for fear that some one might be ahead, the pace never slackened. We don't recall how long it took to make the run. The hot, dry prairie, through which not a stream trickled, must have cut her wind, but on she went, arriving at the claim well before night.

Disillusionment for Some

Always there must be a sequel to such an event as the opening of the Cherokee Strip. And there was. One began to see it in the scattered disillusioned men who a few months later, began trekking back across the line, into Kansas. Substance was gone, and

horses were poor, outfits were dilapidated and the owners discouraged. They had gone in with little and a barren land offered less.

By the end of the first year their numbers increased. They were literally starving out, for the drought had continued into the second year. Claims were deserted. One could purchase a relinquishment for his own price or stake a claim at his leisure. But many did stick and they became the backbone of Oklahoma citizenship.

Rumors that claims might be free due to the activities of Dennis T. Flynn, delegate to congress and a former Kiowa newspaperman, were changing the attitude. Surely the couldn't continue, argued some, as they built hopes anew.

And it didn't continue. Rains the second year made late crops, late crops and turnips. With turnip greens, cooked turnips and jackrabbits, the persistent pioneers could not be dislodged. They remained to conquer a wilderness.

Passing of White Eagle End of an Era; 101 Wild West Show World Headliner

1914 — White Eagle, Chief of the Ponca Tribe, died suddenly on Feb. 5. He was the oldest living member of his tribe.

There was some disagreement about his age, but most thought he was at least 100 years old. He had been chief as early as 1880, and had relinquished his duties to his eldest son, Horse Chief Eagle, in 1907.

White Eagle was very well respected by Indians and whites alike. His obituary mentions that he was an ideal Indian chief in appearance "...tall, straight as an arrow, he bore himself with the dignity and reserve which becomes high position and seldom spoke except in his own language."

Jackie McFarlin Laird joined the 101 Ranch Wild

West Show as a trick rider and roper. Jackie worked with four horses, but her favorite was Alice, who would kneel, pray or lie down at Jackie's direction.

The most dangerous trick she performed, known as "tailback," involved sliding off the backside of the horse and being dragged around the arena. Jackie also appeared in one of the favorite acts of the show, the "Indian Raid" act. She was the one who was seated in the covered wagon when the Indians set fire to it.

The 101 Ranch Wild West Show performed at Madison Square Garden in New York City; then the Miller Brothers traveling road show went to Europe, where they performed in Berlin and Paris before going to London. In August, Zack Miller received word that the English were confiscating the show animals and vehicles, due to the start of World War I.

The Millers quickly closed the show, sold their horses to the British government for war purposes, disposed of their equipment, and returned to Ponca City.

Virginia and E.W. Marland

moved from the Arcade Hotel to a home on North Sixth Street while they waited for their new home on Grand Avenue to be constructed. George and Lydie Roberts, Virginia's niece and nephew from Pennsylvania, had earlier come to Ponca City to live with the Marlands.

Groundbreaking ceremonies for a permanent state capital building in Oklahoma City took place on July 20, with Governor Lee Cruce making the first dig. The firm of Solomon Layton and S. Wemyss Smith were chosen to design the building. Layton, recognized as the capitol's visionary lead architect, designed his plans in the Greco-Roman, or neoclassical architectural style.

He positioned eight winged lions atop the building's roof as symbols of the continual struggle of regal dignity and victory.

Corinthian columns surround the building, and 34 massive steps stretch across the south span of the building, taking visitors to the second story entrance.

1915 — Gov. Robert C. Williams tapped the cornerstone in place on the capi-

tol's northwest side on Statehood Day, Nov. 16. The four-ton granite stone came from Tishomingo, Okla., and holds 50 historical documents from 1915.

The Glass Factory, unable to negotiate a new contract for natural gas, closed its doors. It had only been in business in Ponca City for three years.

Marland opened the Three Sands oilfield, and along with Mayor Bill McFadden, Lew Wentz, and others, began amassing considerable fortunes.

This created tremendous spillover effects for Ponca City in the form of philanthropic gifts of public buildings, parks, school sites, and swimming pools.

The original Lincoln Elementary School opened its doors as a one-room schoolhouse.

The 101 Ranch shipped horses and mules to the allied forces overseas.

The 1915 season of The Wild West Show closed on Nov. 20. The show had traveled for 34 weeks for a total of 12,000 miles, performed 188 shows in 23 states, and made a profit of \$200,000.



SALOONS WERE prevalent in the early days of Oklahoma Territory and after statehood, but were soon to disappear when Prohibition arrived. This watering hole was probably where Eastman Bank's downtown facility is now located. A connection to the financial world is on the left wall — a blackboard posting from the Chicago Market.

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Report

(Continued From Page 5E)

Thousands of men have left town without their horses, and other thousands have sailed away from town and camps along the Cherokee line.

Tonight thousands of people are camped along the line and their campfires make an almost unbroken chain along the boundary. The weather today, while it was hot, was cool in comparison to that of the past few days. The thermometer did not get above 90 in the shade. The wind blew strongly from the north but, while it served to keep the ambitious mercury down, it stirred the dust up in choking, blinding clouds. The indications for tomorrow are for a clear warm day with northerly winds.

At Guthrie yesterday the registration booth was opened by officers in charge of the Orlando booth. The force in charge had issued 1,000 certificates in two hours and were prepared to work all night, when word came from the secretary of the interior that this booth must be moved to Orlando. The removal was accordingly made and the booth was set up again near the location of the one already established at Orlando. Both booths opened for business at 7 o'clock this morning and during the day some 7,000 certificates were issued. Those waiting to register at 6 o'clock numbered 1,200 and the booths will be kept open all night.

All who desire them will secure certificates and no one will be barred out of tomorrow's great race, who proposes to start from Orlando. Those who intend to pre-

empt homestead claims have gone to the border to select starting places and only their families and townsmen and speculators remain in town. There is much suppressed excitement among the boomers and a keen anticipation of tomorrow's events.

Dropped Dead in Line
At Hennessey, at noon today, a man named Niblock, said to have been a liquor dealer from Kansas City, fell dead in the line while awaiting an opportunity to register.

He had paid during the day \$25 in \$5 installments to advance himself in line and was about to spend \$5 more for a place near the door of the booth when he dropped dead with the money in his hand. On his person was found several hundred dollars, which was taken possession of by the sheriff. The body was buried this afternoon.

The work of registration at Hennessey is about complete, but the booths will be kept open all night to accommodate late comers. Only townsmen remain in the town tonight. The homesteaders have distributed themselves along the line looking for suitable places from whence to star the great race. Nine thousand people will make the run from Hennessey and vicinity.

Stillwater will send 7,000 people into the strip. That town has no railroads and nearly all the boomers there are farmers who will strive for claims in the rich farming districts of the eastern portion of the country. Willow Springs, one of the new townsites and about the only one favored with a natural

water supply, is in this district, but it is nearer the northern than the southern boundary, and the race for lots there will of course be made from the north.

A Texan Buncoed
At Stillwater this afternoon J.A. Corswell of Gainesville, Texas, was buncoed out of \$260 by confidence men. Corswell realized he had been buncoed soon after the operation and started after the confidence men with his gun. The gambler ran, but the Texan brought him to the ground with a bullet in the shoulder and not only recovered his own money but relieved the buncoer of \$700 in cash. The commendation of the Texan's method of dealing with the man was so general among the boomers that the gambler made no effort to recover the money and was glad to get away alive.

Reports from other points along both lines where booths are located state the registration has been practically completed and that all the boomers are ready for tomorrow's race.

Crooked Work Suspected
At Guthrie contraband business in certificates has been going on since Tuesday and it is estimated that here and in Oklahoma City from 500 to 1,000 persons have given up to \$5 each for certificates. If they are genuine trouble is in store for some of the booth clerks. The plan of operation was for the men to sign an official declaration, which was taken to Orlando on the afternoon train, and the next morning a certificate, regularly stamped and signed, would be delivered and paid for.

Run

(Continued From Page 4E)

The group leased the entire Cherokee Outlet for \$100,000 a year for five years. In 1888 the Association renewed its lease, doubling the annual rental, but the new five-year term was not permitted to run. Kansas was filling up. The last free lands suitable for the agriculture of those days were gone. The clamor for settlement on the Strip became too great to withstand. On March 3, 1893, Congress appropriated \$8.3 million to buy the Strip from the Cherokees and open it for settlement.

The government ordered herds removed. Deprived of their income by cancellation of the CSLA leases, the Cherokees found no alternative but to sell the territory to the government.

Thus did history prepare for the opening of the Cherokee Strip.

There were other land openings by run, but none so awe-inspiring, so violent, so picturesque, so vast as the opening of the Cherokee Strip. In 1889, so-called Unassigned Lands in central Oklahoma, now referred to as Old Oklahoma, were opened to settlement by a run. More than three times the land attracting four or five times as many settlers were involved in the Greatest Run of all, for the Cherokee Strip.

Trying to sort out those entitled — who had not previously claimed homesteads — the government established registry booths along the borders of the Strip. It was an 1893 version of government red tape, but these pioneer spirits were not easily discouraged.

Day and night, sleeping on the ground, eating what hawkers offered, paying premium prices for a single glass of water, the throngs waited. They were unprotected from the sun. One man dropped dead. Another took his place, glad to save the \$5 it would have cost him to advance a single position in line.

Sun. Sun and Dust. A hot, dry September. The dust was churned by thousands of hooves and bootheels until it was ankle deep. Through the haze the sun was an angry red as it set the night of Sept. 15. The wait seemed interminable, but time ran on and the last applicant was registered.

Soon after dawn that Saturday, Sept. 16, a starting space was staked off 250 feet wide and extending mile after mile along the Kansas border. The

great throng was too impatient to spread out in the space. Instead, they crowded on the line, pushing the ones in front and pushed by those behind. Men afoot, horsebackers, buggies, surreys, makeshift farm wagon "chariots" and buckboards, all stripped down for speed, pressed anxiously southward. Some stood with stake in hand, marker flag and hammer raised, ready to claim land only inches away. Others with crudely drawn maps planned longer races to more fertile river bottoms.

It was inevitable that quarrels arose. Before the start, three men were slain in arguments over position. Three others died in the scorching sun, never to touch the lands their hearts sought and their eyes saw. Against the rules, hundreds were armed. A six-shooter was the only law known to many who made the race. And there was no law on the hard land to settle disputes.

An elderly man riding a spirited horse of racing stock fought his mount. A score of false starts were frustrated by soldiers as high noon approached. But at 11:58 the horse broke, plunged south. Soldiers on their slower cavalry mounts fell behind. One young soldier, thinking it was his duty, shot the offending rider. He died on the New Land he entered just two minutes too soon.

A young woman — there were many competing with the men for land — braved the rough atmosphere for days. There was more than thrill-seeking involved for her; she sought a home. But the strain and tension proved too much. Perhaps from the heat, or the sun, or the excitement, she stood it until that Saturday morning, then she went raving mad.

There were many stray shots, false alarms leading to false starts. Then at high noon, there was The Shot from a soldier's carbine. Other soldiers stationed along the line repeated the signal and 100,000 or more dashed across the now-welcoming soil from the Kansas line. Another 75,000 streamed north from the southern boundary of the Strip. There were estimates that placed 30,000 to 50,000 at Arkansas City, 15,000 at Caldwell, 3,000 at Kiowa and at Hunnewell, and a lesser number on west where the Strip land was considered less desirable for agriculture. There were probably 25,000 at Orlando on the south, while

roughly 10,000 raced from the vicinity of Stillwater and an equal number from Hennessey. These were after the richer, eastern sections of the Strip where settlers were expected to give the government \$2.50 an acre for the land. Little enough, it would seem now, but a tremendous sum to a family that had no money, no crop to harvest, nothing to sell. In the middle division of the Strip the charge was to be \$1.50 an acre and on west the land was valued at \$1.

There was much excitement in the towns that mushroomed from the prairie that afternoon. Government surveyors who marked out 160-acre homesteads also laid out, at convenient intervals, townsites where town lots for business or residence could be claimed in place of farming.

But on tens of thousands of farmland claims taken that day, there was little in the way of thrills. Instead there was work, and more work, and hunger and hardship.

First thought for most was protecting against claim jumpers. Some believed getting a furrow plowed around a claim, or parts of it, would establish ownership rights. Then came the problem of water, from spring or creek, or shallow well. Then came shelter.

For some a tent was enough. Others by arrangement hauled in boards from Kansas, expensively, and quickly built claim shanties. For a great number a sod house, usually have dugout backed against a hillside for protection from searing wind, sufficed. Next came the back-breaking strain of wrestling fields from the grass which had tough roots that defied the plow. There were no huge tractors. Teams of horses rugged the plows through the tough grassroots; sod-busting a term that was cheerier than the work it described. That grass that had nurtured buffalo and range cattle had to make way before the first seed could be sown.

Hardship sent many discouraged settlers back to Kansas, Missouri, Illinois or Arkansas. Others took their places. Despite the drought, the wet and cold of that first hungry winter the snow heaped over firewood and livestock feed, replacements came. No claim went untaken in this part of the Strip, and some had two or three claimants to be sorted out.

Version

(Continued From Page 3E)

Only complete extermination would have been a greater catastrophe.

Between 1700 and 2007 the Ponca have endured a great deal of hardships: in the two-year journey of our forced removal from our homeland, Ponca women and girls were raped, men and boys were murdered, a great many babies, children and elderly died as a direct result of this shameful atrocity. After arriving in our present location, the Ponca were further decimated by poverty, alcohol, disease and racial discrimination. An alien form of education was forced on us, our children were kidnapped and taken from us and sent far off to Indian schools to begin the process of assimilation. This practice is now condemned by the United Nations as a Crime Against Humanity. At these schools Native children were sometime beaten to death for speaking the only language they knew, their native language.

When an Indian child died at these schools, the child was simply buried and the parents were not notified. Political assassination of our cultural leaders and the random murder of Ponca people was commonplace. Further assimilation as accomplished by having Christianity forced on us, our cultural idea of a deeply personal spirituality was forcibly replaced by an alien dogmatic religion. Our most cultural and spiritual ceremony, the Sun Dance was banned in its entirety by Oklahoma state law. Our language and ceremonies were discouraged, suppressed and outlawed into extinction and thereby intentionally destroyed. The Ponca people have yet to come to terms with these tragedies.

As a means of further control, the Dawes Act of the late 1800s provided the means for

the theft of remaining Ponca lands on the reservation. Legally, the Act's primary function was called "allotment." Its clandestine secondary intention was to effectively eliminate the Ponca cultural leadership and to bring about the complete undermining and destruction of our traditional cultural leadership, ceremonial life, kinship system, language, identity and sense of community. The Act also brought in the racist concept of the "blood Quantum." This enforced the law that we are not allowed to say who we are, we are told who we are by the Federal Government. Before this the Ponca had a very simple way of deciding who was Ponca and who was not.

When White people first met the Indigenous peoples of this continent, the settlers/colonists decided that the Indigenous peoples were not human beings at all but were a type of animal or children of the Devil because the Indigenous peoples were not Christian and were not mentioned or referred to in the New Testament of the Christian Bible. So it was decided that we would be tracked and controlled in the same manner an animal breeder tracks and controls his pure bred animals. So now we have Poncas who are "full bloods," "half-breeds," "quarter-bloods," and so on. This identification by blood rather than by culture reduces and doles out our identity in the same way animals are identified and controlled. Furthermore, it has allowed for alien persons of diverse colors and national origins to legally call themselves "Ponca." Now we do not know who is a Ponca and what is a Ponca except for what the Federal law of "blood quantum" dictates to us. We have had our identity taken from us.

We have been forced to team about Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and so on,

but the Ponca people at large have no idea who our leaders were when we were forced from our homeland. Historians and Sociologists say that the most effective way to destroy a people is to destroy their history. This is exactly what has been inflicted on the Ponca people.

In establishing reservations in Indian Territory, the Native peoples who were forced here were assured that their reservations would never be annexed then incorporated as a State, that the various reservations would forever remain the exclusive domain of the Native peoples in consideration of the thousands of square miles of indigenous homelands which were forcibly taken from them. President Theodore Roosevelt signed the proclamation which declared Oklahoma a State, President Theodore Roosevelt also advocated the complete extermination of all native peoples.

By the year 2007, the Ponca people have endured; the complete destruction of their way of life, genocide, ethnic cleansing, a total and complete theft of their homeland, had their children forcibly taken from them for assimilation into White society with the destruction of their own identity, and an intentional and almost complete destruction of their language, history and culture. Further, as a People, we, the Ponca people, cannot go home to the homeland given to us by Our Creator. In effect, we are prisoners.

If one takes an objective and unbiased look at historical fact, one can only conclude that all this that has been inflicted on the Ponca people was created and implemented by the same mentality that created and established the state of Oklahoma.

I simply cannot understand how the intentional destruction of a people is cause for celebration.

Marland

(Continued From Page 8E)

He brought a suitcase containing \$100,000. He invested in the 101 Oil Company, and became vice president of the company.

Mrs. W.T. Oates, a member of Twentieth Century Club, wrote a letter to Andrew Carnegie, requesting a grant for a new library. Mr. Carnegie delivered a check for \$6,500.

J.W. Lynch was a candidate for mayor and a dominant political character. His opponent was Jim Sullivan, also a longtime prominent figure. In public speeches, they berated each other unmercifully.

A story circulated through the city that Lynch had secured a federal pardon for a friend, with a large amount of money changing hands in the deal. On the eve of the election, the two candidates were having a public debate when Sullivan asked the crowd, "Do you think that a man who attempted to bribe the President of the United States should be the mayor of a fine city like this?"

When Sullivan finished his accusation, Lynch rose to answer him. "The thing about Sullivan's remark is that it is a lie. I want you folks to know that I did bribe the President of the United States." Lynch won the election.

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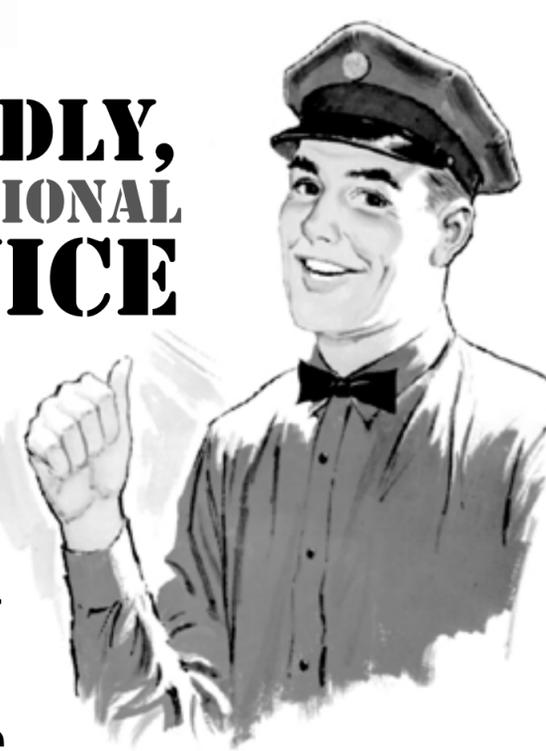
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