

NATIONAL ARCHIVES MICROFILM PUBLICATIONS

PAMPHLET DESCRIBING M828

Interior Department
Territorial Papers:
Oklahoma
1889-1912



NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE

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The records reproduced in the microfilm publication

are from

Records of the Office of the

Secretary of the Interior

Record Group 48

and

Records of the

Office of Territories

Record Group 126

in the National Archives Building

INTERIOR DEPARTMENT TERRITORIAL PAPERS:
OKLAHOMA, 1889-1912

On the 5 rolls of this microfilm publication are reproduced the records of the Office of the Secretary of the Interior relating to the administration of the Territory of Oklahoma, 1889-1912. Also reproduced are two record items dated 1918.

The Territory of Oklahoma was established by an act of May 2, 1890 (26 Stat. 81), and was formed from unassigned land in the center of Indian Territory. Oklahoma Territory continued to be enlarged by the addition of large sections of former Indian land. The eastern part of the future State of Oklahoma was reserved for the Indians and was never organized under regular Territorial government. The affairs of Oklahoma Territory were generally administered by the Secretary of the Interior in accordance with an act of March 1, 1873 (17 Stat. 484). The Secretary of the Interior also administered Indian affairs in the area designated as Indian Territory.

The Organic Act enabling the people of Oklahoma Territory to frame a constitution and to form a State government was approved June 16, 1906 (34 Stat. 267). Under provisions of the act Oklahoma Territory was combined with Indian Territory to form the State of Oklahoma. The State was admitted to the Union by Proclamation No. 780 of President Theodore Roosevelt on November 16, 1907 (35 Stat. 2160).

During the period 1889-1912 the Secretary of the Interior retained responsibility for supervising Oklahoma Territorial affairs within his Office. Territorial business was ordinarily referred to the Patents and Miscellaneous Division which, until its abolition in 1907, was part of the Secretary's Office. Only the incoming correspondence and a few duplicate copies or drafts of outgoing letters of the Division relating to Oklahoma Territory are reproduced on this microfilm publication. Record copies of all outgoing letters of the Division are in a multi-volume series of letters sent, and because those relating to the Oklahoma Territory are not readily segregable they have not been included in this publication. Also omitted is correspondence relating to the appointment of Territorial officials, which was handled by the Appointments Division of the Office of the Secretary. Although the act of 1890 that created the Territory of Oklahoma also required the Secretary of the Territory to record executive proceedings, it did not provide for their submission to an executive agency. Consequently they were not sent to the Department of the Interior and are not included in this microfilm publication.

Before 1881 all correspondence received by the Patents and

Miscellaneous Division was arranged in a single series under a number of subject headings. By 1881 the system of assigning numbers to incoming correspondence by date of receipt had been fully developed, and from that year to 1907 most of the communications received were filed in a single chronological series. At an undetermined date the records relating to Territories were withdrawn from these two series and arranged in a subject series by name of Territory. Most of the letters are arranged thereunder chronologically by date of receipt, but in some cases subsequent letters are filed with the first letter received on a specific topic. Copies of printed reports and messages, proclamations, legislative bills, pamphlets, newspaper clippings, and other papers were occasionally placed in these files, some without any covering letter.

After April 1907 the correspondence of the Office of the Secretary was handled by a central Mails and Files Division, which filed incoming correspondence and copies of outgoing correspondence together under a numeric-subject classification system. In 1934 those records dating from 1907 and relating to Territories were transferred to the custody of the newly formed Division of Territories and Island Possessions (now the Office of Territories). In this microfilm publication they are cited as records of the Office of the Secretary of the Interior.

The records reproduced in this publication are three series as follows:

(1) Letters received by the Patents and Miscellaneous Division relating to the advertisement of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Strip land opening, March 30, 1892-November 15, 1894, and to the advertisement of the Cherokee Outlet land opening, May 5, 1889-June 19, 1894. They concern Presidential proclamations, land schedules, selection of newspapers, and payment for advertising.

(2) Letters received by the Patents and Miscellaneous Division, May 16, 1890-July 20, 1907, concerning miscellaneous subjects. There are records relating to the administration of Territorial funds, efforts to attain statehood, and the administration of public lands. Other records pertain to such diverse topics as the formation of Territorial government; annual reports of Territorial Governors; administration of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches; election and work of the State Constitutional Convention; administration of county public works projects; formation of towns and municipalities; State mental hospitals; agricultural experiment stations; control of liquor and gambling; quarantine laws; administration of public schools and colleges; oil industry; famine of 1890; construction of artesian wells; conflicts between cattlemen and farmers; and quelling of local civil disturbances in 1892 and 1894.

(3) Subject classified files of the Office of the Secretary of the Interior, 1905, 1907-12, and 1918, consisting of incoming correspondence, copies of outgoing correspondence, reports, memorandums, clippings, and printed documents. These records were filed under the general heading of 9 (Territories) - 6 (Oklahoma). This file in turn was divided into 16 subheadings from 9-6-1 to 9-6-16, some of which were further subdivided by subject. Some of the major file headings are Town Lot Fund, Reports of Treasurer and Secretary of Board for Leasing School Lands, Appointment of Townsite Trustees, and Statehood. Most of the records within each heading are arranged chronologically. The 1918 records relate to the disposition of Territorial documents concerning the Governors' salaries, contingent expenses, and State Constitutional Convention expenditures.

The records reproduced on rolls 1-4 and on the first part of roll 5 of this microfilm publication are part of the records in the National Archives designated as Records of the Office of the Secretary of the Interior, Record Group 48; those reproduced on the last part of roll 5 are part of the records in Records of the Office of Territories, Record Group 126.

Also in Record Group 48 are other records relating to Oklahoma Territory. The records of the Appointments Division include copies of nominations and commissions of many Governors and Secretaries of the Territory, letters of recommendation for Territorial appointments, and applications for leave of absence. The records of the Indian Division include copies of correspondence that relates to the assignment of lands, railway rights-of-way, appointment of Indian agents and inspectors, and negotiations with and cessions of lands by Indian tribes. One special file in the Indian Division records concerns an investigation in 1906 of charges against Frank Frantz, Governor of Oklahoma Territory, 1906-7. The Indian Territory Division, 1898-1907, includes records that relate to the enrollment of the several tribes, the allotment of lands, the survey and sale of townsites, the leasing of mineral lands, the administration of railroads and telegraph lines within the Territory, the handling of tribal funds, the operation of schools, tribal taxes, and legislation.

Other related records are in Records of the United States Senate, Record Group 46; Records of the Bureau of Land Management (formerly the General Land Office), Record Group 49; Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75; and Records of the United States House of Representatives, Record Group 233.

The records reproduced in this microfilm publication were arranged for filming by James L. Harwood, who also wrote these introductory remarks.

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May 16, 1890-Nov. 10, 1900
 - 2 Jan. 18, 1901-Apr. 22, 1904
 - 3 May 10, 1904-Dec. 12, 1905
 - 4 Jan. 2-Dec. 11, 1906
 - 5 Jan. 2-July 20, 1907
- Subject Classified Files of the Office of the Secretary of the Interior, 1905, 1907-12, 1918:
- 9-6-1 Proposed Constitution, Parts 1 and 2, 1905, 1907-8
 - 9-6-2 Oil Inspection Laws, 1907
 - 9-6-3 Town Lot Fund, Parts 1-3, 1907-12
 - 9-6-4 Reports of Treasurer and Secretary of Board for Leasing School Lands, Parts 1-4, 1907
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 - 9-6-8 Complaint, Sarah Frey v. Dave McClure, 1907
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 - 9-6-11 "Enabling Act," 1907
 - 9-6-12 Appointment of Townsite Trustees, 1907
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 - 9-6-14 Statehood, 1907-9, 1918
 - 9-6-15 Bank Holiday, 1907
 - 9-6-16 Newspaper Clippings, 1907