

OLD GRAND, GHOST TOWN

By C. A. Squire*

On April 19, 1892, at the opening of the Cheyenne and Arapaho reservation there was a big spring then known as the "Upper Robinson Spring" coming out of the ground near the upper side of one of the best native groves of trees on the prairies of Western Oklahoma. This grove consisted of walnut, hackberry, coffee bean, cotton wood, persimmon and various other varieties of trees. It was several acres in extent and was watered by a large beautiful spring of clear sparkling water. As all the other known water in the neighborhood was full of gypsum, or in the parlance of the people of the country it was "gippy." This spring was to become the source of water for the town of Grand, and the bone of contention between the owner of the adjacent land and the County Seat town of Grand. At that time, this spring was possibly a half mile from the Canadian River and came out of the side of an old range of hills to the east; from the lower side of the grove one could distinctly see the Antelope Hills to the southwest at a distance of some ten miles.

Immediately at the west edge of the grove was the Canadian River. This river was nearly a mile wide at this point, and sometimes the water covered the whole distance across its bed. At such times of high water, great waves 10 or 12 feet high rolled down with such force that neither man nor horse could stand against them. The floor of the river at such times was boggy. In the language of the cow man, "it would bog down a saddle blanket." There was no crossing the stream when the Canadian was at its worst. At other times the river was swift enough, high enough, and boggy enough to make it hazardous for amateurs but for those who were acquainted with it, crossing was quite safe. At other times it was dry or nearly dry, and anyone would be safe in crossing with a team and wagon.

At the point where the big spring above mentioned empties into the river, the stream is flowing nearly due south. A big bend of the river swings north around the Antelope Hills, running north 10 or 12 miles then gradually making a horseshoe bend back to the south till it reaches a point due east of the Antelope Hills. The country between the river and the Antelope Hills has been called

* C. A. Squire, now of Blackwell, has lived in Western Oklahoma forty-five years. He came to Oklahoma Territory in 1905, and filed on a claim one and a half miles east of Grand. Thus, he saw nearly three years of life in the Territory and two years in the State before the town had vanished. He taught school in a number of places in old Day, Ellis and Roger Mills counties, including a district cut from the original Grand school district. All this time, his home was on his homestead near Grand, and he voted there for many years.—Ed.

"Horseshoe Bend," "Snaky Bend" and just "the Bend." I shall refer to it in this article as "the Bend." The big spring and grove are on the east bank of the river where the water is flowing south.

To the north of the grove was a tract of level prairie land between the river and the hills to the east and north. This was to be the site of Grand. Geographically located it was just south of 36 degrees North Latitude, and 13 miles east of the 100th Meridian, West Longitude, the Texas line.

By authority of an Act of Congress that part of the Cheyenne and Arapaho reservation lying between the Cherokee outlet on the north and Roger Mills County on the south was to be called County E until given a name by the people of the county.¹ The temporary county officials were appointed by the Governor of Oklahoma Territory to serve until regular officials should be elected. The temporary county seat was placed at Ioland some sixteen miles nearly east of Grand, on the north side of the Canadian River. This location of the county seat was not satisfactory to a great many people, as the water was bad and as far as was known in those days no good water was obtainable. It must be remembered that the population of E County was scant and almost entirely along the small streams that flowed into the Canadian River.

The E County courthouse, such as it was, burned down on the night of November 12th, 1893, and the next day the County Seat was established at Grand by order of the County Commissioners: George Hastings, John Webb and A. Blackstone. There was always a question about how the court house came to burn. Some of the County Officers were charged with complicity in its burning but no one was convicted in the trial that followed. The sheriff at the time of the removal of court house was convicted of something or other in Texas after he had gone out of office. He was wanted as a witness in the court house burning case. By request of the Territorial court, he was released to come to Grand to testify and never went back. The Texas people refer to the incident as a "life sentence to Oklahoma."

The legality of the transfer of the county seat was always in question. The courts always held that Ioland was the *de jure* county seat while Grand was the *de facto* county seat. However the *de facto* county seat got the court houses (two of them) and court henceforth

¹ In the preparation of this article, the writer wishes to make special acknowledgment for the assistance given by C. A. Null and by others in the offices of the County Clerk, Court Clerk, and County Superintendent of Ellis County. The writer checked the Day County Records in the courthouse at Arnett, Ellis County, from first to last.

was held at Grand as long as there was Day county. The county was named Day before the seat was moved to Grand.²

There are several legends afloat about how Grand got its name. The most likely one is as follows: A number of county officers and a few of the citizens of the neighborhood were standing around the big spring on the day that the tent for the court house was set up. As they viewed the grove and the raging river, and drank the water from the clear spring, one of the officers who had for a year been drinking gyp water at Ioland remarked, "Well, this is Grand." The rest of the crowd agreed, and so they called the place "Grand."

It wasn't long until Grand had a post office and a small wooden court house on main street.³ There were two stores and two saloons at one time. As the country settled, more and more lawyers came in till by statehood in 1907, Grand had four law offices occupied by six resident lawyers. Regular terms of the district court were held twice a year. A federal judge appointed by the President presided over both Federal and Territorial courts. The same jurors served both courts. A deputy U. S. Marshall waited on the court when sitting in federal cases while the Sheriff of the county waited on the Territorial court. The county officers were all elected by the voters of the County.

One point about the county in territorial days that was not up to standard was the county jail. This was a wooden structure and prisoners with any enterprise about them could cut their way out, which a goodly number of them did. A good story is told of one prisoner who got out in the night, took the sheriff's horse and the under sheriff's saddle and made his get-away. The sheriff afterward got a letter from him thanking him for the outfit and praising the horse as one to be proud of. A prisoner escaping jail wasn't a great calamity in those days. If he escaped it saved the County the cost of convicting him. He dared not come back, so the county was rid of him for good. The people of Day County were tax conscious in those days.

Another story is told about the sheriff arresting a great exhibitionist down town. The jail was located up the hill. The arrested man said, "Back where I came from the officers furnished a vehicle and hauled me to jail. Get your rig and I'll go with you." The

² On the authority of Dennis T. Flynn, the origin of the name of Day County is given as follows by Dr. Charles N. Gould in *Oklahoma Place Names* (Norman, 1933), p. 58: "Day County, which was eliminated at the time of the Constitutional Convention, was named at the first election for Captain Charles Day, who, with Dennis T. Flynn and Joseph W. McNeal, built the first courthouse at Ioland, the county seat."—Ed.

³ O. H. Richards, of Arnett, contributed his reminiscences in "Early Days in Day County," published in *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. XXVI, No. 3 (Autumn, 1948), pp. 313-24.

sheriff got his horse and threw a rope around the arrested man and started up the hill. The man decided he would walk. That's another good story whether it is true or not. A St. Louis paper published at that time said that the sheriff roped his man in the Canadian river and dragged him back to jail. This latter story is not substantiated by eye witnesses.

The Oklahoma Constitutional Convention decreed that Day County as such should end on November 16, 1907. On that day the old Day County officers turned over the reigns of government to the newly elected officers of Ellis and Roger Mills Counties with due formality. Ellis County got the county records and old frame court houses which had belonged to Day County. In the course of time Roger Mills had the records pertaining to Roger Mills transcribed and got a judgment against Ellis County as her share of what had been common property. The temporary county seat of Ellis County was located at Grand until the people of the county should decide where they wanted it. The County Seat battle for the next nine months was the most heated and bitterest campaign the people of Ellis County have ever been through. The fight gave Arnett the County Seat and the county commissioners immediately commenced to move the county property. The move was completed in the spring of 1909 and Grand, as a town of any importance, ceased to exist.

From about 1900 the farmers commenced to settle around Grand thick and fast until by 1907 there was a homesteader on nearly every quarter section of land. A great amount of land was settled which was entirely unfit for farming. This was the case, both with the rough land close to town and the sandy land farther east. The settlers on these poor places commenced to find out that they couldn't make a living on their places, by 1908. By 1914, the great majority had sold out and gone.

The decrease in population can be estimated by the decrease in votes. At the last County Seat election in August 1908 there were 199 votes in the box at Grand. The women didn't vote in 1908. Now the three election precincts which supplanted the old Grand precinct cast a combined vote of about 100.

The buildings have all been moved away from Grand and the townsite has grown up to weeds and brush. The big spring has been neglected but it still flows. The river hasn't cut much nearer the last few years but much of the timber has been cut down. The only thing left to indicate a town was ever there is a pile of rocks and mortar sticking out of the hill to the east side of town—the remnant of the old court house vault. The Canadian River doesn't rise so high any more, and is dry most of the year. The hundreds of dams on the small creeks above Grand hold back the floods. A team and

wagon could cross most any time now but as there is no town left no one wants to cross and no one has a team any more. Besides, there is a bridge at the mouth of Packsaddle Creek, ten miles away.

The great school organizing year in Oklahoma Territory was 1894. Many schools were organized in Day County about that time. Since there was practically no deeded land, taxes were raised altogether by a tax on personal property, principally cattle. School houses were small, terms of school were short and teachers were poorly paid. Four months was a good school year, and \$25.00 a month was about the average pay for teachers.

Grand was first included in District No. 2, most of which was north of Grand. It was soon cut off and became District No. 12. Della Cann was the first teacher, salary \$25.00 per month. Miss Cann was also the first elected County Superintendent. Later on a considerable part of District 12 on the north was cut off, and in 1905 two new school districts were cut off of the east side, leaving the Grand district little more than a mile wide and a very poor country to pay the school bills. Shortly after Statehood the Grand district was disorganized and annexed to the district to the east.

For a time Grand maintained two teachers but after so much territory was lost it could not raise the price. The school records of early Day County are somewhat confusing so I have had to depend upon persons now living for a considerable part of the school story. Some of the teachers who at one time or other taught at Grand were: Miss Libby Richards, now Mrs. Lanning Ballard of Enid; Alva Presnell, deceased; J. C. McLean, deceased; Lewis Pickens, now of Canton, Oklahoma; Ora Black, deceased; Della Cann, deceased; Benjaline Weaver. Members of the first district board, district No. 12: J. Howlett, C. F. Stevens and J. C. Langdom.

The original title to the original townsite of Grand, Oklahoma Territory was under U. S. patent signed by President Cleveland. Afterwards the townsite was extended to the north across the townsite line into Section 31, of Township 18 north of Range 24, W.I.M.⁴

4

PATENT

August 4th, 1894

United States of America

By — Grover Cleveland,

President

(S E A L)

to

Robert Alcorn, Probate Judge

Ex officio Trustee — In trust

for the use and benefit of the occupants of the Townsite of Grand, Oklahoma Territory.

Lots one (1), two (2), three (3) & four (4),
Section six (6), Township seventeen (17) north,
of Range twenty-four (24) west of the Indian
Meridian consisting of 63-70/100 acres.

The title of the whole townsite is now vested in Mrs. W. E. Bannister of Woodward. Unlike the ghost towns of the mining country of the Rocky Mountain States, there is nothing left to show where the town was. In case of most of the mining towns, the townsite, at least, is left—with Grand, even that or a considerable part of the townsite has gone down the Canadian River.

Since beginning this history of Grand, I have just attended the old Day County Settlers' Reunion in the old Grove at Grand. The first Sunday of June every year, this picnic is held at Grand, or rather in the Grove where Grand once was. The last few years this gathering of the old settlers has been hindered or entirely prevented by rain which either came the day of the meeting or sometime before that day and washed out the dirt roads so it was hard to get to the old Grove. This year (1950) the day was beautiful, but not hot, and the road coming in from the east was good. A large crowd from all parts of Old Day County assembled and ate a splendid picnic dinner prepared by the women of the two counties—a reminder of the earlier days when such picnics were common in the old Grove.

All of which reminds me of the old gatherings in the Grand grove in Territorial days. People from all over the county would gather there for the County Fair in the fall. Exhibits were few and not of much importance but socialibility was great. Here was where people from the four winds of the earth met on common ground. I never heard of any great controversy arising at these picnics between the North and the South.

Political meetings were also held in the old Grove. Sunday school gatherings and church meetings were also held there. The first graduation exercise for an 8th grade class (consisting of one girl) was held at night in the open air under the trees, and lit by gasoline torches. The Grove is now half gone. Cattle graze over part of the old picnic grounds. The spring is neglected and muddied up but is still flowing as strong as ever. An artificial lake covers part of the old townsite and the river covers part of it.

Although Grand was never much of a town, short-lived, entirely unknown, and is yet unknown to the world outside, it served as a training school for a number of men who made a name for them-

selves after leaving there. The writer has been personally acquainted with all the principal characters mentioned in this article.⁵

MILLARD WORD

Without any doubt, Millard Word was the first permanent white settler in the vicinity of Grand as he was somewhere in that vicinity in the employ of a large cattle outfit, or as an independent operator long before the country was opened.

Mr. Word was born in Corpus Christi about 1860. In 1880 he came to the northern Panhandle of Texas and northwest Oklahoma country where he was engaged in raising beef for the army post at Fort Supply before the Cheyenne and Arapaho country was opened to settlement. At the opening he came to E county and filed on a homestead three miles northeast of Grand. Unlike most of the early settlers, Mr. Word located on a level quarter of land with neither wood nor water. This piece is one of the best farms in Ellis County now. He afterward bought land on the creek two miles north of Grand where his ranch was located. He built his ranch buildings on this creek place and there is where he lived. In the early days before the country was settled, Mr. Word pastured land for fifteen miles to the northwest. This was mostly fenced, and the homesteaders that located inside the enclosure were fenced out. This arrangement seemed to work pretty well until early in the 1900's when the homesteaders were getting too thick. The ranch finally was reduced to 1800 acres, extending south to the old townsite of Grand.

When the town of Arnett started, Mr. Word moved his family there and lived there until he died. Vernon Word, son of Millard now operates the ranch. Mr. Word was one of the County Commissioners of old Day County. He died in 1837 in Arnett.

THE CHURCHILLS

The first settlers south of the river in the Bend were Edward Churchill and his four sons and a son-in-law, Bert Fay. The elder Churchill settled first on a piece of land with some native meadow on it but after cutting the hay in 1892, he decided to file on a quarter of level land, a mile and a half farther east. His

⁵The data for the brief biographical sketches presented here are personally known by the writer or have been secured from members of the families represented. Vernon Word, of Grand, helped in writing the story of his father, Millard Word. Fred Churchill gave the story of the Churchills. Data on the McQuiggs and the Ellises are from Mr. and Mrs. Ansley Ellis. Judge Sylvester Grimm supplied the data on the Grimm family. Mrs. Mary Seward gave the early history of her father, S. A. Miller. Q. A. Walck of Arnett, the only son of Adam Walck now living, gave the early history of the Walcks. The history of the Alcorns and the Mercers is from Mr. and Mrs. O. E. Enfield, the latter a daughter of J. L. Mercer and granddaughter of Judge Alcorn. The story of O. E. Null is from his son, C. A. Null, and from Mr. Null himself.

filing, I think, was the first between the Canadian River and the Antelope Hills. It is also one of the best quarters of land in the country. Three of his sons settled from two to seven miles up the river, the first claim picked by the elder Churchill is nearly all in the Canadian River now. The Churchills all came to Canadian, Texas in 1889 where they lived until they moved to the Bend. Mr. Churchill planted and raised the best apple orchard in these parts unless it is possible that Bert Fay's was better.

While the Churchills had a good herd of cattle, these cattle were not worth much. They milked cows and Mrs. Churchill made butter which was peddled out at Higgins and Canadian in Texas and at Grand after there was a Grand. The price ranged in these frontier town from 10 to 15 cents a pound. Once Churchill and sons shipped four cars of cattle to Kansas City from Higgins, two of these cars were lost on the road, the other two arrived safely at the Kansas City stockyards where they sold for \$13.00 a head. Another time a calf crop was sold at \$5.00 a round.

The first school in this region was held in a shanty 12 x 14 feet given by Mr. Churchill and moved four miles on skids. The school in this district was long known as the Churchill School, and the neighborhood known as the Churchill Neighborhood. Today the children in this district go by bus to Durham and Crawford. Some of them ride fifteen miles to school.

Two of the second generation of Churchills, Vern (81) and Fred (75) now live on the original homestead of the latter three miles north of Durham. A third brother and sister, Mrs. Bert Fay are living in California. Frank Churchill filed on the east side of the Bend. He started to make final proof before the Free Homes Act was passed. He paid his \$1.25 an acre but before the proof was cleared, the Free Homes Act had gone into effect and he got his money back.

JOHN McQUIGG

There is no question but what the Churchills were the first settlers south of the Canadian River and North of the Antelope Hills. Nor is there any question that Alex Crawford and John McQuigg were the next homesteaders on the east bend of the river opposite Grand. John McQuigg was born in Tennessee in 1862. When six years of age, his family moved to Montague County, Texas, where he grew to manhood. At the age of eighteen he went to Lipscomb County, Texas, adjacent to Day County. Here he worked as a cowboy on the Box T Ranch for nearly ten years. In the meantime, acquiring good herd of his own. He pastured his cattle on government land in the early 1890's. He staked a claim on the Canadian River in 1894 although he had run cattle over this part of the country for four years. This claim contained the

finest hay meadow in this part of the country. It might be well enough to note here that nearly all of John McQuigg's original homestead is now in the bed of the Canadian River. There is some question as to just the time McQuigg moved his family to the ranch on the Canadian river but it was about 1897.

A piece of hard luck deserves special mention here: An April snowstorm in 1897 drove McQuigg's herd of cattle into a canyon, and the whole herd of 200 head perished leaving him with nothing and owing a \$1400 store bill in Higgins twenty-five miles away. When the owner of the Box T ranch heard of Mr. McQuigg's loss, he called him out there and sold him a herd of 111 horses at \$10 a head, asking no money down and no security. Mr. McQuigg drove the horses through to Arkansas and sold them for enough to pay all expenses and his store bill. This, in particular, gave him a reputation for honesty which he retained to the end of his life.

In 1897, Mr. McQuigg moved a three-room house from Lipscomb, Texas, to the ranch forty-five miles, with the help of Alex Crawford and four yoke of oxen. This old house has a history worth telling. It was originally built in No Man's Land, out of lumber freighted from Dodge City, Kansas, about 1894. In 1897, it was moved to Mr. McQuigg's ranch where it rested 30 years. In 1927 Gwen Focht, his son-in-law, bought the old ranch house and moved it to the west side of the Bend across the river from the mouth of Little Robe Creek. With some additions, alterations and modernizations, it is now a modern farm home and it is probably the oldest house still in use anywhere in this part of the country. Mr. McQuigg died in 1934, and is buried in Bellview Cemetery on the old Churchill Homestead. His wife preceded him in death.

H. K. McQuigg

H. K. McQuigg was born in Tennessee in 1834. He moved with his family to Texas in 1868 and came to Day County in 1898. He settled on a claim, near his son John, where he planted and cultivated one of the best orchards in the country. He lived there until about 1921 when he went to Texas where he died in 1923.

With H. K. McQuigg came one daughter, Mary, who married Ansley Ellis in 1908 and lives in sight of old Grand now. Also, with the McQuiggs came May Dunn, who later married Will Thomas near Durham where they now live. Both of these younger women filed on and proved up claims near John and H. K. McQuigg.

ALEX CRAWFORD

Alex Crawford came to Day County with his old friend, John McQuigg. These two men had been friends for years on the range in Texas. They homesteaded adjoining quarters. Mr. Crawford moved his filing to a piece of upland some two miles from his

original bottom place. On this he lived till 1913 when he traded all his land for a business in Ft. Worth. The original homesteads of Crawford and McQuigg are now mostly in the Canadian River.

THE ELLISES

Levi Ellis was born in Tennessee in 1855. His early home was near enough the Battle of Shiloh where he could hear the cannonading. He had some clear recollections of the sound of that conflict and the excitement in the community at the time. He moved to Texas in 1877 where his son Ansley was born. He came to the Chickasaw Nation in 1894 and to Day County in 1898 where he filed on a claim four miles northeast of Grand. He sold out here and moved to Ochiltree County, Texas, in 1905. He received \$1600 for his land here. The wheat crop went with the place and more than paid for it. Mr. Ellis was killed in a car wreck in California in 1927.

Ansley Ellis, son of Levi, was born in Texas in 1877. With his father he moved to the Chickasaw Nation, and came to Day County in 1898 where he filed on a claim adjoining his father. He worked for M. F. Word on the Word Ranch about five years when he was appointed undersheriff of Day County. He was afterwards appointed Sheriff to fill a vacancy, thus being the last sheriff of Day County. In 1908 he married Mary McQuigg, daughter of H. A. McQuigg, and sister of John. Mr. Ellis lives with his wife in Roger Mills County, four miles west of Grand in view of the old townsite.

ALEX HUTCHISON

Robert Alexander Hutchison was born in Kentucky in 1854. He came to Texas when a young man where he served three years as a Texas Ranger. An odd accident happened while he was in Texas, deserving of special mention. Mr. Hutchison tells of a time in the Amarillo country when he was shot by a steer. Alex was carrying a pistol in his pocket when trying to hog-tie a steer. The steer kicked the pistol pulling the trigger and shooting him in the leg. He had a bad limp in that leg as long as he lived. Mr. Hutchison was manager some time or other of two different stores in Grand. He was also County Assessor at one time. Alex never married. He died in 1933 and is buried in Bellview Cemetery. He was a Mason.

ISIAH BLACKMON

Isaiah Blackmon, sometimes called "one-eye Blackmon" from the fact that he signed his name "I. Blackmon," was born in Alabama. When he was fourteen years old he ran away and joined the Confederate Army and served four years until the close of the Civil War. He moved to Cordell, Washita County, in 1898. An

incident at Cordell shows the business conditions of the times. Blackmon traded a team of horses, harness and wagon and \$300 in money (a large amount at that time) for relinquishment on a homestead. The stranger signed the relinquishment and then found his own brother, and saw to it that said brother made haste to the land office to file on the land. Blackmon's filing came back from the land office with the information that Mr. Blackmon had been played for a sucker and had lost his money. After this experience at Cordell, Blackmon, with the help of Ansley Ellis, moved to Day County where he filed on a claim one and one-half miles east of Grand. Mr. Blackmon died in Arnett about 1936 at the age of ninety.

CHARLES SWINDALL

Probably the man who afterward became the most noted of the early settlers of Grand was Charles Swindall. He came to Grand in 1897 soon after graduating from Cumberland University in Tennessee. Mr. Swindall was elected County Attorney in 1898 when he was barely 21 years old. He held this office one term. He then went to Woodward where he practiced law for a number of years. He was District Judge for one term and was elected to the Supreme Court of Oklahoma in the Republican landslide of 1928. He served one term on the Supreme Bench. When he came to Day County, he filed on a claim three miles northeast of Grand. This claim is now part of the Word Ranch. Mr. Swindall also served out the unexpired term of Dick T. Morgan in the 66th Congress. He died in 1939.⁶

A. L. SQUIRE

One of the lawyers and newspaper men of some note was A. L. Squire. He was born in Northern Wisconsin in 1865 just at the close of the War between the States. He moved with his parents to Nebraska when he was seven years old. He studied law in Nebraska and at one time in the office of Senator W. V. Allen. He was admitted to the Bar and practiced law in Nebraska, Missouri and Oklahoma. Mr. Squire came to Oklahoma in 1901. He served for a time as Deputy Court Clerk and was appointed County Superintendent to fill a vacancy in 1903, serving till 1905. 1905 he bought the *Day County Progress* which he continued until the County Seat was moved from Grand. He was elected County Judge of Ellis County in 1910-1912. He moved to Blackwell, Oklahoma where he continued the practice of law until a short time before his death in 1949. Mr. Squire filed on a claim one-half mile east of Grand and lived there till he was elected County Judge.

⁶ Richards, "Early Days in Day County," *op. cit.*, p. 315.

FRANK BURNETT

The man who brought more industry to Grand in the early days than any other man was Frank Burnett. He had a sawmill and a store at Grand, and later had a cotton gin and a canning factory at Little Robe. Mr. Burnett was one of the earliest County Clerks and was considered a very efficient officer.

W. H. SUTHERS

As Mr. Suthers located twelve miles from Grand and never lived any nearer, he should not be included in the history of Grand except for the fact that he was one of the last County Commissioners and was the prime mover in the organization of the Masonic Lodge at Grand. He was also the main mover in the organization of the M.E. Church South. Mr. Suthers died in 1913. Three sons still live on their original homesteads. George H., the oldest was clerk of the proposed County of Ellis before Statehood in 1907. W. K. has been secretary of the County Election Board of Ellis County most of the time since 1912.

GEORGE RADER

George Rader came to the country around Grand on the day the C. & A. reservation opened in 1892. He was born in 1865. He settled with his family about five miles northwest of Grand. He had scarcely stopped on his place when his four horses and \$700 in money were stolen. That was a large sum of money for those times. The horses were recovered a few days later near Coffeyville, Kansas, the next day after a notorious bank robbery at that place. Mr. Rader and his wife ran the largest hotel in Grand for several years around 1900. He moved to Shattuck in Ellis County where he died in 1909. Mrs. Rader was the daughter of Adam Walck. She lives in Shattuck, now.

S. A. MILLER

One lawyer who practiced law at Grand in the last years of the Territory and at Arnett many years after statehood, was S. A. Miller. In 1899, he came from Crawford County, Arkansas, where he had been a member of the State Legislature. He was elected County Attorney in 1900, and was elected County Judge of Ellis County three times. He died in 1934.

ALBERT McRILL

As far as I know, Albert McRill was the only man at Grand, who ever made "Who's Who in America." He was born in Kansas in 1880, and had some newspaper experience in his native state. He filed on a claim near Ioland. Soon afterward, with O. E. Null and O. H. Richards, he started the *Grand Republican*. He later bought the *Day County Progress* and consolidated the two papers.

In the spring of 1905 he sold out to A. L. Squire. Mr. McRill was admitted to the bar in Day County and practiced at Grand and Watonga before coming to Oklahoma City. He was City Attorney and City Manager of Oklahoma City from 1931 till 1933. Mr. McRill is listed in *Who's Who in America*.

SOLOMAN GRIMM

Sol Grimm was the last County Treasurer of Day County.⁷ He was born in Missouri, moved to Nebraska and came to the Cherokee Strip when it opened. Mr. Grimm made the Run, staked off a claim, but did not file on it, owing to some technicality of the law. He lived several years in the eastern part of the Strip. He came to Day County in 1900 and settled in what is now the northeast part of Roger Mills County. This was just about the time the herd law fight was getting fierce, and in 1902 Mr. Grimm was elected County Treasurer on the "herd law" ticket. He was elected again in 1904, serving in the office to the end of Day County. Mr. Grimm was living with his son, Sylvester, in Norman, when he died at the age of 87 years, in 1934.

Sylvester Grimm was the fourth child of Solomon. All the time that Sol was County Treasurer of Day County, Sylvester worked in the office, virtually running the same. He was born in Nebraska in 1880, came to Day County with his father. When his father was elected County Treasurer, Sylvester moved to Grand and took charge of the Treasurer's office, in 1903, and continued to run the same until statehood.

When Day County was divided Mr. Grimm went to Cheyenne in Roger Mills County. Sylvester Grimm had studied law while running the treasurer's office and was admitted to the Bar. He served six years as County Attorney of Roger Mills County. About 1921, he moved to Norman, Oklahoma. He has been elected County Judge of Cleveland County four times, and is serving in that capacity at the present (1950). Mr. Grimm raised five children, three of whom were born at Grand. His son, Orville, represented the Second Senatorial District in the State Legislature, 1946-50.

E. L. MITCHELL

E. L. Mitchell was born in Missouri. He came to Day County in 1900 and with his brother, Dick, published the *Canadian Valley Echo* until statehood. Mr. Mitchell was studying law in the meantime. After the end of Day County, he went to Cheyenne where he practiced law. He went to Clinton in 1916 and continued the practice of law. He represented the Second Senatorial District in the State Legislature several times. He was at one time President Pro-tem

⁷ Clara B. Kennan, "Neighbors in The Cherokee Strip," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. XXVII, No. 1 (Spring, 1949), pp. 81-2.

of the Senate. He was several times elected Judge of the District Court in the Clinton district. Mr. Mitchell now lives in Arapaho—I understand he is nearly blind.

W. E. BANISTER

W. E. (Billy) Bannister came to Grand as a rural mail carrier shortly before the close of the Territory. He soon became postmaster and bought the only store left. He continued to run the store many years after the rest of the town was gone. He at some time or other bought the whole townsite of Grand and the old Walek place and other land nearby. After leaving the store he moved to Woodward. He died in 1948. Mrs. Banister still lives in Woodward.

DR. O. C. NEWMAN

There was no resident doctor at Grand and none nearer than Canadian, Texas, or Woodward, Oklahoma, the first six or seven years of the town of Grand. In 1900 Dr. O. C. Newman just out of medical school, came to Grand to practice medicine. For the next few years he was the only physician nearer than twenty-five miles on the north side of the river. He moved his office and residence to Shattuck before statehood but has retained most of his practice in the Grand vicinity until the present time. Much more could be written of Dr. Newman but his story has been written and published elsewhere many times.⁸ Dr. Newman's portrait is in the portrait room in the Historical Building at Oklahoma City.

O. H. RICHARDS

O. H. (Oat) Richards is another one of the early settlers who held office in both Day and Ellis Counties for many years. He, however, has written his own story in a recent issue of *The Chronicles* ("Early Days in Day County," *op. cit.*). Mr. Richards now lives in Shattuck.

ROBERT ALCORN

Robert Alcorn and his sons homesteaded over on Packsaddle Creek, ten miles from Grand. He was the first elected County Judge and was Judge at the time of the removal of the County Seat. He was one of the most important personages in the story of early Grand.

Robert Alcorn was born in Iowa 1838. In 1861 he enlisted in the Union Army and served four years. His second daughter was born shortly after he went to war and she was four years old when he got back home. He had never seen her before. He taught school in Iowa, was a member of the Iowa legislature. He was admitted to

⁸ O. C. Newman, M.D., "Reminiscences of a Country Doctor," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. XXVII, No. 4 (Winter 1949-50), pp. 412-19.

the Bar in Iowa and afterward in Arkansas where he moved in 1872. He moved to Texas by ox team in 1874, came to County E in 1892, and was the first elected County Judge. It was to Judge Alcorn as trustee that the town site of Grand was patented. Judge Alcorn was elected Judge several times and had a hand in almost all moves connected with the early development of Grand. He had six sons, all of whom came to County E with him. As all of these sons lived ten or more miles from Grand and held no county office, nor had any business in Grand, I will leave them after giving their names. Billy the oldest and only one now living is in California. The others are John, Bob, Jim, Aleck and Granville, all deceased. Judge Alcorn died in 1920.

J. L. MERCER

J. L. Mercer was a son-in-law of Judge Alcorn. He was born in Ohio in 1838. Altho a northern man, he believed in States rights and went South. He joined the Confederate Army and served in the Medical Corp. He came to County E in 1893, and was the second elected County Superintendent. One son, Shannon, was killed in the Phillipine War. Another, James, died of disease in France during the World War I. Earl and Hise are now living in Ellis County, and another son, Ed, is deceased. There are three living daughters. Maud (Mrs. Dick Porter), Maggie (Mrs. Orville Enfield,) Jane (Mrs. Jim Bull), and one daughter, May, deceased.

A. A. BENNETT

The last postmaster in Day County who held the office well into Ellis County times was A. A. Bennett. He was born in Nebraska in 1871 and was married to Jessie Meeker in 1893, moved to Kansas in 1897.

The Bennetts moved to Day County and homesteaded three miles northwest of Grand. This claim is now part of the Word Ranch. When the mail route was changed from Higgins, Texas, to Gage, Oklahoma, Mr. Bennett became postmaster at Grand. He remained postmaster about six years, the time of the greatest influx of settlers around Grand. During his term as postmaster, three rural routes were established from Grand. After Grand lost the county seat, Mr. Bennett took charge of the lumber yard at Arnett, and continued the same business to near the close of his life. He died in 1946. Mrs. Bennett still lives in Arnett.

ADAM WALCK AND FAMILY

The history of Grand is tied up so closely with the history of Adam Walck, that part of what has already been written will have to be repeated here.

Adam Walck was born in Ohio in 1834. He left home when he was twelve years old and drifted around the Great Lakes region for

several years. He was married to Mary Walker in 1850 and moved to Missouri about the end of the War between the States. Here he was caught between the two bitter factions created by the war and the causes of the war. He moved to Kansas with his family in the early 1870's and to No Man's Land, that part afterward known as Beaver County, in 1887. He went on to Texas and settled four miles south of Higgins the same year. Here he lived till the opening of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Country April 19, 1892. From here he walked in to County E on the date of the opening. The only stake was wood and water. Mr. Walck had his eye on the lower Robinson Springs and his son Del had his eye on the upper Robinson Springs about two miles up the river. On his way to the new country, he met one Sam Ratliff who informed Mr. Walck that he had already staked off the lower Robinson Spring. After some bargaining Mr. Walck gave Ratliff \$50.00 for his rights and proceeded to take possession. His family was soon moved over from Texas, only about twenty miles away. They lived in a tent for some time.

Adam Walck's first filing covered lots 1, 2, 3 and 4 in Section 6, Township 17, North of Range 17, West of the Indian Meridian. When the County Seat was moved Mr. Walck relinquished his right to lots 1 and 2 to the townsite, and placed his filing on lots 5 and 6, and certain lots in section 7, down the river. Thus, the townsite of Grand was on lots 1 and 2.

The County Seat hadn't been located long before a difference arose between Mr. Walck and residents of the town about the ownership of the big spring as it was upon this spring that the town depended for water. Mr. Walck had the place surveyed and his surveyor said the spring was on Mr. Walck's place. The district judge had a surveyor, a Mr. Ross, from Cordell, run the line and he found the town owned the spring. The suit dragged on. After seven years of litigation a compromise was made. The court decreed accordingly that the spring belonged to Mr. Walck but the people of the town could get water there. However, they were not to cut any timber on the strip of land in dispute.

Adam Walck was the first postmaster, the first hotel keeper and the first storekeeper. In the early days, the Indians came to Grand, and were Mr. Walck's best customers in the store as well as furnishing amusement for children and others who had never seen Indians before. Mr. Walck continued to live on his claim several years after the county seat was moved, until his death in 1920. Mrs. Walck died in 1910. They were the parents of six sons and two daughters—all of whom came to Grand with him or shortly thereafter.

L. A. Walck, oldest son of Adam, was born in Ohio in 1855, came to Grand and settled three miles from his father in 1892. A short time after statehood he went to Rogers, Arkansas, where he died in 1935.

George Walck, born in Ohio, came to Grand with the rest of his family, and filed on river bottom land four miles above town. The river got most of his land and he filed again under the Free Homes Act adjoining the town of Grand where he had a barber shop for many years. After the demise of the town he went to Arizona. He had three children, two of whom are well known in Ellis County: Jennie, who became Mrs. Charles Johnson, has lived in Arnett about forty-five years; Leonard, known as "Happy," and "Rastus" who has worked in Arnett and other places in Ellis County.

H. I. Walck, better known as "Hi" was born in Ohio 1860 and came to Day County with his family in 1892. He filed on a homestead four miles above Grand, and after the passage of the Free Homes Act he filed again five miles northwest of Grand. Most of his first homestead is now in the Canadian River. Mr. Walck was the first elected County Clerk of Ellis County, and was County Clerk when the county seat was moved to Grand. He continued to live on his last homestead until his death in 1950.

Ed Walck was born in Missouri 1863 and came to Day County with his father when the country opened. He opened the first saloon in Grand but didn't stay long in that business. He left the country in 1895. He died in California about 1938.

Del Walck was born in 1871 and came to Day County when barely 21. He filed two miles above Grand and on what was known as the upper Robinson Spring. He lived here until 1909 when he went to Colorado. He died in 1945.

Quinn was the youngest and is the only living son of Adam Walck. He was born in 1879, came with his father to Grand when he was about thirteen years of age. He lived with his father or on his father's place until 1912. He married Nora Johnson, daughter of J. F. Johnson, of Arnett. He lives at present on the place his father-in-law homesteaded in 1901.

O. E. NULL

Probably the man most identified with the growth of Grand next to Adam Walck was O. E. Null, a son-in-law of Adam Walck. O. E. Null was born in Indiana in 1862. His father died when Omar was three years old and a few years later his mother married a preacher, and she became a matron of a County Poor House. It was here the boy got his first official position through the influence of his mother—that of usher at the poor house. It was his place to show visitors around the grounds. There were a great many of these visitors, especially on Sundays. The family moved to Kansas, and afterward Omar went to Colorado where he worked on a railroad for a few weeks then got a job of making railroad ties from virgin timber. After earning \$200 at this, he went back to work on a Kansas

farm for a while. He then went over into Indian Territory as foreman on a ranch twelve miles northeast of present Stillwater. He was but twenty years old at that time. He joined Payne's "boomers" in 1882, but did not make the Run. He went back to Kansas where he farmed ten dry years and nearly went broke. Some time in the early 1880's he married Mallissy Walck, oldest daughter of Adam Walck.

Mr. Null with his family came to Grand in 1894 and settled on a claim five miles north of Grand. From this time on he was definitely connected with the town of Grand. Mr. Null started an abstract business as soon as there was any abstracting to do in Day County, and has continued in that business ever since—the last forty-five years in partnership with his son, C. A. Null, who will be mentioned hereafter.

About 1902 Mr. Null was appointed resident deputy clerk of the district court of Day County of the 6th Judicial District of Oklahoma Territory, which position he held till the end of the territory November 16th, 1907. At the election of September 17th, 1907 he was elected Clerk of the District Court of Ellis County to which position he was re-elected 3 times.

The first years in Oklahoma Territory Mr. Null performed many public services aside from his regular official work. He was delegated to go to Kingfisher and copy all the field notes from the government survey for Day County. Another time in 1898 he with two others were appointed by the Territorial district court to take two men charged with murder to the county jail at Pond Creek, as the jail at Grand was inadequate. These two men had many friends who were organizing to overtake them on the way and release the prisoners. The men in charge started northwest toward Higgins, Texas, traveling a few miles in that direction then switching off to Gage, Oklahoma. When the crowd that would release the prisoners got to Higgins they learned their quarry was already on the train at Gage. Both these men were subsequently convicted and sentenced to 99 years and 10 years, respectively, in prison. President McKinley soon after pardoned the 99 year man. The other served a good part of his term.

Mr. Null was the prime mover in organizing the Woodmen of the World Lodge at Grand and also the Odd Fellows Lodge. He retains membership yet. In 1906 Mr. Null was nominated Republican delegate to the Constitutional Convention but he was defeated in the election by David Hogg, Democrat. Mrs. Null died in 1935. Mr. Null still lives in Arnett and goes to his office nearly every day altho the business is principally run by his son, C. A. Besides C. A., Mr. Null had two other sons, both deceased. He also had 3 daughters; Mrs. E. E. Plank, Mrs. Cleve Cooley and Mr. Orb Vincent. Mr. O. E. Null is a member of the Oklahoma Historical Society.

Chester A. Null, son of O. E., also had a hand in the history of Grand. At a very early age he was in his father's office assisting with the clerical work in both the Court Clerk's office and in the abstract business. He was for a short time in 1906 Deputy Clerk of the District Court while his father was U. S. Commissioner. He has lived in Arnett since statehood and is still running the abstract office of "Null and Son."