

Will Allen and Susan Etta (Hamm) Stallworth beginning – Tour packet

Will Allen Stallworth and Susan Etta Hamm met at the Ft. Smith & Western train depot in Boley, Oklahoma and later married December 20, 1910.

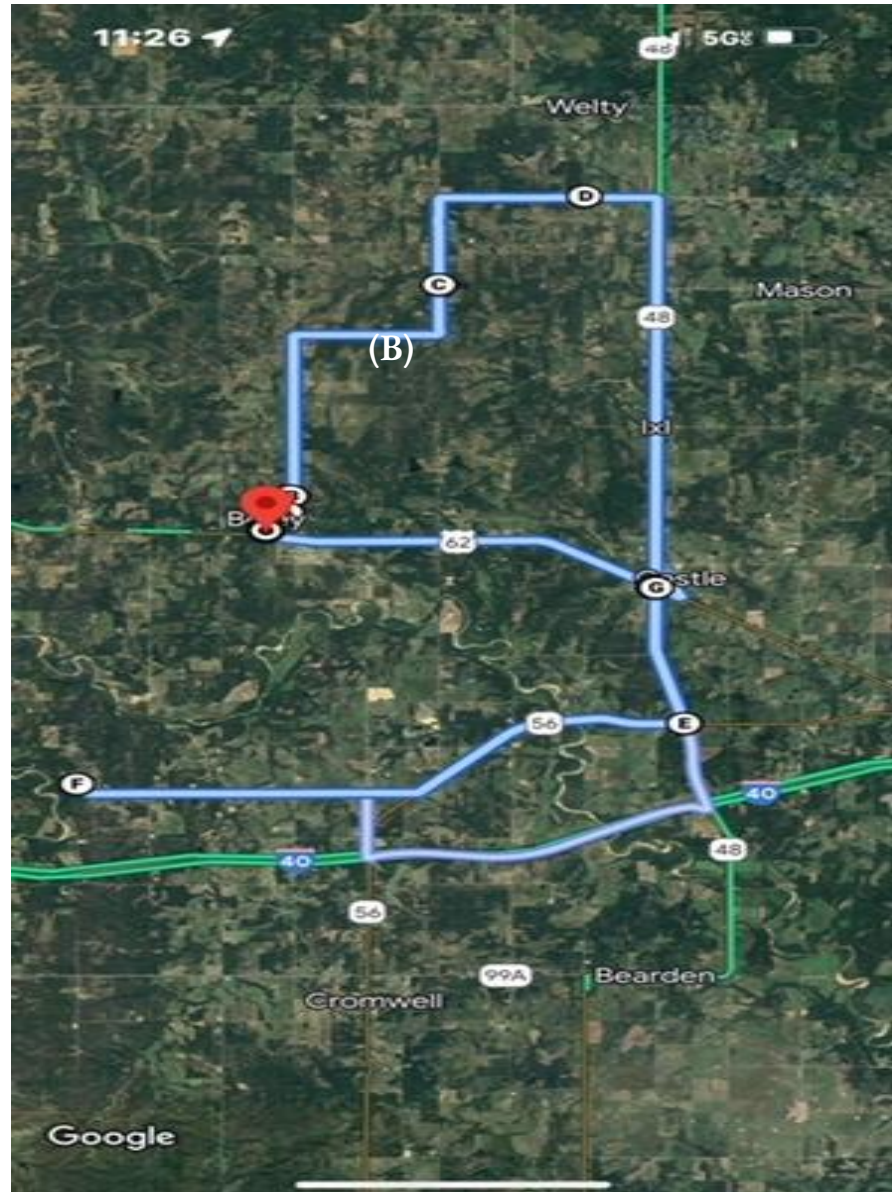
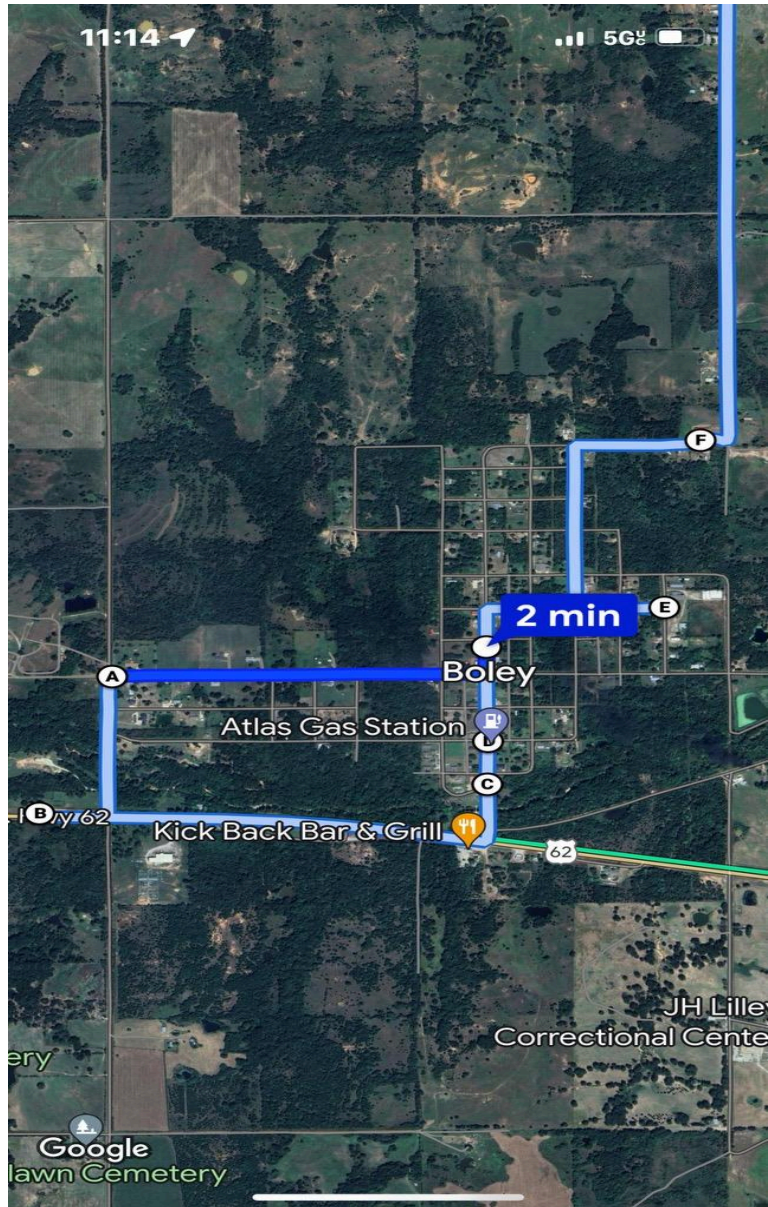


(later picture of them)

Will Allen Stallworth's job assignment was to take the families who were coming into Boley on the train, to their specific communities (for example: Rusk community). That is where he met grandma, Susan Etta Hamm. It was stated that he said that she was going to be his wife.

Tour: July 7, 2024

Tour map of Grandpa (Will Allen) and Grandma (Susan Etta Hamm) Stallworth's Beginning in Boley, Oklahoma - Ft. Smith & Western Train Depot and Beyond



Tour starts at the **Boley Community Center** - corner of Grant Avenue and Pecan Street at or around 1:30 p.m. (after pictures at the depot):

Go West on Grant Avenue to

- A Corner to Boley Rodeo Grounds *912 W. Grant Avenue* turn left / go South
- B Essie B. (Stallworth) and Richard Williams' house *365174 US Hwy 62 - Boley*
(go left / East on U.S. Hwy 62 to Pecan Street; Turn left / North on Pecan Street)
- C Ft. Smith & Western Train Depot - Boley, Oklahoma *300 - 398 S. Pecan Street*
(where Susan Etta Hamm & Will Allen Stallworth met) **Continue North**
- D Farmers & Merchants Bank - *2nd Street & S. Pecan Street* - left side of the street

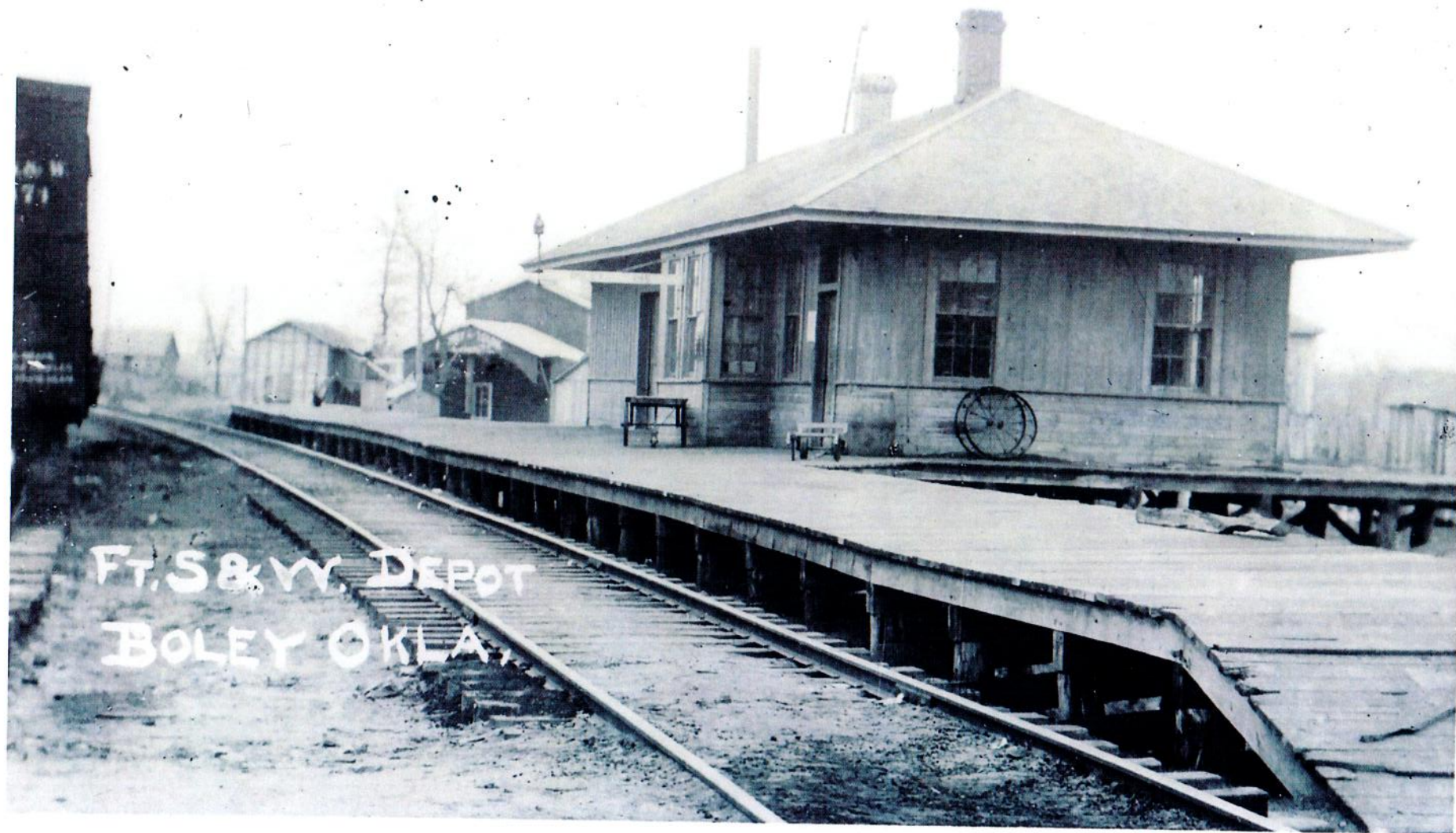
(*not shown on map*) **Continue North** on Pecan Street; turn right (East) on Grant Avenue
To Oak Street; left (North) to Lincoln Avenue.

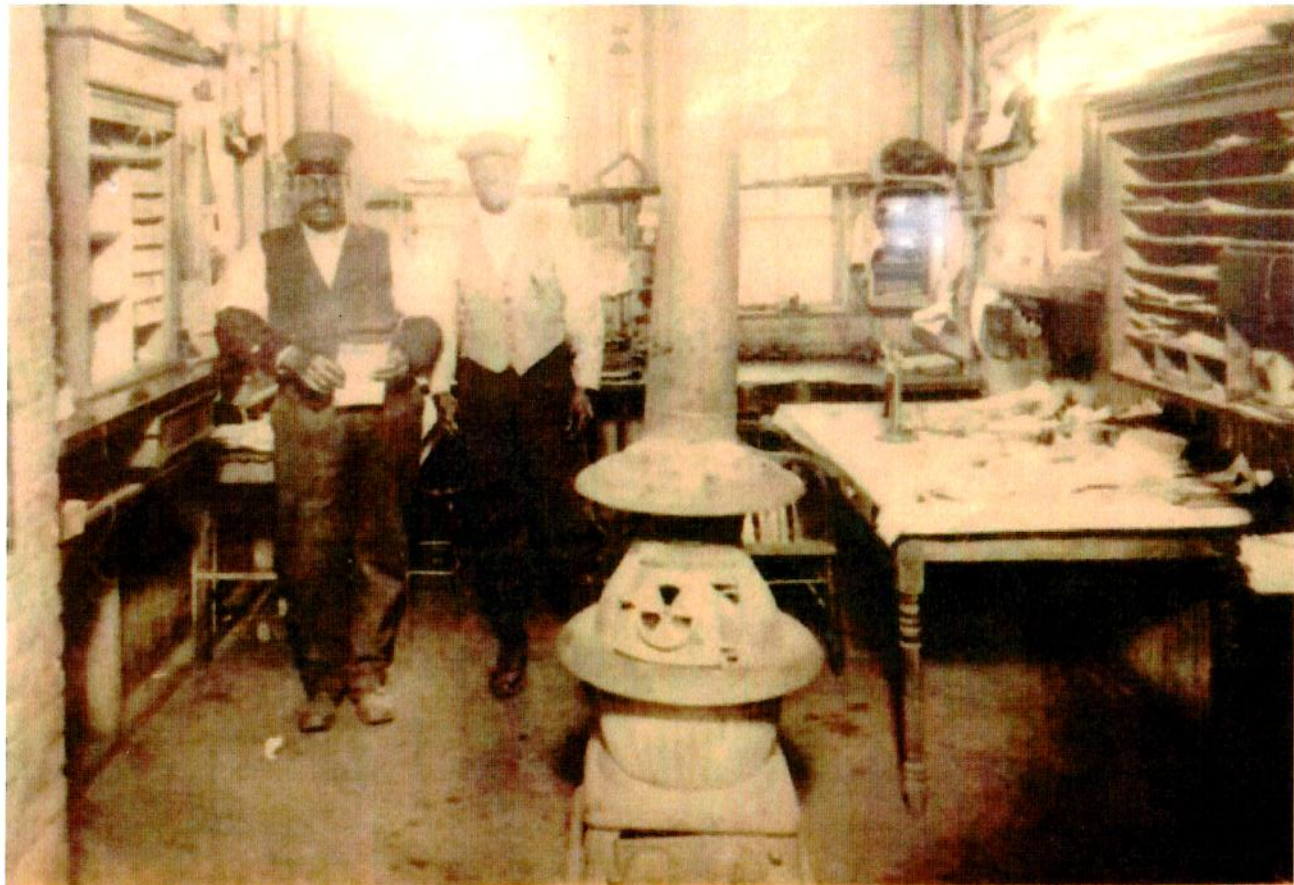
- Boley Public Schools From the school go left (West) on Lincoln Avenue to Pecan Street; turn right (North) and go until Pecan Street stops and curves right (East) into Minnie Ave.
- Creek-Seminole College (West of that Pecan Street / Minnie Avenue corner – about 10 blocks)
(*see a picture of the college and information about it in this packet*)
- F Amos Temple CME Church (on the Townsite map) you can see **CME College** was on this site.

(*see second map above for remaining tour - it starts at “(B)” on that map*)

- (B) **Clayton Chapel Elementary School (grades 1 through 8)** (a Rosenwald School)
Located ~ 1.5 miles East on 1010 Rd before 3690 Rd turn left (North) on N 3690 Rd
- C **Velma (Stallworth) and Abraham “Dude” Reynolds / Susie’s home**
99179 N 3690 Rd - Boley, Oklahoma stay North to 0980 Rd, turn right (East); go 2 miles to N 3710 Rd; turn left
- D **Susan Etta & Will Allen Stallworth’s lot in Welty, OK area** (where they lived with their children)
98588 - 101098 N 3710 Rd - Castle, OK From 0980 go East 1.0 mile; turn right (South) onto Hwy 48
- E **Corner of Hwy 48 and Hwy 56** Turn right (West) onto Hwy 56 toward Cromwell / Arbeka community;
turn right (West) onto EW 111 Rd. Just before you get to our grandparents house, the road changes to NS 364 Rd.
- F **Grandparent’s (Will Allen and Susan Etta) / Aunt Dorothy Stewart house**
House where they last lived (the locator shows:) *11060 NS 364 Rd - Okemah, OK 74859*

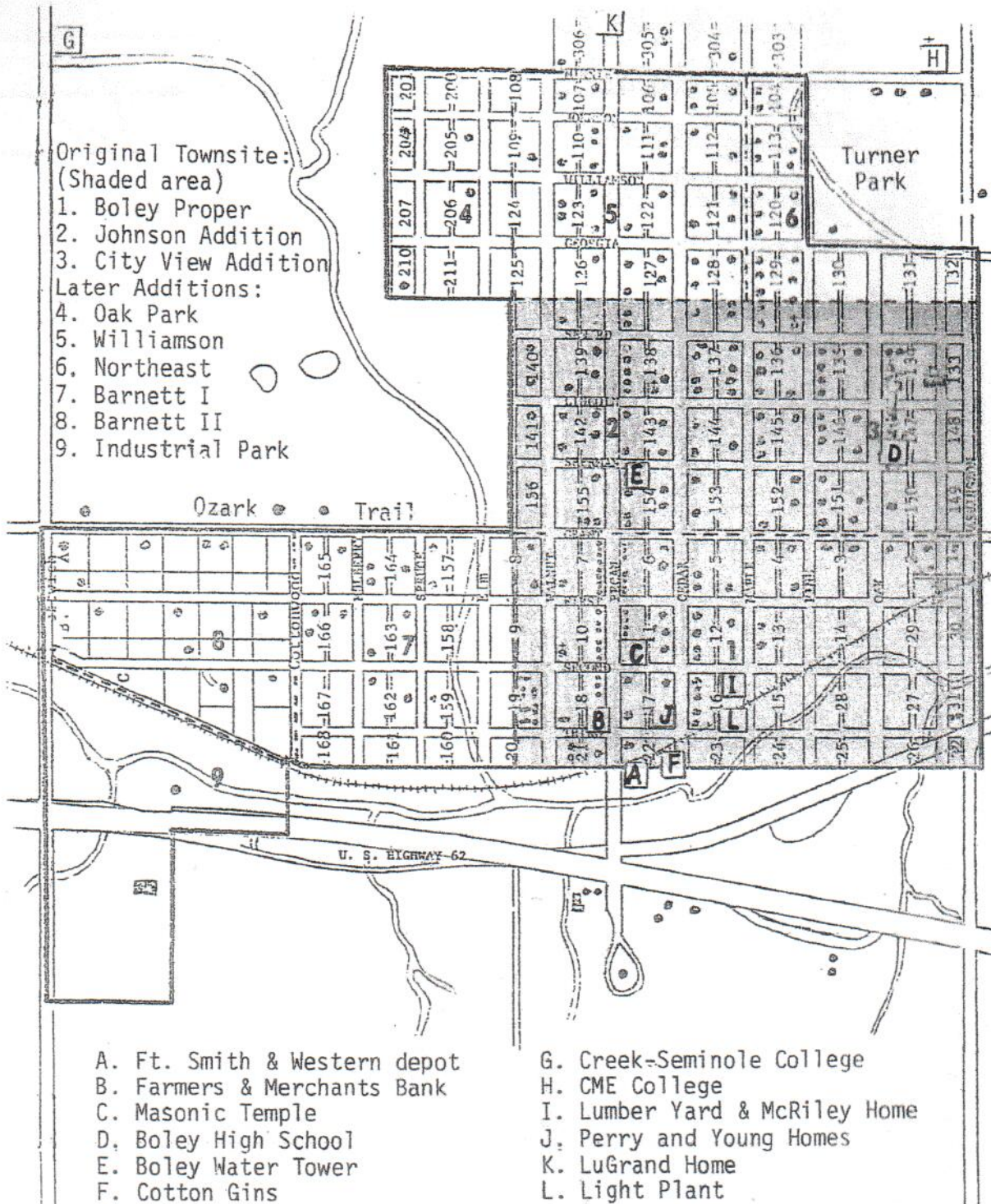
Return back to Boley, Oklahoma – Go back from F to Hwy 56 to E, left North onto Hwy 48 to G; from G turn left (West) onto US Hwy 62 back to Boley, OK.





INSIDE - BOLEY TRAIN STATION

THE BOLEY TOWNSITE



By the time it was incorporated in 1905, Boley consisted of Boley Proper, comprising the North Half of the Northeast Quarter of Section 29, Township 12 North, Range 8 East, and two additions, the Johnson Addition and the City View Addition, consisting of the South Half of the Southeast Quarter of Section 20, Township 12 North, Range 8 East, for a total of 160 acres. As can be seen from the lot numbers, the Oak Park Addition and the Williamson Addition were in the planning stage at that time.

The original 160 acre Boley townsite is represented by the shaded area of the above map. Over 160 acres more additions were platted to the northeast, north and northwest of the area on the above map, but were never incorporated into the Town of Boley.

The solid line on the above map outlines the present Boley town limits. However, it will soon be obsolete as the Town is currently in the process of annexing additional areas into the town limits.

Our Story

Boley, Oklahoma was established in 1903 as one of the largest and most thriving black towns in the country. Formed after the Great Migration, when thousands of blacks moved up north after slavery, Boley was founded on land that was owned by a black woman, Abigail Barnett McCormick. McCormick had inherited the land from her father, a Creek Freedman.

Blacks were invited from near and far to come and establish a home. Booker T. Washington referred to Boley as "the most interesting and enterprising Negro town in the U.S."

In 1905 forty citizens signed a petition for the town's incorporation. This was accomplished in the United States Court for the Indian Territory, Western District at Wewoka on May 11, 1905.

Six years after being established, Boley, Oklahoma grew to a population of 4,000. The historical town garnered attention for building the first Black-owned electric company and the first Black-owned bank in the country. The people took care of the town, establishing five grocery stores, five hotels, seven restaurants, four cotton gins, three drug stores, a jewelry store, four department stores, two insurance companies, two photographers, an ice plant, a laundry, a bottling company, two livery stables, a second-hand store, a lumber yard, a funeral home, two ice cream parlors, two hardware stores and a telephone exchange. Boley had its own water works and electric plant at the time as well. There were five churches, a grade school, a three-story high school and two colleges. There were 9 teachers for the school systems 842 students. There were at least four attorneys and at least one physician/surgeon. The Masonic Temple, at that time was the largest building in Okfuskee County, had been completed at the cost of \$40,000.00.

In 1912, and for some years thereafter, Boley was the largest and wealthiest all-black city in the world. Quite an accomplishment for seven short years.

This tremendous accomplishment was no accident. It was the result of the aggressiveness, resourcefulness and plain hard work of the town's founders.

In 1932, the gang of Pretty Boy Floyd, led by George Birdwell attempted to rob the Farmers & Merchants Bank in Boley. The outlaws consisted of three men. They killed D. J. Turner, the bank president. The Boley Police officers returned fire, killing George Birdwell and Charles Glass. In 1935 Forest Anderson reopened the bank.

In 1975, the town of Boley was declared a historical landmark. Though its popularity and population fell during the Great Depression, Boley, Oklahoma continues to thrive, with its annual Boley Rodeo and Founder's Day celebrations.



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The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture



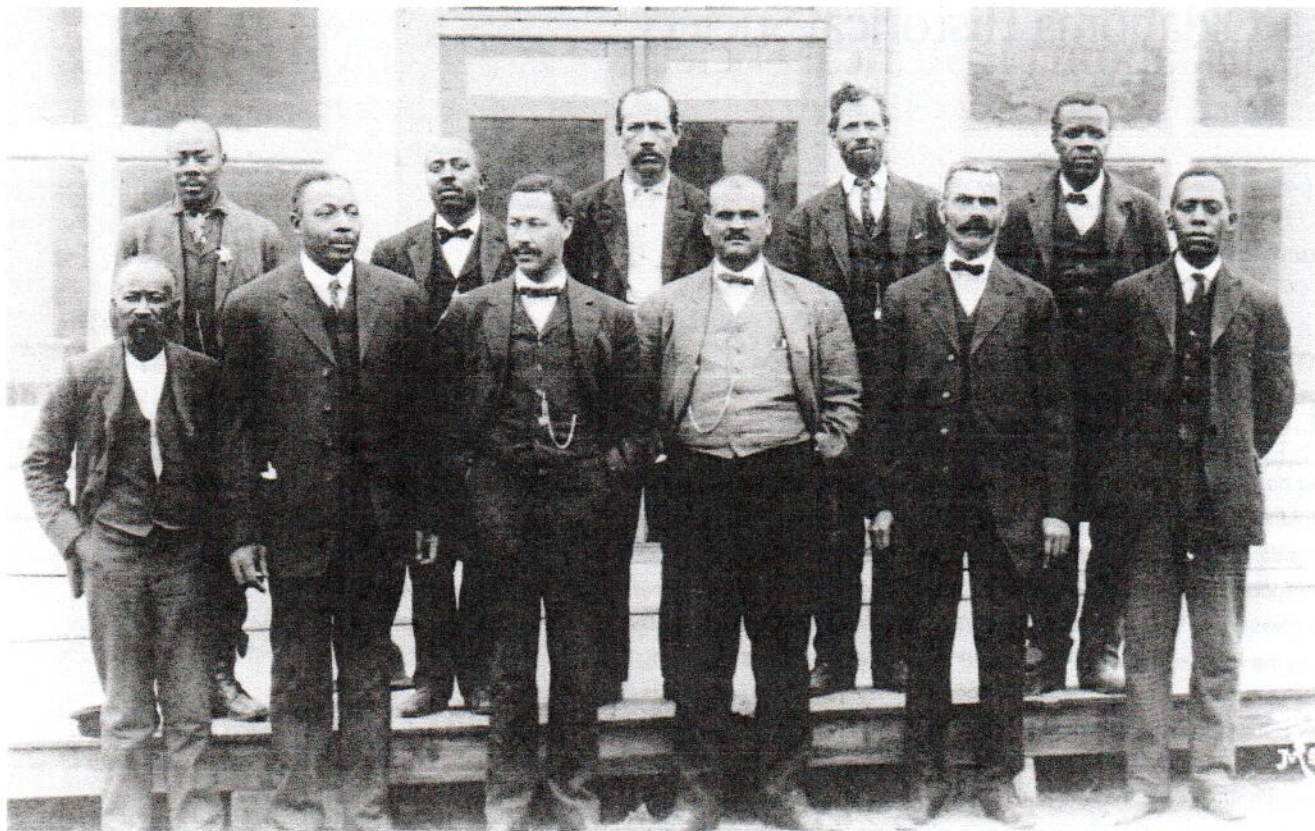
BOLEY.

Located halfway between Paden and Castle in Okfuskee County, Boley is the largest and most well known of the more than fifty All-Black towns of Oklahoma and one of only thirteen still existing. The town, established on land allotted to Creek freedman James Barnett's daughter Abigail, was named after J. B. Boley, a railroad official of the Fort Smith and Western Railway. Founded in 1903 and incorporated in 1905, Boley and the African Americans living in the area prospered for many years. The *Boley Progress*, a weekly newspaper, began in 1905. The paper and various advertising campaigns circulated through the South and lured many former slaves to the new town. At 1907 statehood Boley sheltered 824 individuals.

By 1911 Boley boasted more than four thousand citizens and many businesses, including two banks and three cotton gins. Booker T. Washington, founder of the National Negro Business League and the Tuskegee Institute, in Alabama, visited the town in 1905 and proclaimed it "the most enterprising and in many ways the most interesting of the Negro towns in the United States." The town supported two colleges: Creek-Seminole College and Methodist Episcopal College. Boley also had its own electrical generating plant, water system, and ice plant. The Masonic Grand Lodge completed a majestic Masonic Temple around 1912. At the time, it was said to be the tallest building between Okmulgee and Oklahoma City.

Like many rural towns, Boley suffered through hard times in the 1920s and 1930s, its population dropping to 1,154 in 1920 and 874 in 1930. By World War II the population stood at 942, and it declined to 573 in 1960 and to 423 in 1980. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, with a population of 1,126, the town was experiencing economic rejuvenation. The number of residents was 1,184 in 2010. Boley still hosts the nation's oldest African American community-based rodeo every Memorial Day weekend. The downtown business district is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NR 75001568) and has been designated a National Historic Landmark by the National Park Service. In April 2020 the census counted 1,087 residents.

Larry O'Dell



Boley Town Council

(3377.D.2, Oklahoma Historical Society Photograph Collection, OHS).

See Also

AFRICAN AMERICANS, ALL-BLACK TOWNS, FRATERNAL ORDERS—AFRICAN AMERICAN, FREEDMEN, EDWARD P. McCABE, NEWSPAPERS—AFRICAN AMERICAN, ROSENWALD SCHOOLS, SEGREGATION

Learn More

Norman L. Crockett, *The Black Towns* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1979).

Norman L. Crockett, "Witness to History: Booker T. Washington Visits Boley," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 67 (Winter 1989–90).

"Facts about Boley Oklahoma: The Largest and Wealthiest Exclusive Negro City in the World" (Boley, Oklahoma, Commercial Club [1911]).

Kenneth Hamilton, "Townsite Speculation and the Origin of Boley, Oklahoma," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma* 55 (Summer 1977).

Booker T. Washington, "Boley, a Negro Town in the West," *Outlook* 88 (4 January 1908).

Related Resources

Boley Historic District, National Register of Historic Places

Citation

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CREEK SEMINOLE COLLEGE (1906-CA. 1925)

POSTED ON APRIL 15, 2007

BY CONTRIBUTED BY: [MELISSA STUCKEY](#)



Creek Seminole College, Boley, Oklahoma

Courtesy Oklahoma Historical Society Photograph Collection (3377.E)

The Creek Seminole College was officially opened in 1906 in Boley, a black town in Creek Nation, Indian Territory (today Oklahoma). The school's founder and president was John C. Leftwich, a graduate of Selma University in Alabama. Leftwich built the college on five acres of land donated to him by Lucinda Holloway McCormick, a Creek freedwoman.

President Leftwich was heavily influenced by Booker T. Washington's career at Hampton and Tuskegee, and made Creek Seminole College an agricultural and manual training school that educated the children of Indians, Freedmen, and African American migrants in "heart, head, and hand."

The Creek Seminole College was run largely on donations. Although Leftwich traveled across the country soliciting money, the school was often in financial distress. The frequent reports of unpaid teachers, sub par facilities, and cold and hungry students aroused anger among people in Boley, and many people believed that Leftwich improperly handled the school's funding.

After a tragic fire killed five students in 1912, the College was closed for a few years. By 1916, Leftwich raised enough money to rebuild in Clearview, another black town in Oklahoma. This time the school was opened under the sponsorship of the Baptist church and was renamed Creek Seminole Baptist College. John C. Leftwich was eventually replaced as college president by Reverend Dr. J.M. Young. Creek Seminole Baptist College operated until at the 1920s, but its actual date of closure is unknown.

Reflections:
on how the picture of Clayton Chapel School came about.

We, Priscilla Reynolds Caldwell and I, could not find a picture of Clayton Chapel School anywhere – Okfuskee County Historical Society, Oklahoma City Historical Society building – or even on the internet (*which showed “missing”*), and then a miracle happened.

Judge Henrietta Holloway Hicks gave us the pictures she had of the original Clayton Chapel School that she attended as well. This was one of the many Rosenwald schools that the Julius Rosenwald and Booker T. Washington fundraising provided.

My siblings and cousin told about the items they remembered inside and outside of the school building.

Therefore, we tried to paint a picture of what we remembered. See those two pages also. We are the children of Essie B. Williams & Richard Williams, and Velma O. Reynolds & Abraham L. Reynolds.

Susie Reynolds McGregor

Tour date: July 7, 2024

Clayton Chapel School,
Okfuskee County
Oklahoma

A-No. 10-E

2136

2136



Clayton Chapel School, Dist. #45,
Okfuskee County

✓
Okla.

2136

Two acres of land

Three-teacher type

Built under the 1925-26 budget

Application No. 10-E

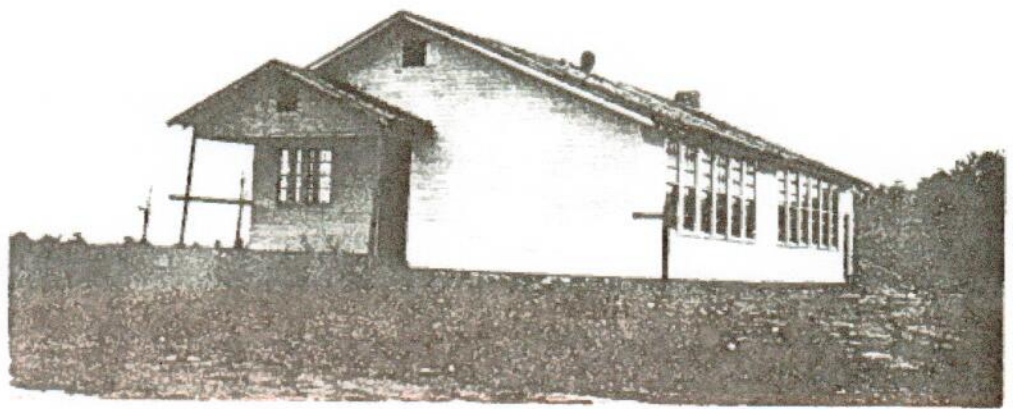
Total cost \$3,952 --Ins. \$2,000

Negroes \$100

Whites

Public 2,952

Rosenwald 900



2136



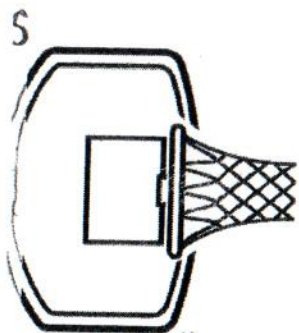
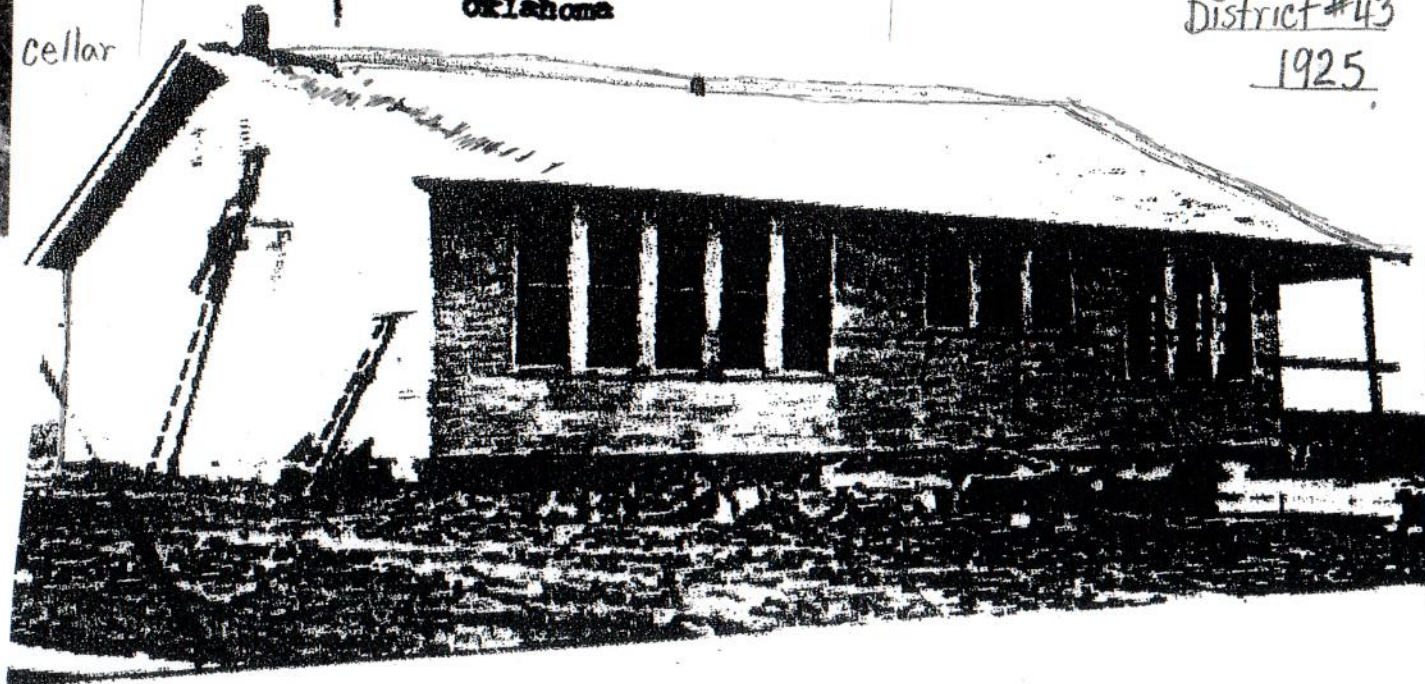
coal House

cellar

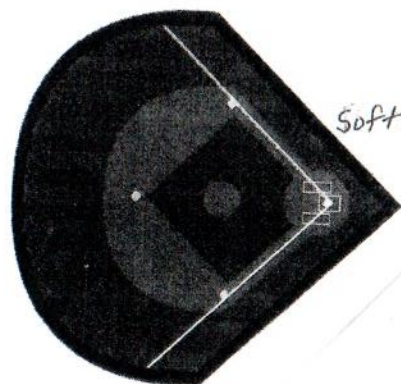
Clayton Chapel School,
Okfuskee County
Oklahoma

Okfuskee County
Boley, Oklahoma
District #43

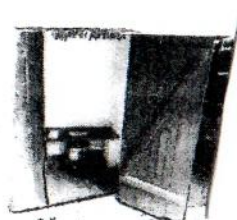
1925



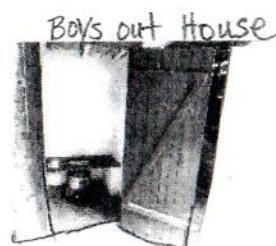
Basketball goal



Softball Diamond

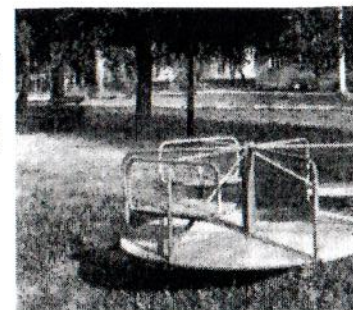


Girls out house

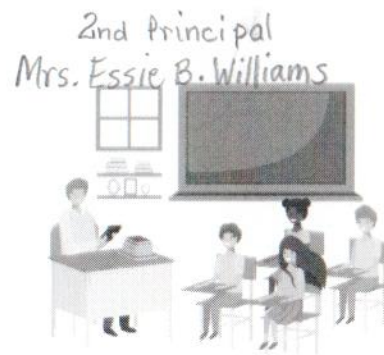
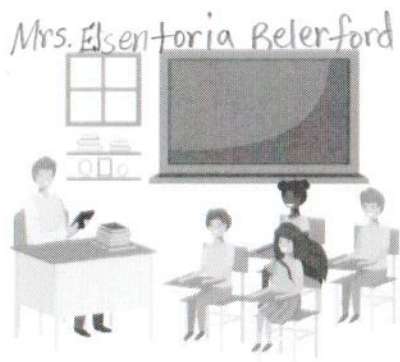


Boys out House

Merry
Go
Round

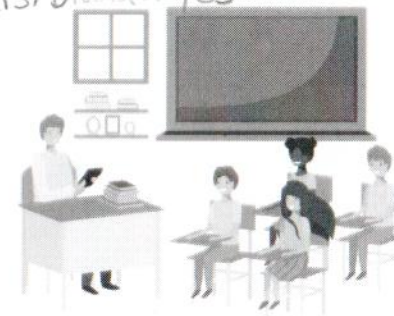


1st - 4th Grade



Cafeteria

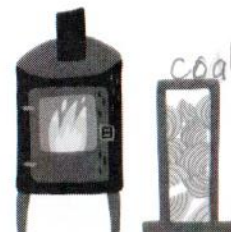
Mrs. Deanna Hayes



Pillow



Pot
Belly
stove



5th - 8th grade

Pillow

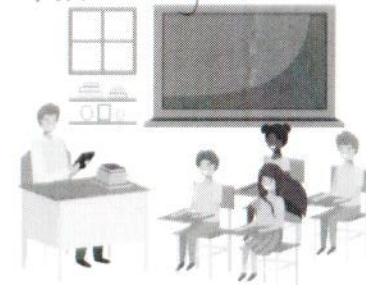


Coat closet



Front
door

1st Principal
Mrs. Ivory Owens



Stage



Okfuskee County, Rosenwald Schools, and Boley

November 1, 2023

By Jerry Klinger



J.B. Boley

Boley, Oklahoma, Creek Nation, Indian Territory, was established as an all-Black town on the land of Creek Indian “Freedwoman” Abigail Barnett in 1903. When the Five Tribes, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee (Creek), and Seminoles, were forcibly removed from their homelands in the 1830s–40s, people enslaved by the tribes also made the long journey to Indian Territory. By 1861, eight to ten thousand Black people were enslaved throughout Indian Territory. Ms. Barnett’s family was part of that story.

Boley was named in honor of J.B. Boley, a “White” man, as the historical marker on the main street around the corner from the Mayor’s office noted with dignity. J.B. Boley was the roadmaster for the Fort Smith and Western Railroad. He was convinced that Black Americans could govern themselves. Boley worked hard, successfully convincing the Railroad to share his vision. The Town of Boley was incorporated in 1905.

By 1911, Boley attracted many Blacks from throughout the South seeking to escape Jim Crow. The Town prospered. It was a haven of Black Enterprise, potential, and refuge from anti-Black bigotry. Its population rose to 4,200.

But Boley could not escape Jim Crow beyond the Town’s borders. Oklahoma became a State in 1907 and instituted Jim Crow. Black children were not permitted to be educated with White children. State and County educational resources were deliberately discriminated against Black education. Okfuskee County, outside of the Town, was primarily rural and poor. The benefits of educational funding for Black children were largely denied.



From left to right with the marker: Mayor Francis Shelton (Boley), Jerry Klinger (JASHP), Amanda Bradford (Boley). Photo courtesy of JASHP.

The Jewish American Society for Historic Preservation (JASHP) has been actively donating historical markers across the South, recognizing the unique mission of Julius Rosenwald and his partnership for Good with Dr. Booker T. Washington, the Black American President of the Tuskegee Institute. Rosenwald wrote in an unpublished speech, "The Jew must be a pillar of civic well-being and moral capacity. He must be the one who in every crisis will be right, militant for the right, the ethical, the spiritual, the best in national life."

Placing a historical interpretive marker needs two key elements for success; a willing partner and time. JASHP approached Boley about donating a Rosenwald marker to the Town over a year ago. Amanda Bradford, on behalf of Boley, accepted the partnership with JASHP. She was the key link. She knew everyone, and everyone knew her.

Amanda wrote on the Boley Facebook page:

"Julius Rosenwald, in partnership with Booker T. Washington, made an indelible mark in African American education by building Rosenwald Schools across the South in the early 20th century. This marker, donated by the Jewish American Society for Historic Preservation and proudly supported by the Town of Boley, Chamber of Commerce, and the Oklahoma Historical Society, celebrates their enduring legacy Boley... these schools became beacons of hope during a time of segregation, providing education and opportunity to countless young minds."

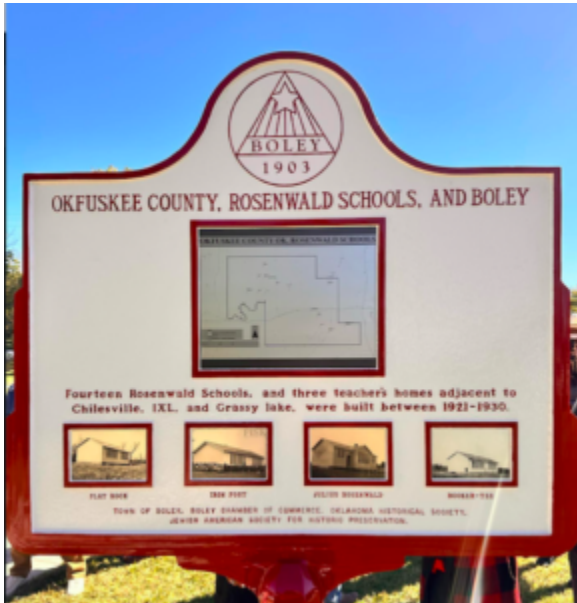
October 14, after many long, frustrating delays, the marker was dedicated. Boley proudly sited it next to the Boley Oklahoma Historical Society Marker adjacent to Boley's Community Park, where it would have maximum visibility.

The Town wrote the text for the marker.

"In 1911, Booker T. Washington, head of Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, asked Julius Rosenwald, a Jewish Philanthropist, to serve on the board of directors at Tuskegee. Washington shared his vision with Rosenwald; lifting the veil of ignorance would point the way to progress and industry. Black-American children in the rural South were severely discriminated against and largely denied educational opportunities. Rosenwald's desire to help, nurtured by Dr. Washington, led to the creation of the Rosenwald Fund. Between 1917 and 1932, the Rosenwald Fund built 5,340

schools for Black-American children. One hundred and ninety-nine Rosenwald schools were built in Oklahoma; fourteen schools and three teacher's homes were in Okfuskee County. Boley High School, a beneficiary of Rosenwald funding, provided generations of young people opportunities to better lives.

Working through mutuality, commonality, and respect, the Rosenwald Fund linked local communities of Blacks and Whites to reach Dr. Washington's vision of good for all Americans."



The reverse side of the marker has a siting map of the Rosenwald Okfuskee County schools and images of four representative schools. An image of Dr. Washington and Julius Rosenwald and Boley High School was included on the front.

The dedication was attended by former Rosenwald students and the members of Boley's and surrounding communities. All acknowledged that the Rosenwald schools had made a difference, then, today, and tomorrow, for all Americans, whatever color they may be.

Julius Rosenwald commented, "I do not see how America can go forward if part of its people (Black Americans) are left behind."

He was right.



Julius Rosenwald was born in Springfield, Illinois on August 12, 1862, while Abraham Lincoln was president of the United States. Julius' parents, Samuel Rosenwald and Augusta Hammerslough, were both German Jewish immigrants.

Rosenwald Elementary School — Essie B. & Lillie (Stallworth) & Quetta (Ashley) are pictured here
(the only school in Okfuskee County named Rosenwald)





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The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture



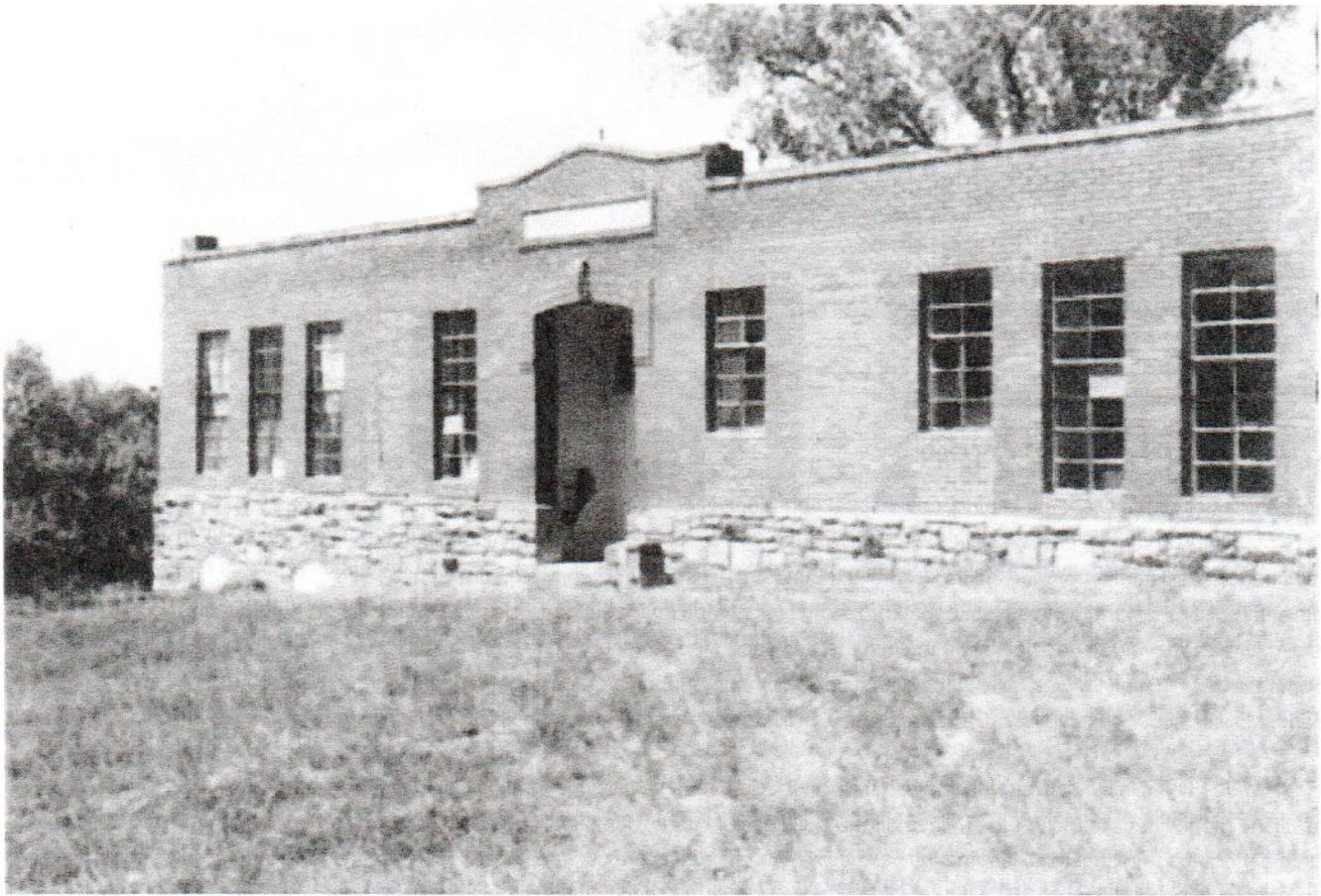
ROSENWALD SCHOOLS.

During the first half of the twentieth century educational opportunities for African American schoolchildren were stifled by racism, a shortage of money, and inadequate facilities. Beginning in the mid-teens, however, black schools throughout the south received much needed financial assistance from the Julius Rosenwald Fund. In 1913 Julius Rosenwald, president of Sears, Roebuck and Company and philanthropist for a variety of causes, began providing limited funding for the construction of black schools in Alabama. Due to the success of this endeavor and the persistent need in Alabama and other southern states, the Julius Rosenwald Fund was formally established in 1917. The fund was active in the states of Oklahoma, Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

The Rosenwald Fund's initial activity was to aid in the construction of new buildings for black schools. Although the fund did not supply all the money necessary for the erection of new buildings, it did provide sufficient money to act as an impetus for the local district to better their facilities. In Oklahoma the Rosenwald Fund aided in the construction of 198 education-related buildings in forty-four counties between 1920 and 1932. Of the 198 buildings, 176 were schoolhouses, ranging in size from one-teacher to twenty-two-teacher, sixteen were teacherages, and six were shops. The Rosenwald school building program ended in Oklahoma and nationally in 1932.

In addition to constructing schools the Rosenwald Fund contributed money for black school libraries, transportation to separate consolidated schools, African American teacher education, and black colleges and universities. The fund also had programs related to health and medicine, race relationships, and miscellaneous other activities related to human well-being. The Julius Rosenwald Fund continued in operation until 1948 when, as intended by Julius Rosenwald, all monies had been spent, and the trustees dissolved the fund.

Cynthia Savage



Rosenwald Hall at New Lima

(19687.TO.N033.67.1.4, Chester R. Cowen Collection, OHS).

See Also

AFRICAN AMERICANS, ALL-BLACK TOWNS, COLLEGES—AFRICAN AMERICAN, FREEDMEN SCHOOLS, IRA DeVOYD HALL SR., LANGSTON UNIVERSITY, FREDERICK DOUGLASS MOON, OKLAHOMA ASSOCIATION OF NEGRO TEACHERS, INMAN EDWARD PAGE, ISAAC WILLIAM YOUNG

Learn More

James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860–1935* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988).

Edwin R. Embree, *Julius Rosenwald Fund: A Review of Two Decades, 1917–1936* (Chicago: Julius Rosenwald Fund, 1936).

Edwin R. Embree and Julia Waxman, *Investment in People: The Story of the Rosenwald Fund* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1949).

Cynthia Savage, "Historic Context for the Julius Rosenwald Fund in Oklahoma," State Historic Preservation Office, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, (August 1997).

M. R. Werner, *Julius Rosenwald: The Life of a Practical Humanitarian* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1939).

Related Resources

Rosenwald Fund in Oklahoma (1997). SHPO Thematic Surveys

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Celebrities who visited Boley, OK

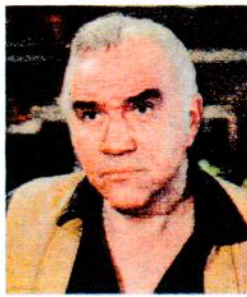
(Not listed in any particular order)



Booker T. Washington
Educator



Mary McLeod Bethune
Educator



Lorne Greene
Actor



Dan Blocker
Actor



Vonetta McGee
Actress



LaWanda Page
Actress/Comedian



Flip Wilson
Actor/Comedian



Bern Nadette Stanis
Actress



Richard Gant
Actor



Al Roker
Weatherman



Byron Allen
Comedian / Producer



Obba Babatundé
Actor



Glynn Turman
Actor



Jackee Harry
Actress

Through 2018