

PLACE AND NAMES IN GARFIELD COUNTY 1893-2003

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Prior to the Cherokee Strip Land Run in September of 1893, a map of what is now known as Garfield County looked very “bare”. A couple of stage stations, the Rock Island Railroad constructed in 1889 and what was then labeled as the Abilene Trail (known more commonly now as the “Chisholm Trail”) were the only land marks then marked. With the land run the county was populated virtually overnight with a homestead located on each quarter section throughout the county. Within a year after the land run the map of our county changed dramatically. Prior to the advent of automobiles, small stores and post offices at intersections every three or four miles were essential to the pioneer’s lifestyle and early day commerce.

The original name of our county itself was a temporary one, simply designated by official proclamation with the letter “O”. The permanent name of the county was to be decided by vote of the settlers at the first general election held in November of 1894. The Populist Party decided the name “O” should be retained. The Republican’s rallied behind the name “Garfield” suggested by Houstin James (father of Enid’s favorite son, Marquis James). James, originally from Ohio, had been an important political supporter of James Garfield in his election in 1880. He was in line to be named a minister to China by the new Administration when President Garfield was assassinated. Vice President Arthur had other political favors to grant and James lost out. Instead of China the James family ended up in the Cherokee Strip. James used his political influence as a County Commissioner to remember his old political friend. The Democrats were divided in their decision on a county name. Many wanted to honor Sen. James Berry of Arkansas, who the summer before had assisted Enid with legislation in the US Senate that ended the Enid Railroad War with the Rock Island Railroad. Other Democrats feared that the name “Berry” would alienate county voters in North Enid who had lost out in the railroad-townsite contest. As a compromise the Democrats selected the name “Hamilton” in honor of civil war hero Winfield Scott Hamilton who had opposed James Garfield in the presidential election of 1880. In the county wide election “Garfield” won with 1236 votes, with 1070 votes for “O” and for “Hanrock,” 147. There were 84 votes for the name “Waukomis”.

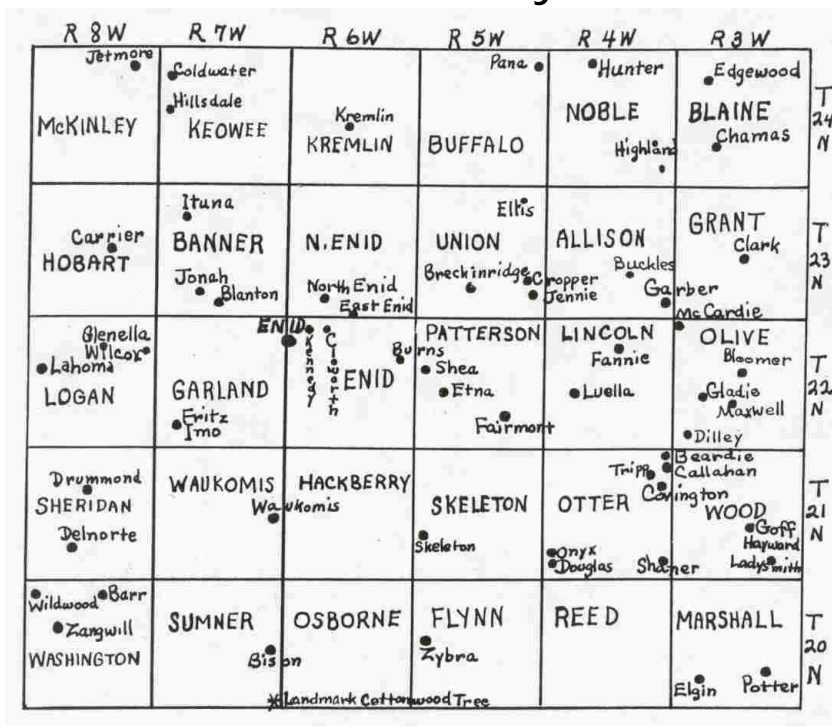
Today many of the county towns serve mainly as residential areas, though some still have active commercial strips. Rural life has changed, too, and a small store and post office at intersections every three or four miles is not needed now.

Sources of Information

- 1) Rainey “The Cherokee Strip” (19__.)
- 2) Rockwell, “Garfield County History V.I”
- 3) M. James, “The Cherokee Strip”

Of the 76 names in the following list, only 19 will be somewhat familiar to the current generation. That means 57 names exist only on lists of “ghosts towns” or landmarks once used in this area. It also means that some of the names first given sites were later changed. The following graphic is reprinted from V.I: Rockwell, “Garfield County History” published by the Garfield County Historical Society in 1982. Copies of that publication can be purchased at the Museum of the Cherokee Strip, 507 S. 4th, Enid, OK 73701. The accompanying list, in alphabetical order, will give the location of most of the sites, and a brief sketch of that sites’ history.

Garfield County, OK



BARR was for a time in Sec. 3-20N-R8W, 5 miles South of Drummond. A post office, named for the postmaster, **Fred Barr**, existed from September 1, 1899, to November 15, 1906.

BEARDIE just North of Covington was in T-21N-R4W and was also named for the postmaster, **John W. Beardie**. It was in service November 20, 1896 until April 25, 1898.

BILLINGS JUNCTION was in T-24N-R7W.

BILLVILLE located on SW corner of 8-22-4 on old Highway 64. **Bill and Ioa Oldham** started filling station and store in the early thirties and operated it until 1966.

BISON, South of Enid on Highway 81, was named for nearby Buffalo Springs, a camp site used by cattle herders, Indians, stage coach drivers, and others. Bison is in Sec. 24-T20N-R7W. A post office was started August 31, 1901.

BLANTON not a post office, was in Sec. 34-T23N-R7W.

BLOOMER Sec. 15-T22N-R3W was a post office from November 6, 1893 to October 31, 1901 and was named for **James F. Bloomer**, the postmaster. It was 5 miles Southeast of Garber.

BRECKINRIDGE is now mostly a residential community, but at one time had several businesses. It was named for the president of the Denver, Enid and Gulf Railway, **Breckinridge Jones**. In Sec. 28-T23N-R5W, it had a post office from June 15, 1901 to November 22, 1963.

BUCKLES was named for the editor of the Enid Eagle at that time, **J.A. Buckles**. Six miles northwest of Garber in T23N-R4W. It had a post office from September 14, 1898 to February 28, 1901.

CARRIER in northwest Garfield County was named for a merchant, **Soloman Carrier**. The post office was started May 22, 1897.

CHAMAS was in Sec. 21-T24N-R3W.

CLARK was in Sec. 15-T23N-R3W.

COLDWATER existed for a brief time near the site of Hillsdale, a post office 1894-1895.

COVINGTON started as **TRIPP**. The name was changed February 24, 1903 for **John Covington** prominent early day resident who helped area farmer raise money for platting a new townsite when the Frisco Railroad built through the area.

CROPPER was east of Breckinridge, a post office 1900-1901, named for the townsite owner, James L. Cropper.

DEL NORTE was in southwest Garfield County, a post office from 1896-1901.

DILLEY northeast of Covington, was a post office 1895-1905, named for the relatives back in Missouri of the husband of the postmistress, Cora Houghland.

DOUGLAS first called **ONYX**, was changed February 25, 1903, honoring Douglas Frantz, whose father, Edmund Frantz, promoted the building of the Denver, Enid and Gulf Railroad, (later the Santa Fe) between Enid and Guthrie. It is in Sec. 30-31-T21N-R4W.

DRUMMOND Sec. 15-T21N-R8W was named for Harry Drummond of the Blackwell, Enid and Southwestern Railroad Company. A post office was started July 17, 1901.

EDGEWOOD [Referenced in B. Gray at 5/1911.]

ELGIN was a post office ten miles southeast of Covington, 1894-1897, named for a local farmer, W.D. Elgin.

ELLIS was a place name in Sec. 2-T23N-R5W.

ENID T22N-R6W, had a post office before the town was established. The townsite had been platted and named as county seat before the Sept. 16, 1893 land run. The post office started August 25, 1893. Enid was name for the heroine of Tennyson's "Idylls of the King", though a number of other stories exist about its naming. It is the largest city in northwest Oklahoma. Enid has had numerous nicknames through the years including *Queen City of the Cherokee Strip*, *Wheat Capital*, *The Buckle of the Wheat belt*, and *Gold Spot of the Nation*.

ETNA was a place name for a time in Sec. 20-T22N-R5W.

FAIRMONT was first called Luella, the name changed in 1902, probably honoring the school of that name in Wichita, Kansas. It is in Sec. 26-T22N-R5W.

FANNIE T-22N-R4W, southwest of Garber, was name for Frannie Porter, wife of the first postmaster. It had a post office from 1893-1898.

FRITZ was two miles northeast of Drummond, then moved and was named **IMO**.

GARBER started as **McCardie**, March 13, 1894, but 38 days later, April 20, the name was changed to **GARBER**, honoring local merchant **Martin Garber**. It is in Sec. 25-26-T23N-R4W.

GLADIE was a post office, 1902-1904. Southeast of Garber, named for **Gladys Ellis**, daughter of the postmaster. Spelling of the name was changed by the PO Department. Gladie was in Sec. 22-T21N-R3W.

GLENELLA was in Sec. 10-T22N-R8W.

GOFF was its post office names, 1899-1903, but the first name used by residents was **LADYSMITH**, for the community in Natal besieged during the Boer War. In 1903 it was name **HAYWARD**. It was in Sec. 22-T21N-R3W.

HAYWARD, in southeast Garfield County was first **LADYSMITH**, then **GOFF**, and in 1903 it was named for the townsite developer, **Samuel Hayward**. It was in Sec. 22-T21N-R3W.

HIGHLAND in Sec. 24-T24N-R4W, north of Garber, was a post office from 1894-1906.

HILLSDALE, northwest of Enid, has had two post office names. From 1900 to 1905, Hillsdale and then for a year it was **COLDWATER**; another post office named Coldwater had been discontinued in May of 1905, file miles west. On September of 1906 it became Hillsdale again. It is in Sec. 18-T24N-R7W.

HUNTER Sec. 7-8, T24N-R4W was named for the townsite owner, **Charles Hunter**. The town and post office were established January 10, 1901.

IMO was named for **Imogene Allen**, daughter of a local family. It was two miles northeast of Drummond then moved to another site northeast of Enid, a site which had been called **FRITZ**. Sec. 19-T22N-R7W, a post office 1895-1922.

ITUNA was in Sec. 8-T23N-R7W.

JENNIE was named for **Jennie Jones**, wife of the postmaster in 1894. It was in Sec. 25-T23N-R5W. In 1900 the name was changed to **CROPPER**.

JETMORE in T24N-R8W was named for **Frank Jett**. It was a post office 1896-1900.

JONAH was in Sec. 28-T23N-R7W.

KENNEDY was in Sec. 5-T22N-R6W.

KREMLIN in Sec. 22-T24N-R6W (Northern Garfield County) has a post office established November 7, 1893. Though the name makes one think of Russia, the story is that a Rock Island Railroad official changed the name from Wild Horse to the name of his daughter's favorite saddle horse, Kremlin.

LADYSMITH Sec. 22-T21N-R3W was a local name for **GOFF**, which later became **HAYWARD**.

LAHOMA post office was started January 22, 1894. The name is a diminutive of the Indian word which is the name of the State, Oklahoma, Choctaw for "red man.". It is in Sec. 18-T22N-R8W.

LUELLA named for **Luella Riley**, wife of the first postmaster. In 1902 the name was changed and the post office moved to **FAIRMONT**. It is in Sec.20-T22N-R4W.

McCARDIE is now **GARBER**. The post office was started in 1894 and the name was changed about a month later.

MAXWELL Sec. 11-T22n-R3W had a post office from 1894-1895. It was northeast of Covington and was named for the fourth assistant postmaster general, **Robert Maxwell**.

NORTH ENID had a post office from January 19, 1894 to August 31, 1923. It was the site the Rock Island railroad officials thought would be the county seat town. Sec. 29332-T23N-R6W.

ONYX in Sec. 29-31-T21N-R4W was named for a type of quartz rock in the area. Located on the farm owned by Reuben W. Spencer, a post office was started May 23, 1894. In 1903 the post office was re-named **DOUGLAS** and moved to the developing town on the railroad.

PANA was once three miles northwest of Hunter, in Sec. 1-T24N-R5W. It had a post office from 1895-1902.

PIONEER is the name of a rural community and school.

POTTER didn't survive the years by did have a post office from 1895-1904 named for Linda Potter, the postmistress. It was in Sec. 26-T20N-R3W.

RELIEF was a place name at one time, no location in the records.

SHANER was named for **William Shaner**, first postmaster. It was in Sec. 35-T21N-R4W, and in business from 1894-1904.

SHEA was in Sec. 18-T22N-R5W.

SIBLEY is listed, no location given.

SKELETON named for Skeleton Creek was a post office southeast of Enid from 1894-1904 in Sec. 21N-R5W.

SPENCER, STACY, and **STEEN** are all names listed in Garfield County, location not given.

TRIPP was named for a town in South Dakota. It was in Sec. 11-T21N-R4W and was soon renamed **COVINGTON**.

VANCE AIR FORCE BASE at Enid was name for Congressional Medal of Honor winner, Major **Robert L. Vance** of Enid, who lost his life during WWII.

WAUKOMIS sounds somewhat Indian, but is actually the despairing statement of an early day rail-road official who missed the last train back to Enid and said "walk home...us". Located 5 miles south in Sec. 24-T21N-R7W, its post office was established November 25, 1893.

WHITE was in T22N-R8W named for **H.D. White** the postmaster. It was in business from 1894-1903. another town of White, OT was reportedly located in the SE/4 of 22-5. Started by dick Meirerdierks who built a blacksmith shop thee. When Fairmont came into being in 1902 all was moved there.

WILCOX was in Sec. 12-T22N-R8W, west of Enid. Named for **George Wilcox**, it was a post office from 1895-1903.

WILDWOOD Sec. 6-T20-R8W was a coined ward, using part of the postmaster's name, **James Wiley**, and the word "wood" because of a nearby grove of tress. It was a post office east of Ames from 1894-1905.

ZANGWILL was once a post office west of Bison, name for an English author, **Israel Zangwill**. In Sec. 16-17-T20N-R8W it operated from 1897-1905.

ZYBRA in Sec. 18-T20N-R5W, east of Bison, described in its name, a colloquial word used at that time what was going on over the area. Zybra meant "a moving settler". It was a post office from 1898-1903.