



**P**henomenal changes took place in the country's heartland between the first land run in 1889 and statehood in 1907. The changes, scorned by some and welcomed by others, affected many lives. Tumultuous changes had been forced upon thousands of Native Americans in a relatively short span of time. For the thousands of homesteaders, the changes were welcomed and signified new hopes and dreams.

# Chapter 12

## Creating the 46th State

### Chapter Preview

#### TERMS

interurban, boll weevil, subscription school, Enabling Act, progressive movement, referendum, governor, bicameral, amendment, initiative, suffrage, prohibition, Jim Crow laws, charter

#### PEOPLE

J. H. Lawhead, Charles N. Haskell, William H. Murray

#### PLACES

Ponca City, Shawnee, El Reno, Sapulpa, Tulsa, Sequoyah

*This painting by Mike Wimmer, President Teddy Roosevelt Signing Statehood Proclamation, hangs in the State Capitol.*

# Signs of the Times

## POPULATION

The population of the United States in 1900 was 76,212,168 and included Indian Territory and the territories of Alaska and Hawaii. The population was classified as 60.4 percent rural and 39.6 percent urban. The world population in 1900 was about 1.7 billion.

## MUSIC

"Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home?" was written by Hughie Cannon in 1902. *Babes in Toyland* was produced by Victor Herbert in 1903. George M. Cohan wrote "Give My Regards to Broadway," and "The Yankee Doodle Boy," in 1904 for the theater production *Little Johnny Jones*.

## INVENTIONS

Items invented included the modern escalator, vacuum cleaner, neon lights, the teddy bear, crayons, windshield wipers, and cornflakes. The Wright brothers invented and flew the first gas-powered airplane in 1903.

## LITERATURE

Books published included *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* by Lyman Frank Baum (1900), *Hound of the Baskervilles* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1901-1902), *The Virginian* by Owen Wister (1902), and *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* by Beatrix Potter (1902).

## SPORTS

The first Boston Marathon was run. Ice hockey was introduced at Yale and Johns Hopkins universities. The first boxing match was photographed with a moving picture camera.

## EDUCATION

The first correspondence school opened in Scranton, Pennsylvania, to teach miners working methods that would make coal mines safer.



## Figure 13 Timeline: 1890–1910



**1905**  
Indian Territory petitioned to become the state of Sequoyah

**1902**  
Interurbans appeared in Oklahoma City

**1906**  
Oklahoma Enabling Act

**1897**  
Mixed schools became unlawful

**1907**  
Oklahoma became 46th state

**1890**

**1895**

**1900**

**1905**

**1910**

**1896**  
U.S. Supreme Court  
*Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling

**1906**  
San Francisco earthquake

**1900**  
Hurricane devastated Galveston, Texas, killing 6,000

**1904**  
New York City subway opened

# Section 1

## Growth in the Territories

### As you read, look for

- the importance of the railroads to Oklahoma's growth,
- crops grown in the twin territories,
- the development of schools in Oklahoma Territory, and
- vocabulary terms **interurban**, **boll weevil**, and **subscription school**.

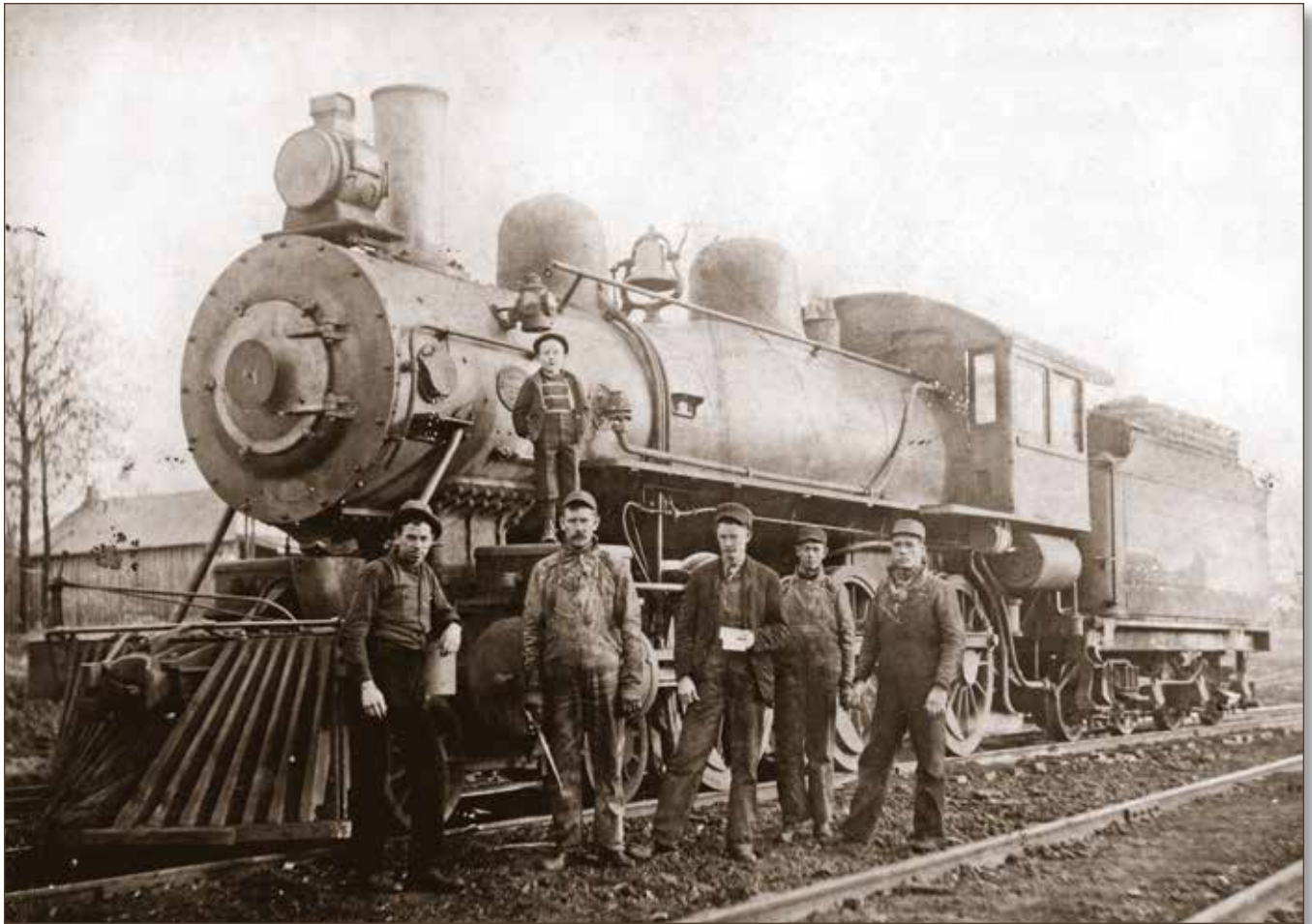


**A crowd awaits the arrival of the first train at Blackwell, Oklahoma Territory, on February 28, 1898.**

**Activity across both Indian Territory and Oklahoma Territory was** occurring at a fevered pace. Towns, farms, businesses, and industries were growing rapidly as new settlers kept coming. The Native Americans were dealing not only with the daily routine of life, but also with seeing their way of life being stripped away. The territories appeared destined for statehood, but when and how were questions that remained to be answered.

### Railroad Power

While people fueled the settlement of America and Oklahoma, railroads played a large role in making it happen at a faster rate. The first railways in England and in America consisted of wagons drawn by horses over wooden rails. In 1829, George Stephenson won a contest in England for building the fastest steam-powered locomotive. American engineers quickly put the technology to work, and railroads soon became a leading industry that spread across the country.

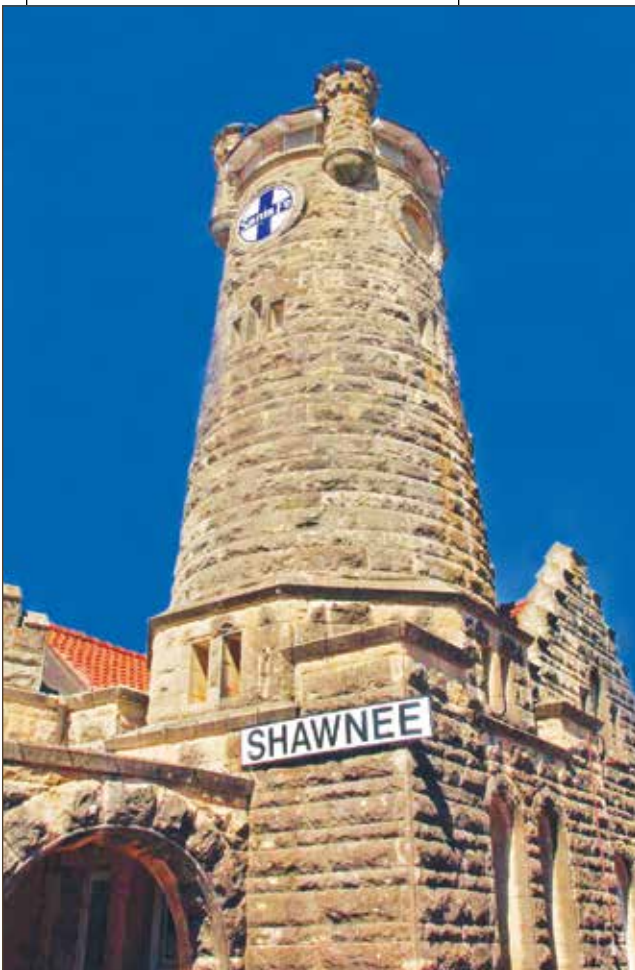


### Importance of Railroads

The railroads noisily came into Indian Territory. Profits were made from the sale of coal, asphalt, and timber, but the railroads also brought losses in the form of forever-changed lifestyles. The trains brought loads of boomers into Oklahoma Territory as land openings settled the territory piece by piece. People and their belongings were moved quickly by train, and people didn't feel so isolated from family and friends when they relocated.

The Santa Fe, Frisco, Rock Island, and Katy railroads continued pushing across the Indian and Oklahoma territories. Railroad companies could lay out town sites along their routes, but sometimes people in a community went shopping for a railroad. A railroad almost guaranteed growth for a community, and towns that were bypassed found it hard to compete. The Santa Fe Railroad originally stopped at Cross in Kay County, which, like many railroad stops, consisted mainly of a wood frame station and a small house for the railroad agent. An independent town site company established Ponca City near a good supply of spring water a short distance from Cross. Ponca City leaders had promised town lot buyers that the train would stop in the community and, with some political pressure, the Santa Fe agreed to the stop, bypassing Cross.

**A locomotive at McCurtain in Haskell County, 1906. A railroad almost guaranteed growth, and any town that was bypassed was certain to find its pocketbook hurt.**



**The Santa Fe Depot in Shawnee is now the Historical Society Museum.**

Bitterness and sometimes violence erupted between railroad-backed towns such as Kildare, Wharton, Jefferson, and North Enid and the government-designated county seats such as Newkirk, Perry, Pond Creek, and Enid. The railroads often refused initially to recognize the new towns and would speed through them without even blowing a whistle.

### **Growing Towns**

The Santa Fe Railroad arrived in Oklahoma City in 1897, linking it to Sapulpa-Tulsa, Kansas City, and St. Louis. By 1904, the landlocked prairie town was crisscrossed by four railroads, connecting it to the rest of the world. Much of Oklahoma's wealth of cotton, cattle, horses, mules, wheat, fruit, corn, produce, and minerals exited the state from the freight yards at what is now called Bricktown. Machinery, hardware, farm implements, wagons, and household goods were among the seemingly endless items carried on the inbound trains.

Shawnee rivaled Oklahoma City in the railroad industry, beginning when the Choctaw Railroad (later absorbed by the Rock Island) moved its main repair shops and work force of one thousand men there from McAlester in the late 1890s. A strong agriculture base of cotton, potatoes, and peaches along with feed stores, wagon yards, and a factory that made Round House overalls fueled the railroads. In the early 1900s, the Santa Fe built a lavish Bedford rock depot for the bustling business. As the gateway, the railroad station was designed to reflect the community.

Many Czechs moved to the territory to work on the railroads in the El Reno area, which became another major rail center. El Reno, like other railroad towns, boomed, while its sister town across the North Canadian River, Reno City, dissolved.



In 1902, the Frisco Railroad made Sapulpa its division headquarters. An electric light franchise was soon approved, and a new waterworks system was built. The railroad brought rapid growth, and by 1903, new businesses included a meatpacking house, ice plant, wagon factory, bottling works, and a brick plant.

Leaders in Tulsa wanted to capture some of the growth Sapulpa was experiencing. The Tulsans tried to get the Frisco to move its headquarters across the Arkansas River, but at the time Tulsa didn't have a reliable water supply. When Tulsa leaders learned that the Katy Railroad didn't plan to make their town a stop, they quickly took action. Tulsa's Commercial Club offered the railroad a \$12,000 bonus and right-of-way land if it would stop in Tulsa. The Katy changed its plans to include the Tulsa stop.



**Top:** This panoramic view of Ponca City was taken around 1910. **Above:** The Hotel El Reno, now on the National Register of Historic Places, was built next to a railroad depot.

## Something Extra!

Reno City residents packed their belongings and the buildings, and moved most of them, including a three-story hotel, across the shallow river to El Reno.

**Interurbans** (short railroads or electric trolleys) first appeared in Oklahoma City in 1902. The success of the Metropolitan Railway Company brought other interurbans to Guthrie, Norman, El Reno, McAlester, Muskogee, and many other communities. Automobiles eventually led to the demise of interurbans and passenger rail service.

## Something Extra!

Commercial clubs were the forerunners of today's chambers of commerce, which serve to promote and unite a city.





**These cattle are being “fattened up” at a feedlot in Eufaula, Indian Territory.**

## **Agriculture**

Some of the Indians had been producing corn, wheat, cotton, and cattle in the territories, primarily in the eastern areas, for many years. Their success, as with any farmer, depended upon the rainfall.

Sorghum cane was one of the first crops planted by many of the settlers. The grain on the top of the cane was made into livestock feed, and the cane or stalk was used to make sorghum molasses, a sweetener. Many of the first settlers came from areas that grew corn, but they soon learned that corn usually couldn't survive a hot, dry western Oklahoma summer. Settlers also grew oats and maize for livestock feed. Oklahoma led the nation for several years in the production of broomcorn, which was used to make brooms and brushes.

Cotton became the most popular crop in many parts of the territories. Cotton could be planted with simple equipment and didn't require large amounts of rain. But it did require a great deal of work. Weeds had to be chopped from the cotton with a hoe so they wouldn't compete for the sparse moisture, and the crop had to be plowed several times. The flowers of the cotton plant developed into round bolls, where the fibers are formed. In the fall, the cotton bolls would open. “Cotton pulling” involved hand-picking the cotton from each boll on the stalk. The person picking the cotton pulled a twelve-foot-long canvas sack to put the cotton in. When full, the heavy sacks were weighed and emptied into a wagon. When the wagon was full, it was taken to the nearest gin, where it was made into a bale. Farmers could

## Something Extra!

The sand plum was one of the few edible native fruits in western Oklahoma and was used to make pies and jelly. When there were no jars for canning, the plums were cooked until they became a batter, which was spread out on cloths to dry. The sheets of dried plum batter were removed from the cloth, rolled up, and eaten later.

then sell their bales to a cotton buyer or wait for a better offer if they didn't need the money right then. Wagons would fill the towns, usually on Saturdays, as the farm families came to sell their cotton. When their cotton was sold, families would buy supplies or clothes, and usually spend the night in the wagon yard. At the turn of the century, the boll weevil arrived in the twin territories. The **boll weevil** is an insect that attacks the boll of the cotton plant. The weevil destroyed cotton crops until farmers learned how to eradicate it.

Growing wheat required a lot of heavy equipment such as a seed drill to plant the wheat, a binder to cut the grain and tie it into bundles, and a threshing machine to separate the wheat grain from the stalk. The Germans from Russia who settled in central and western Oklahoma brought hard, red winter wheat seeds with them. The crop was suited to the sometimes drastic climate changes in the territories. Wheat production increased greatly with the availability of better and more affordable equipment soon after World War I.

## Environmental Challenges

### Oklahoma's Second Deadliest Tornado

**Snyder lost about 10 percent of its population on May 10, 1905,** when it was struck by an F5 tornado. The supercell tornado still ranks as the second most deadly in Oklahoma's history. Estimates of the number of people killed vary from 97 to 120. The violent storm struck the Oklahoma Territory community about 8:45 p.m. With no warning other than strong wind, rain, and lightning, the tornado quickly destroyed most of the west and north sides of town. The eerie quiet immediately following the killer storm was soon broken by the shrieks and cries of the injured and lost. While people were still frantically searching in the darkness for survivors, the building that housed a Chinese laundry started burning. Other fires also broke out, but an ample supply of water in the gutters helped the people extinguish the flames. A former Civil War soldier called the horrifying devastation unlike anything he had seen since the Battle of Shiloh.

Messengers ran by foot to the nearby town of Mountain Park to ask for help, and word soon spread throughout the territory and country. People immediately began pouring into what was left of the town to help. Supplies, doctors, nurses, and volunteers began arriving by train at 4 a.m. the next day.

The destruction was only magnified by the light of day. People, animals, and buildings all lay mangled, and debris was strewn for miles. The community organized a General Relief Committee to coordinate the incoming supplies, the needs of the injured and homeless, the cleanup, and the rebuilding. The unbreakable spirit of the community persevered, and Snyder overcame the tragedy.



**Top:** Lines of mule-drawn cotton wagons wait to unload at an Okmulgee cotton gin.  
**Above:** The first school in the Cherokee Strip was built in Ponca City in 1893.

The early settlers used horses and mules for farming and for transportation. Every farm had milk cows, as well as chickens and hogs, both of which were used for food. Wild game and fish added occasional variety. Preserved pork provided the farm family with meat for several months. Cattle and other livestock were raised and sold.

## Education

Most of the people in the territories recognized education as a necessity. The first settlers wasted no time in setting up schools, regardless of whether they lived in a town or on a farm. Later, the school became the social center of the community, and people would gather there to sing and to hold box suppers, literary readings, or spelling bees.

The first schools sometimes started in a tent, dugout, sod house, log house, or whatever shelter was common to the area. Many of the early schools were **subscription schools**, which meant that parents paid a monthly fee, usually ranging from \$1 to \$2. Length of the school year, availability of books, and subjects taught varied greatly, as did the qualifications of the teachers. Penmanship drills, reading from the McGuffey reader, spelling, “ciphering” (arithmetic), history, and geography were among the subjects studied.

# Spotlight



## Amusements

**Life for the new settlers was hard, but time was usually made for entertainment, which ranged from the simple swimming hole, dances, or horse races to amusement parks. From 1902 to 1910, the Delmar Gardens park in Oklahoma City featured a theater, race track, baseball field, swimming pool, beer garden, restaurant, and hotel. Picnicking, boating, rides, concessions, and a dance pavilion were found at Belle Isle Park and Lake, located at one end of the interurban line. Wheeler Park, with a zoo, was located at the other end of the interurban line.**

A streetcar line and electric plant resulted in Electric Park in Tulsa. Samuel Orcutt opened his Tulsa lake to boating and swimming in 1907, and by 1910 it was the last stop on the streetcar line. Rides, a dancing pavilion, and moving pictures could be enjoyed at Orcutt Park, and a 600-foot roller coaster, Tulsa's first, was soon added.

**Street fairs are nothing new. This photograph of a street fair in Oklahoma City was taken in 1899.**

Smaller towns also had amusement parks. Benson Park opened in 1907 on the interurban line between Tecumseh and Shawnee. It had an opera house, roller coaster, natatorium (indoor pool), and skating rink. The Enid City Railway Company built Lakewood Electric Park with a bowling alley, pavilion, boat house, and scenic railway in 1909. Similar parks were built in Okmulgee, Muskogee, Woodward, and other towns.

Areas with mineral water springs quickly developed into recreation spots. The Chickasaw National Recreation Area near Sulphur was established in 1906 to preserve the soothing flora, fauna, and wildlife of the area. Zodletone Resort was an early day health spa in Kiowa County with "healing" sulphur springs. The resort was the site of picnics, baptisms, and other outings.



**The one-room Stoney Point Schoolhouse can be seen at Harn Homestead Museum.**

## Something Extra!

**McGuffey readers first appeared around 1836. In the mid to late 1800s, four-fifths of all American children learned to read from them.**

The 1890 Organic Act provided for the establishment of schools in Oklahoma Territory, which gradually replaced the subscription schools. Governor Steele appointed J. H. Lawhead as the first territorial superintendent of schools. The estimated school population in 1891 was over 21,000; by 1896, the number was 88,000.

Long-established patterns of cultural and racial beliefs came with the settlers and territorial leaders. For some, the beliefs included the separation of whites and African Americans in the schools, as well as many other areas. For the first several years in Oklahoma Territory, counties were given the option of deciding whether to have “mixed or separate” schools. In 1897, however, mixed schools became unlawful. Educational opportunities for blacks improved somewhat, but black children in rural areas rarely had the opportunity to attend school beyond eighth grade.

## Mining

Salt and coal mines played an important role in the twin territories for years. Lead and zinc, found in several areas of the territories, became a major industry. Some lead was surface mined in northeastern Oklahoma for ammunition during the Civil War, but the mineral was largely untapped until 1891. The Peoria Mining Land Company of New Jersey opened mines near Peoria in Indian Territory. Other veins were discovered around Quapaw in 1904, and the mining area was expanded to Miami, Picher, and Commerce a few years later. Combined with the rich finds in southwestern Missouri and southeastern Kansas, the area became known as the Tri-State District or Joplin Region. The region was home to hundreds of small mining and milling companies. The largest ore discovery came in 1913 in downtown Picher. In 1926, Ottawa County was the world’s largest source of lead and zinc.

The Ruby Stucco Mill in Blaine County was the first gypsum mill in Oklahoma Territory. Some of the purest gypsum in the world is still produced in the Southard area in Blaine County. Much of the rest of the country was first introduced to the Territory’s gypsum at the 1904 St. Louis World’s Fair. The territorial legislature appropriated \$40,000 to erect a booth at the fair to showcase the Territory. Gypsum



from an experimental mill in Caddo County was used to make the outside stucco of the building, and gypsum from Blaine County was used in the interior. Two large blocks of white, sparkling gypsum, three feet by eight feet, served as columns. Thousands of “petrified roses” (native sandstone, crystal rose rocks) were handed out as souvenirs. Dr. H. W. Nichols of the Field Museum in Chicago published a paper on the “sand barite crystals.”

Towns sprang up quickly when gold fever hit the Wichita Mountains area in Oklahoma Territory. The early Spanish explorers were the first to search for gold in the mountains. In the early 1890s, prospectors found evidence of gold. By 1895, miners were swarming into the Kiowa, Comanche, and Apache reservation. Soldiers from nearby Fort Sill and Indian police tried to keep the gold-hungry prospectors out of the area. When the area was opened to settlement in 1901, people were waiting to make their fortune in gold, and over two thousand mining claims were filed in a nine-year span. The mining towns of Wildman, Golden Pass, Craterville, Oreana, Hollis, Doris, and Meers were quickly established. The gold fever ended when a geologist determined that most of the ore had no economic value.



**Top:** A lead and zinc mine near Miami. **Above:** Many of the miners for the area's coal mines, such as this one near Wilburton in Indian Territory (1902), came from Pennsylvania and the East Coast, as well as Great Britain and Italy. Mining communities were a real “melting pot.”

## It's Your Turn

1. Why would a town give a railroad bonus money?
2. Why was the boll weevil harmful to Oklahoma agriculture?

## Section 2

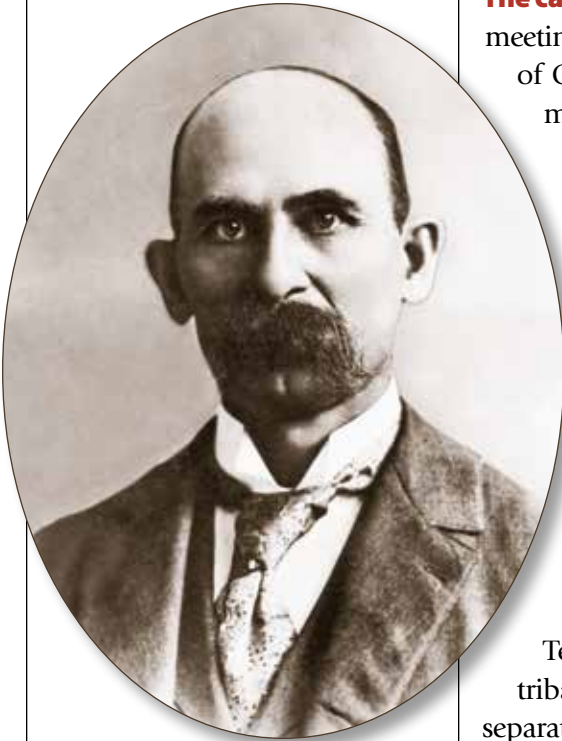
# Statehood

### Something Extra!

The name Sequoyah was chosen to honor George Guess, who invented the Cherokee syllabary.

### As you read, look for

- the efforts to establish a separate Indian state,
- the influences on the writing of the state constitution,
- when Oklahoma became a state, and
- vocabulary terms **Enabling Act, progressive movement, referendum, governor, bicameral, amendment, initiative, suffrage, prohibition, Jim Crow laws, and charter.**



**Territorial Governor William C. Renfrow** advocated joining the two territories into one state.

**The call for statehood was persistent in Oklahoma Territory, and** meetings on the topic were held almost every year. The population of Oklahoma Territory grew with each land opening. The estimated population in 1890 was 61,000. By 1900, the number had skyrocketed to 400,000, and by 1907 there were 722,441 residents in the western territory. Territorial Governor William Renfrow was one of the early advocates of a single state.

Leaders of the Five Tribes were opposed to joining Indian Territory and Oklahoma Territory in a single state. The Indian Territory population was also growing rapidly with 197,000 residents in 1890, 300,000 in 1900, and 691,736 in 1907. There were almost seven times as many noncitizens in Indian Territory as Indians, but they could not own land or send their children to tribal schools. The noncitizens began to demand changes in the eastern territory. Tribal leaders, although bitterly against the idea, could see that statehood appeared inevitable. Fearing that Oklahoma Territory would dominate Indian Territory in a single state, tribal leaders felt that their interests would best be met with two separate states.

A January 1902 resolution from Oklahoma Territory requesting the admission of Oklahoma as a single state was followed by a November 1902 resolution from Indian Territory against uniting the two territories.

## The State of Sequoyah

In 1905, leaders of the Five Tribes met to discuss statehood for Indian Territory. They called for a constitutional convention for the state of Sequoyah to be held in August 1905 in Muskogee.

Indian Territory voters selected 182 delegates to attend the convention. Pleasant Porter of the Creek Nation was elected to preside at the convention. The vice presidents elected were W. C. Rogers for the Cherokee, Green McCurtain for the Choctaw, John F. Brown for the Seminole, Charles N. Haskell for the Creek, and William H. Murray for the Chickasaw. The Creek poet and journalist Alexander Posey was elected secretary.

William Wirt Hastings, a Cherokee who later represented Oklahoma in the U.S. House of Representatives, chaired the committee that drafted the constitution for the state of Sequoyah. The constitution included a bill of rights and established three branches of government and a system of checks and balances. The people of Indian Territory approved the constitution on November 7, and it was promptly submitted to Congress. However, bills on the state of Sequoyah were tabled in both the House and Senate in December 1905, while the political fight for single statehood continued.

## The Enabling Act

Legislation that “enables” something to happen or empowers a person, government agency, or other entity to do something that it could not do before is called an *enabling act*. On June 16, 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt signed an **Enabling Act**, also called the Hamilton Statehood Bill, that provided for joining the twin territories into the single state of Oklahoma. The bill, named for Edward L. Hamilton, chairman of the committee on territories for the House of Representatives, also addressed possible statehood for the territories of Arizona and New Mexico. Along with the Organic Act of 1890 and the Curtis Act of 1898, the Hamilton Statehood Bill is considered one of the three most important laws in the Oklahoma statehood process.



**Creek Chief Pleasant Porter called for a convention to draft a constitution for a separate Indian state. He then served as president of the convention.**





## Something Extra!

**William Murray was given the nickname “Alfalfa Bill” in the early 1900s. Murray supported the new idea of planting alfalfa and other legumes to restore nitrogen in the soil. The colorful political figure served as Oklahoma governor from 1931 to 1935.**

The Enabling Act required the people to organize a republican form of government similar to that of other states. The constitution for the new state also needed to establish religious liberty, prohibit polygamous marriages (those with more than one wife), guarantee the right to vote to all races and colors regardless of previous servitude, prohibit alcoholic liquor in Indian Territory and the Osage Nation for twenty-one years, and establish a system of free public schools. Guthrie was to remain the temporary capital until 1913.

Before a constitutional convention could be held, 112 delegates had to be elected—55 from each territory and 2 from the Osage Reservation where the allotment process was still going on. Delegate districts were defined by the governor, secretary, and chief justice in Oklahoma Territory and by the Indian commissioner and two federal judges in Indian Territory.

The election for delegates was held November 6, 1906. Women did not have the right to vote or serve as delegates, but all males over twenty-one who were U.S. citizens or a member of any Indian tribe in the territories and who had resided in the territories at least six months were eligible. Of the men elected, twelve were registered as Republicans, one was an Independent, and ninety-nine were Democrats. The delegates included farmers, ranchers, lawyers, merchants, ministers, doctors, bankers, journalists, teachers, and one college student. None of the delegates was African American.

Leaders of the two main parties headed the constitutional convention. Charles N. Haskell was the leader of the Democratic majority,



and Guthrie attorney Henry Asp headed the Republican minority. William H. Murray was elected president of the convention, and Pete Hanraty, a labor leader from Indian Territory, was elected vice president. Haskell was named majority leader, and Henry Johnston of Perry was Democratic caucus chairman. Royal Allen chaired the committee on county boundaries. Oklahoma Territory was already divided into county units, but Indian Territory was not. The committee divided the state into seventy-five counties and designated temporary county seats that could be changed by a vote of the people. (Later reorganization resulted in the state having seventy-seven counties.)

The convention convened on November 20, 1906, in Guthrie. Murray said, "On schedule time I went to Guthrie. There I merely visited with the delegates by approaching them in the lobby of the Royal Hotel, sometimes taking them behind the stairs. 'Old-line' politicians asked where were my headquarters. I invariably replied, 'Under my hat.'"

### Writing the Constitution

In the early 1900s, the **progressive movement** spread across the country. Progressives believed that government was best equipped to correct the problems in society. This reform movement wanted to break up large corporations and regulate business, such as the railroads. Progressives wanted the people to have more say in government. They believed that U.S. senators should be elected by the people, and they thought that citizens should be able to vote on a law that affected them through **referendum** before that law went into effect. They also

**The Oklahoma Enabling Act, signed into law in 1906, called for the Indian and Oklahoma territories to write a constitution and take steps toward statehood. There were 112 delegates to the convention—55 delegates each from Indian and Oklahoma territories and two from the Osage Nation.**

### Something Extra!

Several delegates to the convention had, only a few months earlier, helped write the constitution for the proposed state of Sequoyah.



**Above:** Pete Hanraty, president of the Twin Territorial Federation of Labor, wrote most of the labor code of the Oklahoma constitution. **Below:** A part of the Oklahoma constitution provided protections for child laborers.

supported a graduated income tax. The progressives' ideals, and their efforts to improve society, were prevalent in the minds of the delegates charged with writing the Oklahoma constitution.

### State Government

The new constitution set up three branches of government—executive, legislative, and judicial. It also included a system of checks and balances to prevent any one branch from becoming too powerful. Most state officials were to be elected by the people. The **governor** would serve as head of the executive branch, which included twelve elected officials, and be responsible for administering the state's laws. A **bicameral** (two-house) legislature had members of the house of representatives serving two-year terms and members of the senate serving terms of four years. The judicial branch included justices of the supreme court, as well as justices of the district, county, and municipal courts, and justices of the peace.

The delegates intended for the legislature, serving as the voice of the people, to have the most power. Governor elections were to be held in off-presidential election years to avoid a popular president swaying the state election. The personal power of a governor was limited by allowing only one four-year term.

The constitution called for a board of health, board of dentistry, board of pharmacy, and a pure food commission. A department of charities and corrections was set up to deal with orphans, mental patients, and prison inmates.



Citizens were empowered by having the right to subject a legislative act to a referendum. Citizens could also propose a law or constitutional **amendment** (an addition to a document, such as a constitution) by **initiative**. The power of the people was further protected by the bill of rights.

### Labor Rights

Peter Hanraty served as chairman of the Labor and Arbitration Committee for the constitutional convention. Labor laws were written to shorten the workday to eight hours in mines and on public works projects. Convict labor was prohibited, and children under fifteen could not be employed in any hazardous occupation. Boys under sixteen and females could not be employed in underground mines. The chief mine inspector was required to have eight years of actual experience as a miner.

### Education

The constitution called for free public schools that were not affiliated with any religious group. All children between eight and sixteen were required to attend school.

### Suffrage

The national women's suffrage movement was going strong as Oklahoma approached statehood. The issue of women's **suffrage** (the right to vote) was raised in 1890 with the first territorial legislature, when women were given the right to vote in school matters. Peter Hanraty proposed removing the word *male* from the description of electors, but his proposal failed. Southern Democrats feared that allowing women to vote would result in more blacks voting.

The only other people who could not vote in general elections were felons, paupers (those who are very poor), and those who were mentally incapable.

### Prohibition

The issue of **prohibition** (forbidding by law the making or selling of alcoholic beverages) was an especially sensitive one in the territories. Alcohol was legal in Oklahoma Territory and illegal in Indian Territory. Not everyone agreed with either law.

Oklahoma's Anti-Saloon League was organized in Oklahoma Territory in 1899. Margaret Olive Rhodes of Guthrie organized the first Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). Maude Thomas of Beaver, publisher of the *Territorial Advocate*, refused to print liquor advertisements and wrote numerous editorials in favor of prohibition. Carrie Nation, with her famous hatchet, led the prohibition campaign in Kansas and Oklahoma, tearing down saloons, breaking mirrors,



**Carrie Nation was arrested over thirty times and amassed huge fines in her efforts to ban alcoholic beverages.**

## Something Extra!

**Progressives believed that if their leaders were elected those officials would be more responsive to the people who elected them.**



**Frank Frantz, center, a former Indian agent to the Osage, was the last territorial governor of Oklahoma. He ran unsuccessfully for governor against Charles Haskell.**

## Something Extra!

From 1895 to 1905, more than three thousand U.S. firms were gobbled up by competitors in mergers (unions of two or more businesses). Progressives believed that fewer companies meant less competition and higher prices.

and smashing liquor bottles. In 1905, Nation moved to Guthrie to support the prohibitionist movement and print her newspaper, *The Hatchet*. She was unsuccessful in her attempt to rid Tulsa of the “evils” of alcohol.

Not everyone favored prohibition. Many settlers were immigrants from European countries where alcohol was a part of the culture. The Citizens League called for people to voluntarily choose not to drink. In light of so many opposing views, the constitutional convention delegates decided to submit the prohibition issue to a vote of the people.

### Rights for Blacks

African Americans who had moved to the territories hoped to escape the discrimination found in many southern states. The South’s **Jim Crow laws** (laws that limited the rights of black people) led thousands of blacks to seek a safer environment. Some searched for that better

life in the territories. The Jim Crow influence, though, made its way into Oklahoma. Some convention delegates wanted to add segregation provisions to the constitution, but others prevailed in tabling the matter until after statehood was achieved.

### Business Issues

The new constitution required that all corporations receive a **charter** (official permission to operate) from the state. Corporations could not influence political campaigns or own stock in competing firms, and their records were subject to state inquiry. Large businesses, railroads, trusts, and utilities were to be regulated by an elected corporation commission.

### Ratification

The work of the constitutional convention delegates lasted for several months, and the result was a document that was almost ten times as long as the original U.S. Constitution. The state constitution was regarded by many as the most progressive of its time, and William Jennings Bryan of Nebraska called it a model for other states. Later arguments have called the constitution too restrictive to adequately deal with new situations.

The people voted on the constitution on September 17, 1907. By a vote of 180,333 for ratification to 73,059 opposed, the new constitution was accepted. In the same election, Democrat Charles N. Haskell was elected governor with 137,599 votes, defeating Republican Frank Frantz and Socialist C. C. Ross. The prohibition amendment passed 130,361 to 112,258.

Oklahomans also elected their five U.S. congressional representatives at the same time. Elected were Republican Bird S. McGuire of



Pawnee and four Democrats—Scott Ferris of Lawton, James Davenport of Vinita, Charles D. Carter of Ardmore, and Elmer Fulton of Oklahoma City. Senators could not be elected until Oklahoma was officially admitted to the Union and the state legislature could meet.

### Statehood Proclaimed

President Theodore Roosevelt signed the statehood proclamation on November 16, 1907, and through a direct telegraph wire from the White House, the news was received in Guthrie two minutes later, at 9:18 a.m. Oklahoma time. The announcement was made public by Hugh Scott, private secretary to Territorial Governor Frantz, who stood on the portico of the Carnegie library in Guthrie and shot a pistol as a signal to several militia companies. The militia replied with volleys of blank cartridges, and celebrations instantly broke out in the city with bands playing, bells ringing, steam whistles blowing, and guns firing. Five minutes later, Governor Haskell took the oath of office in the governor's office at the Hotel Royal. The private ceremony would be repeated a short time later for the public.

Several thousand citizens had gathered in Guthrie, filling the streets and even the trees as people clamored to view the inaugural. Shortly after noon, Charles H. Filson, territorial secretary, read President Roosevelt's statehood proclamation. A symbolic marriage ceremony joined Mr. Oklahoma Territory and Miss Indian Territory as the state of Oklahoma. C. G. Jones of Oklahoma City, who had tirelessly cam-

**The inauguration of Charles Haskell as Oklahoma's first governor drew a large crowd to celebrate in front of the Carnegie Library in Guthrie.**



**Guthrie's Carnegie Library, site of the swearing in of Oklahoma's first governor, was the second Carnegie library built in Oklahoma and is the only one still standing.**

paigned for joint statehood, represented Oklahoma Territory and Mrs. Leo Bennett of Muskogee symbolized Indian Territory. The governor repeated the oath of office ceremony for the public.

With a population of 1,414,177, more than any other territory at the time of statehood, Oklahoma joined the United States as the 46th state. Some citizens, however, did not feel jubilant. In fact, many Native Americans in the new state felt betrayed. A letter from Mary L. Herrod, a Creek Indian, appeared in the *Okmulgee Democrat* the day before statehood:

*As Friday the 15th of November will be the last day of the Indian Territory, and after that we will be no longer a nation, some of us feel that it is a very solemn and important crisis in the history of the Indians. . . . Now I've lived to see the last step taken, and the Indian does not count any more even in his own territory. . . . I shall never write another letter. I cannot date my letters "Indian Territory," and I shall not write.*

### **It's Your Turn**

- 1. What is an enabling act?**
- 2. Who was the first governor of the state of Oklahoma?**

# Oklahoma Profiles

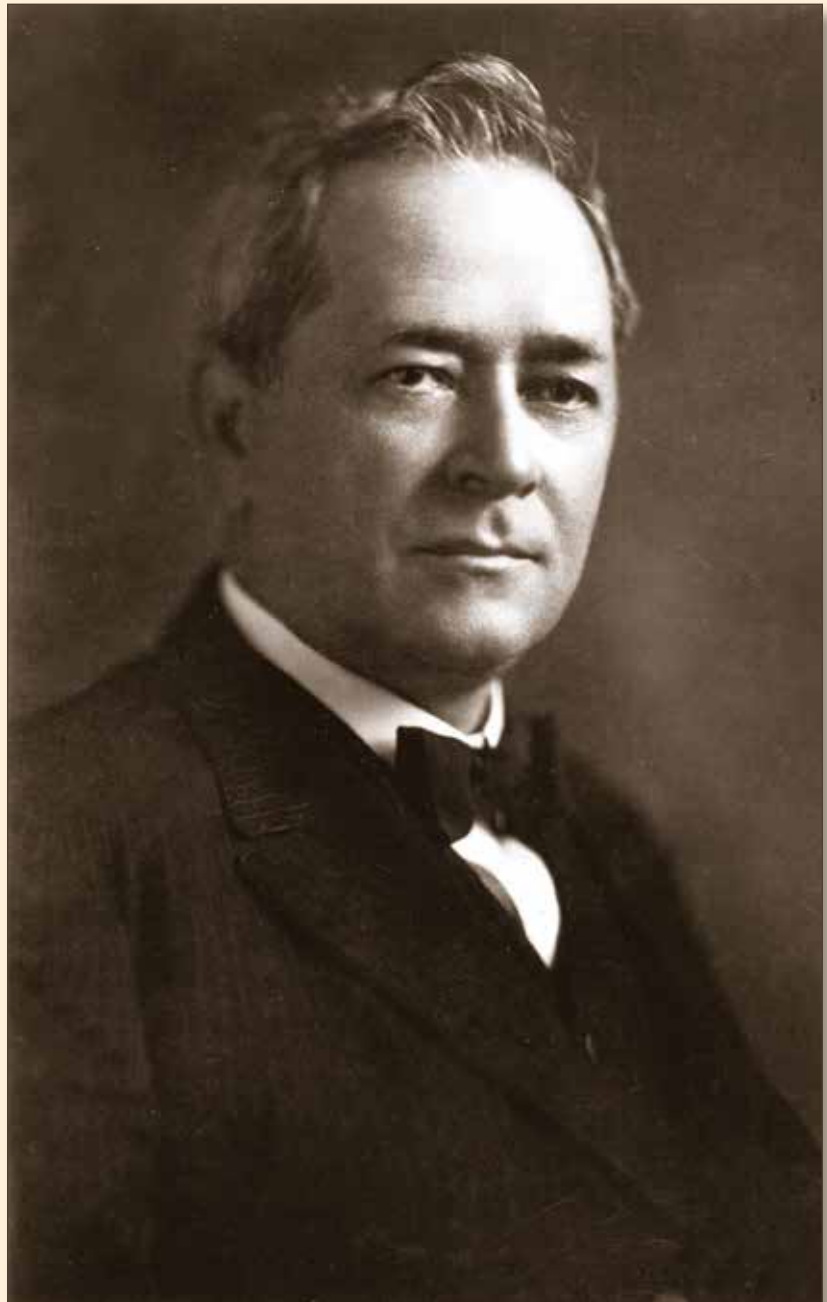
## Charles N. Haskell

**Charles Nathaniel Haskell**, the first governor of the state of Oklahoma, was born March 13, 1860, in Leipsic, Ohio. Haskell's parents died when he was three, and a neighbor raised him. He became a teacher in Ohio in 1877 and studied law at the same time, passing the bar in 1880. Haskell and his first wife, Lucie, had three children. When his first wife died, Haskell married Lillian Gallup, and they had three children.

In 1901, Haskell moved his family to Indian Territory, where he became a lawyer for the Creek tribe. He represented the tribe in the effort to establish the state of Sequoyah in 1905. When that effort failed, he became one of the chief organizers of the constitutional convention for a single state. Haskell won the Democratic nomination for governor and then the top seat in the new state. He ably led Oklahoma into statehood.

Haskell's term ended in 1911. In 1933, he suffered a stroke, and he died on July 5 in the Skirvin Hotel in Oklahoma City. He was buried in Muskogee.

**Charles N. Haskell** served as Oklahoma's first governor.





# Chapter Review

## Chapter Summary

- The rapid growth of both Oklahoma Territory and Indian Territory began to affect the daily routine of life for the Indians. The Indians soon realized that statehood was inevitable.
- The expansion of railroads and the introduction of interurbans led to the growth of cities and towns.
- Agriculture began to boom with more crops being planted in a wider area.
- Subscription schools were established in Oklahoma Territory. They were later replaced by a system of public schools. In 1897, segregation became an issue when mixed schools for white and black children were declared unlawful.
- Mining for lead, zinc, gypsum, and even gold added to the growth and economy of the territories.
- An all-Indian statehood convention was held in Muskogee in 1905 to create the state of Sequoyah, which covered the eastern half of present-day Oklahoma. The two-state movement, however, was rejected.
- On June 16, 1906, President Roosevelt signed the Enabling Act, calling for one state. The constitutional convention convened on November 20, 1906, in Guthrie with 112 elected delegates, all of whom were males.
- The progressive movement, which was spreading across the country at this time, greatly influenced the decisions of the delegates as they worked on the Oklahoma constitution. Prohibition, a sensitive issue, was voted on separately by the people and approved.
- The people ratified the constitution on September 17, 1907. Democrat Charles N. Haskell was elected the first governor.
- The state of Oklahoma came into the Union on November 16, 1907, by a statehood proclamation signed by President Theodore Roosevelt.

## Vocabulary

Write a short story about life in territorial Oklahoma or around the time of early statehood using twelve of the following vocabulary words. Be sure to indicate that you understand the meaning of the words you use in your writing. Highlight each word used.

1. boll weevil
2. caucus
3. cotton boll
4. dugout
5. Enabling Act
6. fevered
7. initiative
8. interurbans
9. Jim Crow laws
10. "petrified roses"
11. phenomenal
12. progressive movement
13. prohibition
14. referendum
15. subscription schools
16. temperance
17. tumultuous

## Understanding the Facts

1. What town rivaled Oklahoma City in the railroad industry?
2. What was an interurban?
3. What were the three most important crops grown in early Oklahoma?
4. What were the first schools in Oklahoma Territory called?
5. Name three of the minerals mined in Oklahoma.
6. Name three of the ideas from the progressive movement that were included in Oklahoma's constitution.
7. Who was the president who proclaimed statehood for Oklahoma, and what was the date?

## Developing Critical Thinking

1. (a) Defend single statehood and explain why it was a good idea. (b) Defend double statehood and explain why it was a good idea.
2. If the Oklahoma constitutional convention were held today, how do you think the politics, ethnicity, and gender of the delegates would differ from those elected in 1906? Explain your answer in detail.
3. Why do you think the convention delegates called for a separate vote on the issue of prohibition rather than including it as part of the original Oklahoma constitution?

## Applying Your Skills

1. The following prices were typical for groceries in 1900. How much is each item per pound? What is the current unit price of each of these items?
  - Holland Special coffee (2 pounds), \$0.30 (Use Folgers)
  - Sugar (19 pounds), \$1.00
  - Flour (50 pounds), \$1.10
  - Navy beans (25 pounds), \$1.00

- Bacon (4 pounds), \$0.64
  - Ham (5 pounds), \$0.50
2. Draw a map of Oklahoma and show the boundary line separating the proposed states of Oklahoma and Sequoyah. Locate and name three major cities in each of the proposed states. Shade Oklahoma with blue and Sequoyah with red and label each area with capital letters. Show the boundary line in bold black.

## Exploring Technology

1. Using the Internet, research the history of Jim Crow and the Jim Crow laws. Tell how these were applied in early-day Oklahoma and tell why these laws are no longer in effect today.
2. Today, a company that owns many other companies is called *diversified*. Often, the other companies may not seem to have any common ownership. Choose one of the following companies (or some other diversified company) and research to find out what other companies they own or who they are owned by: (a) Pepsico, (b) Walt Disney, (c) General Foods, (d) Philip Morris.

## Building Skills

## Researching Topics

**Researching topics is just one part of a historian's work.** Historians are much like detectives looking for clues and possible solutions to questions or mysteries. The historian knows that a library is often a researcher's best friend.

During the year, you will be given assignments that make it necessary to find information in a library. When you visit a library for research, there are specific places to look for information. Your key aids in the library are the card catalogue (either paper or electronic) and the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature*.

Visit your school library or media center and find information on the following subjects:

- Women's Christian Temperance Union movement in Oklahoma
- Prison reform in Oklahoma
- United Mine Workers labor union

All these topics have to do with the progressive era. For each of these topics, find one reference in each of the following types of sources: encyclopedia, periodical, biographical or historical dictionary, and general history book.

Once you locate your sources, list the name of the book or periodical, making sure to include all the information for a bibliography: the title of each book or article, date of publication, and author. This list will help you find the information again if necessary. After completing this task, think about these questions:

1. Are there sources in your library that emphasize Oklahoma history or give information on the state? Does your library have an "Oklahoma Collection"?
2. In which of the categories above was it most difficult to locate information you needed? Why do you think it was difficult?