

OKLAHOMA
TERRITORY

TERRITORIAL TALES

Bits of
History
Before
Statehood

INDIAN
TERRITORY

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'Wealthy' Needed Little In Pre-Statehood Days

Because of drastic differences in dollar values, it is not easy to comprehend what determined wealth in Oklahoma before and around the time of statehood.

A biography of Wirt Franklin, early-day Ardmore oilman, refers to his wealth, then adds: "Further and tangible evidences of the success that has attended the well-ordered endeavors of Mr. Franklin are those given by his ownership of 1,000 acres of valuable land in southern Oklahoma and approximately \$25,000 worth of city property in Ardmore."

The information is from "History of Oklahoma" by J.B. Thoburn, as is the following reference to the construction of a home by Robert L. Ream, Wapanucka farmer and political leader at the time of statehood. It was noted that Ream's 300-acre farm was underlaid with "a fine quality of oolitic stone."

"From this material he has constructed a residence of \$14,000, regarded as one of the finest in the Chickasha Nation and the construction of which from the opening of the ground for the foundation work to the final completion involved a period of five years."

The cost of opening a business is reflected in the biography of Arthur Y. Boswell, who came from Arkansas to Fairland in 1894 to establish a jewelry shop. Later he moved to Tulsa, where his business thrived so that he was able to open a new store in May 1907.

"His building and lot cost him \$25,000 and his fixtures cost \$10,000, being of solid mahogany and glass. The building is three stories high, and in this ample establishment he carries a stock valued at \$40,000 to \$70,000. On opening day ... more than 8,000 visitors were received by Mr. Boswell at his store and to each was given a handsome souvenir."