

LIFE AND SOCIETY IN SAPULPA

By Pauline P. Jackson

At the turn of the century Indian Territory was changing rapidly, but it left much to be desired in the way of comfortable living. Life in Sapulpa was complicated by streets that were ungraded, muddy in the early spring rains and ankle deep in dust in the summer. The stores stood above the streets on stilts-like foundations with steps leading to the platform porches in front of them. It was quite a feat for the ladies to shop from one store to another, struggling with their long skirts, children, bundles, and market baskets.¹ So, incidentally, O. M. Irelan had an opportunity to buy the *Sapulpa Light*,² because its owner's wife, Mrs. Will Winch, longed to get back to Kansas City where "everything's up to date."³

Most Sapulpa yards, however, were large enough for a big family garden and many families owned chickens and kept a cow. The gardens provided seasonal food luxuries, such as strawberries, muskmelons, watermelons, and roasting ears, and small orchards and grape arbors provided the winter's canned fruit and jelly. In this new country where men were trying to set up their businesses and raise their families at the same time, home grown food was almost an economic necessity.

Game was also abundant, including quail, pheasants, prairie chickens, deer, squirrels, rabbits, and wild turkeys. A good hunting dog was a prize possession. The creeks were clear and full of fish to be caught for sport or for the family larder. Hunting in Indian Territory was quite a "tourist" attraction in those days and the St. Louis and San Francisco Railway advertised the area as the hunter's paradise. Congress passed game laws applying specifically to Indian Territory and "The curious Want to Know" a column in *Twin Territories, The Indian Magazine*,⁴ advised a reader that deer season was from November 1, to February 1, without dogs; quail season was from November 15, to February

¹ Pearl Morrow Miller, "Reminiscences of an 'Old Timer,'" Book of Pioneer Stories and Historical Data About Sapulpa. Sketches and clippings compiled by the members of the Nancy Green Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (Sapulpa Library, 1946-1947); hereafter cited as DAR Scrapbook.

² O. M. Irelan, "First Fifty Years of Sapulpa's Newspapers," DAR Scrapbook.

³ Line from the Lyrics of "Oklahoma," a musical by Rodgers and Hammerstein:

"Everything's up to date in Kansas City,
They've gone about as far as they can go . . ."

⁴ *Twin Territories, The Indian Magazine*, Volume 4, No. 8 (August, 1902), p. 248.



Magditcha, Mulholland, Imbri, Toadme, Zettle (to left); "Dad" Thompson, J. G. Skreuter, Perry Cross, Dr. John S. MacMaster, John F. Egan, C. E. Weaver.

15; turkey season opened November 1, and closed February 1. One of the game laws prohibited the shipment of game out of the territory,⁵ and so the butcher shops during the hunting season were hung with dressed game from the expeditions of hunters.

J. C. Menifee often arranged hunts for men with whom he did business in the east. He told the story of how he warned one such group not to shoot any deer with red flannel neckbands, as they were pets of his children, Betty and Newell. But the hunters were careless, and in their kill that day they found they had accidentally shot two deer with red flannel collars. They were sorry and offered to pay for them, but Menifee said the important thing was to keep the secret from the children. Betty and Newell did not know for many years that the dressed deer hanging in the Williams Meat Market across the street from their father's store were their pets.⁶

Indian Territory was an exciting land to grow up in, although somewhat difficult for the good parents who sought to rear their children properly. Early on Saturday evenings the residents began pulling down their window shades in anticipation of the usual Saturday night revelry when usually some bad Indians and tough white men found it great sport to shoot at lighted windows. The small community with only United States marshals to maintain order over a wide area soon found itself housing some very unsavory citizens. In Sapulpa a deputy marshal had been employed by the city as early as 1894 to help keep order.⁷

However, against the threatening dangers of "bad men" activities, there were the many advantages of the freedom of a small village. It did not take long to reach a field near town, where there was good hunting for a boy (or girl) and dog. Polecat Creek and Rock Creek were nearby for fishing, swimming, and picnicking. Moccasin Track's sandstone ledge was a favorite place for white and Indian boys from Euchee to dig for arrowheads and to camp out.⁸ This spot was also an attraction for many visitors and a favorite picnic area for all.

Pianos and musical instruments were expensive and therefore scarce. "Dad" Smith's wife, Polly, had an organ she had carefully brought with her from Kansas, and Dr. J. S. McAllister

⁵ *Sapulpa, Indian Territory; Natural Division Point of the Great Frisco System; Resources, Development, Surroundings and Future Prospects*; compiled by the Sapulpa Real Estate Company, 1903. Sapulpa Democrat Print, Sapulpa, Ind. Ter.; hereafter cited as *Sapulpa, Indian Territory, 1903*.

⁶ A newspaper interview with Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Menifee, *Sapulpa Herald*, August 22, 1948.

⁷ *Sat Vedor*, "Sapulpa" *Tulsa Daily World*, July 17, 1955.

⁸ Interview, John Barnett, Muskogee, August 16, 1954.

held the first Union Sunday School in the summer of 1894⁹ at their hotel because the Smiths let him use the organ.¹⁰ Hall Miller started a band which was much in demand. But if musical instruments were scarce, declamatory talent was abundant. Every child could learn a poem or speech with proper gestures. Sapulpa had two gifted elocution teachers: Pearl Morrow Miller (Mrs. H. C.) and Myrtle McDougal (Mrs. D. A.), and their pupils were called on to perform at school and church affairs, and community celebrations, such as the Fourth of July and the annual Christmas parties. These first Christmas parties were given by local merchants, but later became community sponsored affairs.¹¹ They were looked forward to with great excitement by children of all ages.

Men, women, and children alike enjoyed horseback riding. Not everyone could afford to keep a pony or horse, but the livery stable did a thriving business renting horses for riding or driving with carriages. Horse racing at special events, such as fairs and the Fourth of July celebrations, was always included on the program. The latter was a two-to-four-day affair. An arbor to offer cool shade usually was set up on the main street with free barbeque for everyone. In 1897, the first year the Whitakers were in Sapulpa, the star attraction on the Fourth of July was a horse race for the ladies. Mrs. John F. Egan caused quite a stir by riding astride her horse.¹² Mrs. Charles Whitaker rode a borrowed horse and her husband was so grateful that she did not have an accident on a strange horse that he later bought her one. Whether the horses were borrowed or owned was of no concern to the lady, who felt that she cut a fancy figure dressed in the traditional red, white and blue.¹³ Hall Miller's band led the parade and played later for the pleasure of picnicking groups of friends and neighbors. Other activities included square dancing, and a speech by the mayor and patriotic orations by local dignitaries.¹⁴

The 1900 Fourth of July program was climaxed by a Queen's parade and coronation ceremony. Pearl Morrow was elected queen,¹⁵ and she selected six matrons of honor and six maids of honor to share her glory. Some of the names of these ladies

⁹J. D. Manflec, "A Few Early Day Happenings in and around Sapulpa, by a Pioneer," *DAR Scrapbook*.

¹⁰A newspaper interview with Mrs. Hattie Smith McKeltop, Sapulpa, *Sapulpa Herald*, July 16, 1948.

¹¹Maude Whitaker Harmony, "I Remember When — in Sapulpa," *DAR Scrapbook*.

¹²*Ibid.*

¹³Mary McIlflec Whitaker, "A Pioneer Story", *DAR Scrapbook*.

¹⁴Maude Whitaker Harmony, *op. cit.*

¹⁵Interview, Roberta Miller Croston (Mrs. Merwyn), Tulsa, Oklahoma, September 9, 1936.

have been forgotten but pioneers remembered Mesdames J. F. Egan, B. L. Baldwin and Charles Whitaker among the matrons of honor, and the Misses Blanch Burnett and Auriola Burns as maids of honor. All wore regal costumes obtained in St. Louis by Hall Miller. A platform was built in front of the Ripley Hotel for the coronation of the "Queen of the Territory." The queen's float was drawn by six white horses. When the parade started north of the tracks, the train crew pulled a practical joke on the young mayor, Hall Miller, and managed to switch a train into the way just as the parade was ready to cross the tracks. Despite the delay, however, the parade finally reached the hotel, and Miss Morrow ascended the platform to stand between Confederate and Union veterans with drawn swords. She received an ovation from the hundreds of people gathered from miles around, but one tipsy cowboy was heard to threaten to shoot her because he wanted no "royalty" in the territory. But all went well, and Mrs. Charles Whitaker sang "God Save the Queen" to close the ceremony.¹⁶

On June 30, 1906, the *Sapulpa Light* ran a full page advertisement of the "Grand Celebration" to be held at Highland Park, Moccasin Tracks Cliff, for two days, July 4 and 5. The speakers of the day were to be Mayor H. M. Watchorn, Judge Sam P. Jennings, Hon. Ira C. Perkins, L. B. Jackson, J. J. Jones, J. J. Mars, W. P. Root, and C. C. Warren. The amusements offered to make it a big celebration were baseball games, Indian stomp dances, brass band music, horse races, dancing in a pavilion, roving contests, and a greased pole contest. Big prizes for winners in all events were offered. Gas lights would illuminate the park, and fireworks were to be displayed nightly.

These traditional Fourth of July celebrations, which were characteristic of the early 1900's in Indian Territory, had a frontier quality unique to this area.

Enthusiasm ran high in Sapulpa in 1906. With Glenn Pool now famous, the people could not do enough to boost their city. When the Commercial Club formed the bridge corporation to finance the Rock Creek bridge to Glenn Pool, several benefits were given to augment the bridge fund. One group of boosters sponsored a ball game, the Leans versus the Fats. Every business closed. Even the post office closed because Postmaster Bill Bayless was the captain of the Leans. The Fats' captain was Lefe Spear, abstract man and local orator. Darkness ended the game, but it was a success because the game earned seventy-nine dollars for the bridge.¹⁷

¹⁶ Pearl Morrow Miller, *op. cit.*; letter, Mayme Brentlinger Clark to writer, July 10, 1952.

¹⁷ *Sapulpa Light*, May 16, 1906.

1776 JULY 4 1905

GRAND CELEBRATION

TWO BIG DAYS  AT HIGHLAND
 Tuesday and Wednesday PARK
 JULY 4 & 5 The Moccasin Tracks Club

SAPULPA, I. T.

Speakers of the Day	Amusements of the Day
Address of Welcome	Base Ball Games
Mayor H. M. Watchorn	Indian Stomp Dances
Judge Samp Jennings	Horse Races
Hon. Ira C. Perkins	Dancing Pavilion
Hon. L. B. Jackson	Roping Contests
Hon. Henry Clay King	Golf, Croquet, Tennis
Hon. J. J. Jones C. H. R.	Grassed Pole, Sack
Hon. J. J. Mars	Races, Wheelbarrow
Hon. W. P. Root	Races, Egg Races, etc.
Hon. C. C. Warren	Big Prizes for Winners

GRAND ILLUMINATION BY GAS NIGHTLY

MUSIC BY CHANDLER BRASS BAND

BIG INDIAN WAR DANCE
Day and Night, Participated in by Fifty Gaudily Painted Indians—Don't Miss It

DISPLAY OF FIREWORKS NIGHTLY
From Top of the Cliff—Two Hundred Feet High

REDUCED RATES ON ALL RAILROADS AND CARRIAGE LINES
 ROUND TRIP FROM THE CITY TO GROUND, TWENTY-FIVE CENTS

Then there were the activities of the ladies auxiliary to the Commercial Club. Their biggest project was to give two chicken dinners, for which all the food was donated by the women of Sapulpa. The two dinners raised four hundred dollars for the fund. They also gave a benefit ball and ran refreshment booths.¹⁸

In April of 1906 John M. Weeks had been elected mayor,¹⁹ and his daughter Grace was selected to christen the new bridge when it was completed in the last week of August. Two thousand people gathered to watch the parade and bridge dedication. It was a fitting celebration to culminate the efforts of Sapulpan who had met the need of the city's newest industry, oil.

Organized labor was strong in Sapulpa with the Frisco railroad employing a large majority of the town's breadwinners, and the Farmers Union was an active and powerful political force. Hence, Labor Day was another occasion for well attended parades, picnics, and speeches.

The Labor Day of the year 1907 was particularly memorable, as political enthusiasm ran high for and against candidates for the state's and county's first officers. The Farmers Union and the Federated Trades Union held a parade and picnic. The parade, headed by W. F. Collins, president of the Farmers Union, and F. A. Fulp, president of the Retail Clerks Union, included some five hundred representatives of bricklayers, stone masons, and carpenters unions. At the picnic, following the parade, leading candidates made speeches. L. B. Jackson was running for county attorney and his speech was considered the feature of the day. He was complimented for his ability as an orator and lawyer, but especially for his knowledge of the history of labor unions. His election was urged by the editor of the *Democrat* so that Creek County would be represented by one of the most able lawyers in the Creek Nation.²⁰

Although the oil boom days brought lantern slide shows, the nickelodeon, and later the silent movies, there was still a preference for activities which involved large groups of people getting together to extoll or demonstrate the wonders of a new town in a growing state. As late as 1915, there were three events which emphasized the frontier atmosphere still found in Sapulpa. In February the State Bankers Convention met in Sapulpa, and a reception for the ladies attending was held in Mrs. L. B. Jackson's home, 16 North Poplar.²¹ The program of entertain-

¹⁸ Daisy Dublin Irelan, "Memories of Early Sapulpa," DAR Scrapbook.

¹⁹ *Sapulpa Light*, April 6, 1906.

²⁰ *Sapulpa Democrat*, September 3, 1907.

²¹ Mrs. L. B. Jackson (Pearl Burk), (1880-1961) was a leading woman in Sapulpa club activities, especially PEO in which she held

ment also included a ball at the Elks Club and a trip to Kiefer, in the heart of Glenn Pool, on the interurban. The comment was made of this Kiefer trip that there was not another car line in the world which had the fascinating scenery which bordered the Sapulpa-Kiefer tracks.²²

The State Firemen's Convention was a week-long event in May, 1915. An area in the residential district was roped off to allow for practice runs and races. The whole town, but especially the children, had a rare time watching the hose stringing contests and the black and brown horse teams racing down the street answering an imagined alarm.²³

County fairs had been planned in Creek County but never held until the one in September, 1915. John F. Egan was president of the fair and J. W. Colvin, secretary. Many beautiful booths were decorated by the merchants, and Better Babies Contest with 125 entrants was judged by local physicians. The Humane Society raised funds by attracting persons to its booth with free ice cream donated by the Union Ice Company, while the county demonstrators showed how country schools could teach domestic science. There was an Art Hall, a weight guessing contest of a huge home grown pumpkin, style shows, and a talking machine.²⁴ And among the many prizes of the day was a diamond cavaliers.

World War I marked the end of much of the isolation and need for a strong community spirit. Sapulpa worked hard during the war. The men served their town at home in war bond drives and abroad on the field of battle.²⁵ The women gave unstintingly of their time and effort in Red Cross work.

Many cultural and civic activities of the community were met by the women of Sapulpa from the earliest times. As men-

many offices including state president. See footnotes #28 and #27. Mrs. Jackson was also a business woman who managed her own business affairs all her life. She was an excellent legal secretary and held the position of court reporter in the Western Judicial District of Indian Territory. In the early days of the oil business there were no printed lease forms, and Mrs. Jackson's ability to take shorthand was in constant demand by many oil men to make out the various and varying lease agreements.

See *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, xiv (Summer, 1948), pp. 240-241 for biography of L. B. Jackson.

²² *Sapulpa Herald*, February 23, 1915.

²³ *Ibid.*, May 23, 1915.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, September 18, 1915. Merchants exhibiting were King's Kaah Konzern, Sapulpa Bottling Works, Katz Department Store, Willis-Creegan Hardware, Sapulpa Music Company, Van Orman's Grocers, Cootee's Ladies Wear, Warful Millinery, and Ladies Wear, Kaufman and Mayer, Cowman's Pharmacy, and Allen Lumber Company.

²⁵ *Maudie Whitaker Harmony Scrapbook*, a collection of unorganized clippings (Sapulpa Public Library, Sapulpa, Oklahoma); hereafter cited in this study as *Harmony Scrapbook*.

tioned earlier, the first cultural group to be organized was the Social and Literary Society, which was formed in 1897 with Mrs. P. B. France as president.¹⁶ This club was also interested in civic projects. It was responsible for providing a watering trough for horses on Main Street. Also, when the Frisco was securing a new right-of-way in 1899, the ladies prevailed upon Mayor McAllister to move the town cemetery which they had fenced and cared for.

In 1901 Mrs. Charles Whitaker was elected as the first president of the Ladies' Library Club.¹⁷ This club carried on money raising projects by sponsoring teas, plays, bazaars, tag days, and baseball games. In one year the club had accumulated enough money to build a library building on the lot given to them by a Mr. Harsell and a Mr. Lazarus at 100 South Water Street. They purchased 150 volumes as a beginning stock for circulation. J. F. Egan, J. O. Hereford, John Sinco, and J. H. Fuller were listed among the first individual donors of books. This organization supported the library until 1917, when through its members' untiring efforts¹⁸ it became a Carnegie Foundation Library. In 1918 it was moved to its present building at Dewey and Poplar streets, where a community center was provided in its basement auditorium.

The young people, too, formed their clubs. In May, 1903, a group met in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Summers to begin the Atoka Club. "Atoka" was a Creek word meaning "I labor on." Their purpose was to study good literature, give debates, and enjoy friendly good times. They celebrated holidays together, held picnics, and went on moonlight hayrides. Some friendships begun during these club activities blossomed into romances. For example, Edna Stants and Charles Wolfe were married, as were Daisy Daubin and O. M. Irelan. By 1910 the club was disbanded, however, because many of its members were married and were busy in their home and in expanded community affairs.¹⁹

In 1903 the Lucile Opera House was built, in which the first and second floors were the Indian Territorial offices and court-

¹⁶ Interview and correspondence, Mrs. C. W. Harmony (Maude Whitaker), Sapulpa, Oklahoma, August 6, 1954. Other members compiled by Mrs. Harmony were Mesdames J. S. McAllister, J. C. Menifee, John Egan, Charles Whitaker, P. J. Hogland, Charles Crane, Frank Clark, Joseph Gillette. Also a Mrs. Grinstead and Mrs. Paul.

¹⁷ Interview and letter, Mrs. C. W. Harmony, Sapulpa, Oklahoma, August 6, 1954. Charter members were Mesdames Charles Whitaker, H. C. Abbott, John Egan, B. S. Baldwin, P. B. France, Ed Brodie, C. E. Ricker, J. O. Hereford, W. P. Root, Robert Whelan, H. C. Miller, M. E. Plumstead, and Florence Rundell.

¹⁸ Sapulpa Light, May 24, 1910.

¹⁹ Daisy D. Irelan, *op. cit.* (See Notes and Documents (this issue of *The Chronicles* for "The Place Name Atoka."—Ed.)



Social and Literary Society, 1898. Bottom, first row, left to right: Mrs. J. B. McAllister, Mrs. John Egan; second row, Mrs. Paul (in dark dress), Mrs. F. J. Newland, Mrs. J. C. Manifee, Mrs. Charles Crump; third row, Mrs. Christiana, Mrs. B. J. Brown, (President), Mrs. Emma Clark, Mrs. Charles Whitaker, Mrs. Margaret Elliott.

house, and the third floor was a ballroom into which seats were placed to create an auditorium or "Op'ry House." It was used for many home talent shows, recitals, benefit balls, high school graduation exercises, and convention meetings.

The Sapulpa Symphony Club sponsored the appearance of celebrities at the Lucile Opera House or the Empire Theater.¹⁰ This club was formed in 1906 under the leadership of Mrs. J. J. Parmlee, who was an accomplished violinist. It federated with the Indian Territory Federated Women's Clubs in 1906, and joined the Organization of Music Clubs and the National Federation of Music Clubs in 1917. The club held regular meetings, presenting musical programs by its members. Once a year a concert was given, and at Easter a vespers program was presented. The money earned from concerts and other entertainments was used to purchase a grand piano, which was presented to the Public Library for the community center soon after the completion of the Carnegie building in 1917. A few years later the Sapulpa Symphony Club was disbanded.¹¹

The Reading Club is today the oldest active women's club in Sapulpa. It was formed in 1905 and helped organize the City Federation of Women's Clubs, with which it was affiliated in 1906. Its purpose was to study classical literature, the fine arts of the world, and current events and government. The first president was Mrs. Lena C. Dornblazer. Other officers were Mrs. Anna Linzee, vice-president, and Mrs. Alice M. Denton, Secretary-treasurer.¹² There were twenty-two charter members. Today the club and its functions have so grown that it is necessary to divide the work among committees for program, legislation, nominations, and finance.¹³

¹⁰ *Sapulpa Democrat*, September 4, 1907. An announcement of the appearance of Miss Florence Doggett, harpist of Chicago Conservatory of Music on September 10, sponsored by the Sapulpa Symphony Club. Other attractions were Maude Powell, Paul Althouse, Luccy Oates, and Helen Keller. After 1907, the Lucile Opera House space was used for Kate offices. By 1909, the Van Orman's Opera House was in use.

¹¹ Interview and letter, Mrs. C. W. Harmony, Sapulpa, Oklahoma, August 6, 1954. Mrs. Harmony compiled a list of members of the club during the first years naming Mesdames J. J. Parmlee, E. P. Baxter, P. M. Castellan, W. C. Hodges, Clyde Robinson, Emery Jennings, H. McPann, H. Portney, C. J. Baugh, Jennie Graham, Henri Walter, W. H. Odell, Claude Masters, W. E. Loucks, and W. E. Cantrell. Also Misses Phoebe Dingman, Hazel Harrington, Esther Wilkinson, Ina Ladd, Ester Millerman, Myrtle McDougal and Maude Whitaker.

Also Mesdames J. A. Fulp, Winona Graham, Frank Marx, Marie Parham, E. H. Unger, Bert De Loxer, A. P. Crawford and Nan Hoon. And Misses Bettie Mentree and Nettie Pfleger.

¹² Daisy Dublin Ireton, *op. cit.*

¹³ Interview and letter, Mrs. O. M. Ireton, Sapulpa, Oklahoma, August 23, 1954. Charter members were Mesdames A. R. Burnett, Alice M. Cheahire, Effie B. Crawford, Sarah DeLano, Alice M. Denton, Anna

The Lucile Opera House was the meeting place of the first and only convention of the Indian Territory Federation of Women's Clubs. At a called meeting in November, 1906, the representatives of Sapulpa's women's clubs met with Mrs. Charles Whitaker to organize the city federation. They elected Myrtle McDougal (Mrs. D. A.) president, and she with fellow officers¹⁴ spent a year preparing for the convention held in November, 1907, when Mrs. McDougal was elected president of the Indian Territory Federation of Women's Clubs. The following year the convention met in Ardmore to amalgamate the Indian Territory and Oklahoma Territory organizations into one state club federation. Mrs. McDougal represented the Indian Territory as past president, and Mrs. John Threadgill represented the Oklahoma Territory in the same capacity. In 1909 and 1910, Sapulpa club women and Mrs. McDougal continued to lead the state organization. Mrs. McDougal was elected vice-president in 1909 and president in 1910. Mrs. Charles Whitaker was chairman of the state library committee, which did much to provide public circulating libraries in the early days of statehood.¹⁵

The PEO, Chapter G, a secret lodge for women, was organized June 21, 1907, by Louise K. Schmidt (Mrs. Louis) and Pearl B. Jackson (Mrs. L. B.). In 1906, Mrs. Jackson and Mrs. Schmidt were visited by Mrs. Winona Reeves, Organizer for Supreme Chapter, who suggested that the two ladies organize a Sapulpa chapter. They agreed and selected the nine charter members from different groups so as to have a varied representation in the town. The nine women each held an office in the charter group after they were initiated and installed by Mrs. Reeves.¹⁶ In 1909 the organizing convention of the Oklahoma chapter was held in Okemere. Mrs. Schmidt and Emma Noble (Mrs. E. S.) served on the committee which framed the state by-laws, and Mrs. Schmidt was elected as the first state recording secretary.¹⁷ In 1910 Chapter G, Sapulpa, entertained the first state convention, at which Mrs. Reeves, then president of the

L. Dillon, Hilda M. Hurd, Daisy D. Ireland, Earl D. Johannes, Effie Kinnsrud, Emma E. Linsee, Elizabeth P. Mason, Myrtle McDougal, Minnie Parmlce, Minnie E. Rice, Louise Schmidt, Florence A. Ungot, Elizabeth B. White.

¹⁴ *Sapulpa Democrat*, November 15, 1906.

¹⁵ *Sapulpa Light*, November 3, 1908; November 5, 1909; November 2, 1910.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* Charter members and officers: Louise K. Schmidt (Mrs. Louis), president; Pearl B. Jackson (Mrs. L. B.), vice-president; Alice Cheahire (Mrs. F. H.), recording secretary; Alice Denton (Mrs. J. O.), corresponding secretary; Effie Crawford (Mrs. A. P.), treasurer; Emma Noble (Mrs. E. S.), chaplain; Dannie Burnett (Mrs. H. H.), guard; Ethel Lenhard (Mrs. P. J.), journalist; Elizabeth Mason (Mrs. R. E.), musician.

¹⁷ Letter, Mrs. C. W. Harmony, to writer, August 8, 1954. Meadwren Schmidt, Noble and Jackson served one-year terms as state presidents.

Supreme Chapter, was the honored guest and main speaker, and Mrs. L. B. Jackson gave the welcoming address at the Presbyterian Church. The PEO, Chapter G., one of the oldest chapters in the state of Oklahoma, also sponsored a new chapter in Sapulpa in 1947, Chapter D. T. This sisterhood has contributed to the community's and state's betterment by many philanthropic and educational grants.

In the fall of 1912 Mrs. E. A. Matton was appointed by the state regent to act as organizing regent in Sapulpa for a prospective chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. On February 24, 1913, an initial meeting was held in the home of Mrs. Frank Smith, where the eighteen charter members elected Mrs. Matton as their first regent.¹⁸ The name Nancy Green was chosen for their chapter in honor of a common ancestor of four of the members: Mrs. Smith, Mrs. R. B. Thompson, and Misses Mary and Myrtle McDougal. The first money earned by this patriotic organization was given to the Red Cross. In both World Wars it contributed time and money to aid the Red Cross. In Sapulpa they purchased the Sapulpa family burial ground south of the city as a worthy historical site. Medals are given each year to students in high school who excel in American History. Also, a citation is awarded to the outstanding girl who is judged meritorious for good citizenship. Later, in 1924, the Martha McBride chapter of the Children of the American Revolution was formed by Mrs. W. E. Darner (Bettie Menifee).

Many organizations formed in Sapulpa since statehood have disbanded because their purposes were realized, because of lack of interest, or because of a change in public opinion. The Ku Klux Klan was one of the groups affected by public opinion. A partial list of once thriving clubs includes the Gun Club, the Eagles, the Law Enforcement League, the United Daughters of the Confederacy, the Humane Society, the Grand Army of the Republic, the Railroad Y.M.C.A., and the Retail Merchants Association.¹⁹

Early "society" in Sapulpa began in 1903 with the organization of the Tuesday Club, which was formed to sponsor euchre, whist, and later bridge parties. It was federated with the city women's clubs in 1906 and was not disbanded until the middle

¹⁸*Ibid.* Charter members were Mesdames W. D. Richardson, Ruby Nicholas, Frank Smith, E. R. Unger, J. B. Thompson, Alice Weidner, Vesta Workman, Christina Maddox, Hattie Trotter; and Misses Fay Cantrell, Myrtle McDougal, and Mary McDougal.

¹⁹Sapulpa Light, January 1, 1909; January 28, 1909; September 8, 1909; *Hoffine's Sapulpa, Oklahoma Directory, 1929* (Kansas City, Missouri: Hoffine Directory Company, 1929).

1930's.⁴⁰ The Morning Bridge Club was active for many years, too.⁴¹ The Sapulpa Country Club was enjoyed for a few years, but disbanded in the 1930's. The Oaks Country Club which lies about half-way between Sapulpa and Tulsa now has about twenty Sapulpa families in its membership.⁴²

The men and women of Sapulpa organized chapters in practically all orders of lodge work. The Masonic orders and the I.O.O.F. were particularly popular, and the ladies organized corresponding auxiliaries. The Eastern Star and the Modern Woodmen of America have always been active groups since statehood, also. The Elks built a club building on South Popular Street, which served its members and was made available to the community as a meeting place.⁴³

Probably the oldest civic men's group was the Sapulpa Commercial Club of 1903 which had seventy-five members with J. G. Davis acting as secretary.⁴⁴ Just before statehood, a Commercial Club was reorganized to meet the problems of the expanding Glenn oil pool and the Frisco Railroad, and to lay the groundwork in the ill-fated campaign to make Sapulpa the county seat in the new state. In 1906, James H. Fisher was president and James J. Mars was secretary. The ladies also organized an active auxiliary to aid their menfolk.⁴⁵

In April, 1907, fifty businessmen organized a "\$25,000 Club" to boost the town. A. P. Cederford was president, Walter Martin was temporary secretary and an executive secretary was being sought.⁴⁶ But soon this group was succeeded by the Business Men's League, with W. M. Watchorn as president and Theo G. Lenimon as Secretary. Their purposes, as set forth by President Watchorn to the forty members, were to locate new industries in Sapulpa without begging for money. The plan was to purchase the Timmie Fite land, plot it, and sell it for the money needed to build the electric line. This was done. The group also induced a glass company to build a factory in Sapulpa. And a

⁴⁰ Fayette Reece Dunlap, "History of Sapulpa Society Dates Back to Whist Players of Tuesday Club First Organized Here in 1903," *Sapulpa Herald*, October 9, 1935.

⁴¹ *Sapulpa Light*, May 20, 1909. This was the date of the first meeting.

⁴² Hoffine's Sapulpa, Oklahoma Directory, 1920, op. cit.; interview, Mrs. C. W. Harmony's Sapulpa, Oklahoma, June 20, 1955; Mr. J. M. Moore, Tulsa, Oklahoma, June 21, 1956.

⁴³ *Ibid.*; *Sapulpa Light*, January 11, 1909.

⁴⁴ *Sapulpa Light*, April 10, 1908.

⁴⁵ *Sapulpa Democrat*, March 1, 1906; July 12, 1906.

⁴⁶ *Oklahoma City Daily Oklahoman*, April 17, 1907; *Sapulpa Democrat*, May 17, 1907.

refinery, the Sapulpa Refining Company, was begun at this time.⁴⁷

The Commercial Club was reorganized in February, 1908, with R. B. Dingman as president and H. F. Klagge as secretary. Its members were stockholders whose money made up the bonuses offered to industries to come to Sapulpa. At this time a packing plant was being planned with financiers of St. Louis. The club also held a Greater Sapulpa Carnival early in 1909, to boost the town, increase retail sales, and earn money enough to entertain the St. Louis businessmen.

The next big industry offered Sapulpa was a steel rolling mill. Again the club sold lots to raise funds to support it. But Ross Dingman became discouraged with their progress and offered his resignation as president. His resignation was refused, because it was pointed out that the "general apathy" of which Dingman complained was the usual thing with each Commercial Club Sapulpa had ever had, and the members felt this club had the best record of any.⁴⁸

Late in 1909 and in 1910 two groups worked toward a greater Sapulpa, as the first Chamber of Commerce joined the Commercial Club in this enterprise. W. B. Stone was president of the Chamber of Commerce and Byron Snyder was the secretary. The Commercial Club was still active, with Dingman and Klagge in charge. The two groups met together early in December but their differences could not be compromised and the two groups continued separately to boost projects they felt most important. The Chamber of Commerce worked very hard to raise a bonus which would persuade the Midland Valley Railroad to enter Sapulpa. The Commercial Club worked equally hard to bring in the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe.

All the efforts and money spent by these citizens came to almost nothing. Their troubles were compounded by the hard times of 1907-1913, when the Sapulpa banks, bankers, and individuals were hard pressed financially. The Farmers and Merchants Bank closed temporarily in 1907, and it closed for all time in September, 1912. In the meantime, the Creek County

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, August 31, 1907; September 7, 1907; September 9, 1907; September 15, 1907; September 13, 1907; September 25, 1907; December 3, 1907; October 11, 1908, editorial which told chronologically the efforts of citizens to bring industry to Sapulpa (1900-1908).

⁴⁸ Sapulpa Light, July 24, 1909; October 11, 1909. \$150,000 was raised for a packing plant and interurban. Citizens also voted school bonds and necessary public utilities; January 7, 1908.

Bank and Trust Company had been started, closed, reorganized, and sold to open as the Oklahoma State Bank, only to close its doors once more.⁴⁹

Besides the bank failures, the Sapulpa Packing Company closed and the steel rolling mill failed before it was actually completed. The interurban from Sapulpa to Kiefer ran for the first time October 31, 1910, but proved to be another "white elephant" to its backers.

These depression times caught up with the town, which had overspeculated, oversubscribed, and overestimated the potentials in the rapidly changing, competitive situation of a new state. The bank guaranty law, even when amended, failed to halt the financial slide, and only World War I restored good times.

The depressed times in Sapulpa did not discourage the women. The Ladies' Commercial Club was organized May 28, 1912, with seventy members. Its activities in publicizing the needs of the community were so outstanding that a St. Louis paper wrote a story concerning their successful campaign for a bond issue to provide an adequate water supply.

Again in 1915 a reorganization of the Sapulpa Commercial Club occurred, and it was incorporated. Then the Commercial Club was disbanded to form the Sapulpa Chamber of Commerce on March 21, 1920. The Women's Chamber of Commerce was formed in 1927.⁵⁰ Today, there is also a Junior Chamber of Commerce.

In addition, several other successful and active clubs continue to contribute to the city's welfare and culture. The Current Events Club is an evening group of married couples, many of whom have met together regularly since the club's founding in 1916. The Salvation Army has been active for many years in Sapulpa. The American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars have posts to provide help and entertainment for their members. The Business and Professional Women's Club and the Sapulpa Business Men's Association meet regularly.⁵¹ The Fraternity of

⁴⁹ *Sapulpa Democrat*, November 21, 1907; *Bristow Record*, September 13, 1912; *Sapulpa Democrat*, September 24, 1907; *Bristow Record*, December 28, 1911; January 17, 1913.

⁵⁰ Letter, Mrs. C. W. Harmony, to writer, August 6, 1954. Directors: W. E. Brown, George Wilmarth, C. J. Benson, P. E. Gates, J. W. Graves, J. K. Welch, A. O. Wilkinson, E. E. Cowman; secretary engaged, J. K. N. Cobb.

Charter members of the women's organization were Mesdames E. R. Unger, W. P. Longmire, C. C. Taylor, E. C. Silvers, E. B. Mathews, Maude Miller, E. M. Sweeney, R. R. Wallace, Thomas S. Harris, Arthur Lawrence, and Misses Mamie Jones and Esther Wilkinson.

⁵¹ *Polk's Sapulpa (Creek County, Oklahoma) City Directory, 1951* (Dallas: R. L. Polk and Company, publishers, 1951); Daisy D. Ireland, *op. cit.*

the Wooden Leg is a unique organization which was begun by Sapulpan Augusta Weaver. She lost her own leg, but with her misfortune she found time and talent to write a little paper of encouragement toward the rehabilitation of others, who, like her, faced life with a wooden leg.⁵¹ The active men's luncheon clubs are the Kiwanis, Lions, and Rotary. The Rotary Annex, the women's auxiliary, are active also.

The pioneer settlers of Sapulpa like to recall the charter members who signed the petition for incorporation of the town in 1898.⁵² Under the original charter the mayor-council form of government served the town until 1910, at which time the city adopted the commission form of government.⁵³ Today the city is operated under the city manager-commission form of government which was adopted in 1922.⁵⁴

The problems these governments and their officials were required to manage were not unusual for their times. There were franchises to be awarded for gas and later for electric lights. A municipal water plant was a constant problem as the city's growth and industrial expansion made greater demands. Board sidewalks were replaced with brick and then concrete, and dusty or muddy streets were gradually paved. Ordinances concerning such matters as health, speed of delivery wagons and later automobiles, spitting on the streets, and the handling of stray animals were numerous and necessary.

Indian Territory did have one problem which was unique in the controversies it caused. The early day marshal's biggest job was to enforce the prohibition of liquor sales. After statehood this task became a bitter pill for county and city officials throughout Oklahoma. The prohibition clause to the Oklahoma Constitution had passed in 1907 by a narrow margin and its enforcement aroused factions which warred constantly. If a city or county official became unpopular for any reason, it was always possible to show him lax in enforcing prohibition and to make

⁵¹ Interview, Augusta Weaver, Sapulpa, Oklahoma, July 7, 1954.

⁵² *Sapulpa Herald*, February 6, 1915. The following citizens joined in petition to the federal court at Muskogee to grant incorporation to the town of Sapulpa, I. T., in 1898: John Egan, J. C. Menfee, J. Wisdom, J. T. Gillette, Charles Whitaker, H. A. Booth, S. S. Unsell, James C. Smith, Alfred May, C. D. Harvey, S. C. Nigh, J. W. Elswick, O. M. Gilbert, R. M. Powell, R. C. Miller, A. L. Hay, O. C. Crane, Charles T. McAllister, J. C. Edwards, O. P. McLendon, P. B. France, Frank Clark and Fred P. Smith.

⁵³ *Sapulpa Light*, September 28, 1910.

⁵⁴ Interview, John S. Egan, Sapulpa, Oklahoma, September 6, 1956. Mr. Egan is city clerk and the son of John P. Egan, pioneer Sapulpan; copy of the *Charter of the City of Sapulpa*, adopted April, 1922, with amendments thereto.

the case stronger for his defeat at the next election. In Sapulpa this happened shortly after statchood in the name calling between Bristol and Sapulpa during the county seat contest.⁵⁴

Late in 1908, a Rev. E. J. Bulgin toured the new state of Oklahoma in a series of revivals to urge the towns to clean out the gambling halls, the saloons, and other places. Dr. Bulgin declared in a sermon in Sapulpa, "If twenty-five of your men will stand behind me for three weeks, we will run the devil out of town, and I don't care what the sheriff, prosecuting attorney, or the town officials do!"⁵⁵ These Sapulpa revival meetings started a number of cleanup drives.

As late as 1915 and 1916 the battle for reform was carried on by the Sapulpa *Herald*.⁵⁶ The *Herald* office was bombed on May 15, 1915, after a bitter exchange of editorials with the *Argus*⁵⁷ on the issue of cleaning out the gamblers and bootleggers. An investigation was held, but no prosecutions resulted. This was closely followed by the election of a reform mayor, W. B. Stone. His apparently accidental death soon after his election was the source of much comment and speculation.⁵⁸

The churches and schools played an active role in the betterment and growth of the community. The first church in Sapulpa was the Methodist Episcopal, South, established in 1895.⁵⁹ By 1903, the Baptist,⁶⁰ the Presbyterian,⁶¹ and the Methodist

⁵⁴ See the *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, (Spring, 1962), pp. 55-72 for a print of Chapter II of this account, "The Sapulpa and Bristol County Seat Contest."

⁵⁵ *Sapulpa Light*, November 14, 1908.

⁵⁶ O. M. Irelan, *op. cit.* In September of 1914, O. S. Todd, John W. Young, and O. M. Irelan (former owner and editor of the *Light* from 1903-1908) took over the plant of the *Democrat* to begin the *Herald*. In 1944, Mr. R. F. Matthews purchased the *Herald* from the John Young estate. In 1949, the present owner, Ed Livamore, became owner.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* The *Argus* was published by James D. Flynn of Sapulpa (who was not related to the first territorial delegate to Congress by the same name). He first bought and published the *Democrat* (1907). He then changed the name to the *Argus*; then to the *American*; and again to the *Argus* by April, 1914, when the argument between the editors ensued.

⁵⁸ Interview, O. M. Irelan, Sapulpa, Oklahoma, July 1, 1954.

⁵⁹ Mayor Ira C. Perkins' Speech, 1903, DAR Scrapbook; J. C. Menfee, *op. cit.* A Reverend Pope was the first pastor. A Union Soudaf School had met in the Prison waiting room in the summer of 1894. J. C. Menfee said the South Methodist was organized in 1894.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* Reverend W. A. King was the first minister. The Baptist Church was organized in 1895.

⁶¹ *Ibid.* The church was built by the efforts of J. C. Menfee and it was organized in 1895.

Episcopal⁴⁴ had organized and built churches. The Christian Church met in a temporary meeting place until it built a church home in 1905.

By the time statehood was proclaimed for Oklahoma there were several new denominations to meet the needs and beliefs of citizens of the growing town. The Episcopal Church had organized. The Catholics held services conducted by a Tulsa priest in the Denton Building until a church was built in 1908. And by this time the Negroes had built a Baptist Church in their neighborhood. Most of these original churches moved to larger churches as the congregations grew. Some of them split to form new churches of their faith. New fundamentalist denominations started as the town grew to be a factory center. These workers were interested church members and the church became an important community center as well as a place of worship. At present there are in Sapulpa twenty-five churches of fourteen denominations.⁴⁵

One of the biggest problems of Indian Territory days was that of providing schools for the non-citizens' white children. The Indians founded elementary schools and academies for their children with tribal funds, and by 1904 provisions were made to extend schooling to the white settlers' children in these Indian institutions; however, it remained a paper provision which could not materialize because the tribal funds were insufficient to support it.⁴⁶

Faced with these difficulties affecting non-citizens, individuals established the subscription school. In 1894 Miss Cassie Meadows, who had finished the fourth grade, taught in the office of W. A. Smith's livery barn on North Main. A second subscription school was taught by Miss Sina Bussat. The third was organized in 1895 by a group of mothers, who raised funds to build the first school building on the ground where the present courthouse is located.⁴⁷ There Colonel Ira Dodd taught the first

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* Reverend W. S. Browning was the first pastor.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* *op. cit.*

⁴⁶ *Tulsa Daily Democrat*, October 21, 1904; Edward Everett Dale and Morris L. Wardell, *History of Oklahoma* (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1948), p. 294.

⁴⁷ Mayor Ira C. Perkins' Speech, 1903, *op. cit.*; interview, Mrs. W. E. Darnet (Bettie Menifee), Sapulpa, Oklahoma, April 2, 1955; *Sapulpa Herald*, July 10, 1949; *Sapulpa Light*, February 12, 1909. In this latter article, John Egan related the history of the school board purchase of the Dewey Street property to convince the county commissioners that they pay a fair price for it if they earned a half-block for the new courthouse. He stated that J. C. Menifee, Wm. Whitman, and John Egan had purchased the land from Euchee Jim in 1895 and J. J. Jones and others had helped to keep it for the schools.



55th Infantry Band, 1909

year and Miss Sally Boone the second. The school then was moved to a large room over two stores on Main Street and the number of teachers was increased to four. By Christmas of 1897 Henry Land had completed a two-and-one-half-story building east of the present high school for a school which he called Dewey College. This was the building which was to become Sapulpa's first real public school home. The school board first leased it and later, in 1900, purchased the building and moved it to the school land on Dewey Avenue.⁴⁸

In May, 1902, Congress passed a law enabling towns of 1,000 or more to vote bonds for public schools and water works. Sapulpa was one of the first towns in Indian Territory to avail itself of this opportunity. The Washington School was the result of this first bond money. When the Washington School was completed, it became the high school affectionately called the "Castle." Its first four graduates were Luch Lavina Clark, Floyd T. McMahan, Jennie Myrtle McDougal, and Clifton S. Mitchell. The graduation exercises were held in the Lucile Opera House at eight in the evening of April 19, 1907, seven months before statehood.⁴⁹

The school building program kept in line with the growth of the city. An announcement in the *Light*, October 4, 1909, advised the parents of the opening of school, and concerning the particular school their children should attend in relation to where they lived. Four schools were listed, one of which was for Negro pupils.⁵⁰ The school system has continued to grow until today there are ten elementary schools and two junior and senior high schools.⁵¹

APPENDIX

Sapulpa, Oklahoma, the county seat of Creek County was originally part of the Creek Nation in Indian Territory in present Oklahoma. The Creek Indian for whom Sapulpa was named came alone to join his tribe in their new home about 1833 or 1834. Soon he met and married his first wife, Na Kitty, who bore him three children, James, Hannah, and Sarah. In time, according to the custom of the Creeks, Sapulpa took a second wife, Cho-pok-sa, Na Kitty's sister. Cho-pok-sa had seven children, all of whom died young except Rhoda and William.

The Indian trading village of one store and a blacksmith shop was a stopping point for stages and a pony express before the Civil War. When Sapulpa returned to his ranch after fighting with the Confederacy, few buildings were left standing; the cattle had disappeared, and the tiny trading center was destroyed by fire. He set up

⁴⁸ Mayor Ira C. Perkins' Speech, 1903, *op. cit.*; Sapulpa Herald, July 15, 1948.

⁴⁹ Sapulpa Light, April 19, 1907.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, October 4, 1909.

⁵¹ See Veder, *op. cit.*

a store, obtaining his supplies from Coffeyville, Kansas. But, he was forced to close because of the long wagon haul; and he returned to his cattle business.⁷²

In 1888 the Atlantic and Pacific Railway, later the St. Louis and San Francisco, built its tracks ten miles from Red Fork station and the crossing over the Arkansas River. The construction crew built their camp on a site near a spring belonging to Sapulpa. The Engineer, G. P. Huggins, asked Sapulpa to be his guest and first passenger when the train was put into operation to Tulsa;⁷³ and the station was subsequently named Sapulpa in the Creek's honor.⁷⁴

Today Sapulpa is a small but important industrial city. Sapulpa has survived the loss of the division point of the Frisco, for the town has maintained its population level of 1916, when the Frisco first threatened to move its shops. The winning of the county seat from Eristow has assured Sapulpa the prominence in the county and state which the citizens of an earlier day visualized.⁷⁵ The present industries are seemingly permanent, having outlasted the serious depression of the 1930's. A second national bank, the growth of new residential areas, and a beautiful new high school indicate the progress of the town.

⁷² William A. Sapulpa, "Sapulpa", *Chronicles of Oklahoma*, IV (March-December, 1926), pp. 330-331.

⁷³ Indian Pioneer History, *The Great Foreman Papers* (Indian Archives Division, Oklahoma Historical Society, 1937), Volume 101, p. 45.

⁷⁴ Charles Newton Gould, *Oklahoma Place Names* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1933), p. 54.

⁷⁵ Pauline P. Jackson, "The Sapulpa and Eristow County Seat Contest", *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. XI (Spring, 1963), pp. 35-72.