

## THE GRAND RIVER VALLEY CHRONOLOGY

Long before recorded history, the Grand River carved its way from the confluence of the Neosho and Spring Rivers to Three Forks, a meeting of the Verdigris and Arkansas near Muskogee over 100 air miles to the southwest. During that time, and until inundated by Grand, Hudson, and Gibson lakes, the river steadily ground out a spectacular valley. Fed by innumerable creeks and rivers draining nearly 11,000 square miles in Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas and Oklahoma, the river is a recognizable division between the Ozark uplift toward the east and the Osage Plains westward. One can only imagine the impression the soaring cliffs and intermittent flooding in the valley had on early inhabitants.

Historians speculate as to when man first occupied the river valley. The “Afton Spring” mentioned on page 19 gives some clues. Additional archaeological data acquired later in the 20<sup>th</sup> century also offers proof that inhabitants lived here thousands of years ago. More recent evidence from the accounts of Indian lore and historical documents indicate that white men, Spanish conquistadors, were in the region in the mid 1500’s and French traders by the 1700’s or even earlier. And, during this time, the river has been accorded no less than a total of eleven names. However, the distinguishing date was March, 1796 when fur trader Jean Chouteau seeking a site for a trading post encountered a sizeable stream which he called “Le Grande Riviere.”

The purpose of this chronology is to provide dates of events that were occurring or occurred in relation to the river from pre-historic times through the construction of the Pensacola Dam followed by the Kerr dam by the mid-60’s in northeastern Oklahoma. I have not addressed many dates related to the migration or removal of various tribes to Indian Territory along the Grand River because of the complexity. That story deserves a chronology of its own. My addition of “factoids,” descriptions of some events, is to highlight some incidents that may be of additional interest.

And, now a disclaimer pertaining to specific dates and places. For example, some historians have placed French explorer La Harpe and his parley with Indian tribes in 1719 near Muskogee, more recent research points to a locale near Jenks. I have chosen the recent version as being more credible. And, in some “arguable” instances, recent settlers offer conflicting recollections regarding dates of events and location of places. This said, the overriding objective of the publication has been to draw more attention and debate to the fascinating story of the history of Northeastern Oklahoma in relation to the “Grand” River that flows through it.

Finally, as the occasion permits, remember to re-visit the web site [www.grandriverhistory.com](http://www.grandriverhistory.com) which is being continually updated with new information and additional links to history in northeastern Oklahoma.

D. Bruce Howell, 2010

## **PRE-HISTORIC CULTURES AND PERIODS IN NORTHEASTERN OKLAHOMA**

**350,000 BC** Northeastern Oklahoma was covered by water there was no glacier activity in this region. (13)

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***FACTOID:** The Grand River essentially divides the Ozark uplift, a limestone wooded plateau in eastern Oklahoma and western Arkansas, from the more arid Osage prairie region further west. For example, an observer looking east from the cliff called Tynon's Bluff, now the Coves residential development overlooking Grand Lake, will note the difference in land characteristics of the rolling hills toward Grove and Jay, compared to the prairie lands westward toward Cleora, Ketchum, Afton or Vinita. These land characteristics were ideal for early inhabitants to gather nuts or obtain salt as well as other products from the woodlands to the east and still hunt big game on the prairie nearby.*

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**18,000 – 6000 BC** Paleo – Indian Period (13)

- ..... Spruce forests (east)
- ..... Wisconsin Ice Age 10,000 years ago possibly as far south as Kansas City, MO.
- ..... Predominantly hunters
- ..... Little substantial information exists, but some radio-carbon evidence

**6000 BC – 1 AD** Archaic Period (13)

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***FACTOID:** Written history was being recorded in other parts of the world prior to the birth of Jesus and, while peoples of northeastern Oklahoma may have acknowledged their past through song or stories handed down through generations, writing was either non-existent or drawings not preserved. The early history of the region is gradually being written by archaeologists through location or excavation of hundreds of sites in the quad county region. (13) Figure 17 p. 48*

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Some recorded world historical events that occurred later: (14) p. xii

- 2500 BC** Egyptians discover papyrus and ink. Build first libraries;  
.....Stonehenge in England is constructed as a center of worship;
- 2300 BC** Horses are domesticated in Egypt. Bows and arrows used in warfare;
- 2166 BC** Abraham born;
- 2100 BC** Tower of Babel built in Mesopotamia;
- 2066 BC** Isaac born;
- 1900 BC** Spoke wheel invented. Horses used to pull vehicles;
- 1500 BC** Sun Dials invented in Egypt. Mexican sun pyramid built;
- 1446 BC** Jewish exodus from Egypt;
- 1445 BC** Moses receives the Ten Commandments;



## FRENCH AND SPANISH EXPLORATION 1400 - 1700

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**FACTOID:** *Several theories exist regarding the route traveled by the first white man, a Spaniard named Hernando de Soto, or simply Soto, during his 1000 day tour of “La Florida” from Florida through Arkansas. The only confirmed camp is his winter site in 1539 – 40, discovered in 1986 in downtown Tallahassee, Florida. (110) p. xxvi. Otherwise, only four eye witness accounts of expedition participants exist, written years after the return of the expedition, but none clearly define geographic locations.*

*As a result, from a scholarly standpoint, conjecture abounds on whether or not he, or at least some of his party, ever saw Oklahoma. However, accounts related by Indians indicate that white men were present in the region during the winter of 1541. And, since French presence was not documented until later, logic favors the Spaniard de Soto or members of his expedition being the first white arrivals in this region.*

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**1492** October 12. Columbus discovers America. (15)

**1496** Hernando de Soto (Soto) b. Badajoz/Jerez, de los Caballeros, Spain. (5)

**1541** May 8. de Soto reaches the Mississippi River. (5)

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**FACTOID:** *At age 44, Hernando de Soto, now governor of Cuba and one of the richest men on earth following his conquest of Peru, set forth from the coast of Florida seeking gold and a possible inland water route to China and India. He explored an extensive area, arriving in the Mississippi valley river region in 1541. After traversing the Arkansas River area through the state, it is thought he encamped for the winter somewhere along the boundaries of today’s Arkansas and Oklahoma. He died of fever in 1542 and was buried in the Mississippi River. (108)*

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.....An expedition, led by Spaniard Francisco de Coronado, was crossing today’s Kansas at about the same time de Soto reached Arkansas. Two of Coronado’s men became lost and are captured by the Osage. (4)

.....Osage near Fort Smith report white men with coats of iron and long knives. (4)

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**FACTOID:** *Although Spanish explorer Francisco de Coronado did not venture as far south as the Grand River Valley, the Osage first mentioned an encounter with white men when two became detached from the expedition and wandered into the Osage village near today’s Nevada, Missouri. These men were eventually permitted to leave, and by later accounts, wandered hundreds of miles before reaching a Spanish settlement in Mexico. A few months after that encounter, during the winter of 1541, a band of Osages far to the south near today’s Fort Smith, Arkansas discovered men on horseback “wearing coats of iron and bearing long sharp knives.” (4) p. 5*

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**1541 – 42** de Soto wintered on Arkansas River at a village called Utiangué. (5)

.....or, de Soto wintered in the Branson, Missouri area. (110)

..... or, de Soto wintered at junction of Canadian & Arkansas rivers. (6)

..... or, de Soto wintered along the Grand River. (103) p. 31

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*FACTOID: Historians disagree on the routes of most explorers because although the compass was in use to determine direction, distance traveled from point to point was disputable. The “league” was the accepted means of determining distance from one point to the next and it most frequently referred to the distance a person or horse could walk in an hour. However, the length of a league was not internationally standardized and could vary, depending on the explorer’s country of origin and the terrain covered. It is defined in Webster’s Dictionary as ranging from 2.4 to 4.6 miles.*

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**1542** May 21. de Soto died and was buried in the Mississippi River near today’s McArthur, Arkansas. (5)

**1610** Santa Fe designated capital of New Mexico, a province of Spain. (15)

**1625** Juan de Onata, founder of Santa Fe traded with the Osage. (4)

**1673** Father Marquette’s French expedition to southwest locates Osage. (2)

**1675** Marquette founds the mission and trading post at Kaskaskia, Illinois. (4)

**1681** Claude Charles Du tisme b. Paris, France. (2)

**1682** Osage dwelt near the mouth of the Osage river in Missouri. (4)

## **EXPLORERS AND PIONEERS 1700 – 1800**

**1700** Kaskaskia, located in today’s southern Illinois, designated the capital of French Upper Louisiana. (2)

**1718** New Orleans, Louisiana founded by Governor Bienville. (1)

**1718** Attempted visit by Claude Du tisme with Osage, thwarted by Missouri Indian Tribe. (1) (2)

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*FACTOID: Claude Du tisme suffered from a childhood disease that left him nearly bald. During his youth, his parents obtained various hair pieces as he grew. When Du tisme finally met with the Osage to obtain permission to cross their hunting grounds, in order to obtain approval he mistakenly laid out all of his trading gifts. Ordinarily, items were exchanged one item at a time. Seeing this, the chiefs discussed killing him and taking all of his wares. They did not realize he understood their Osage language and quick thinking saved his life. When he realized what they were plotting, he took off his wig and threw it at their feet. The chiefs were in awe, convinced he must be a god who could scalp himself. They made no further attempts to harm him. (6)*

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**1718** The Alamo, Franciscan mission, founded at San Antonia, Texas (15)

..... Bernard de la Harpe establishes trading post on the Red River northwest of today’s Texarkana, Texas. (24)

**1719** Du tisme crosses Missouri northwest from Fort Kaskaskia and contacts the Osage. (1)

.....first exploration of northeast Oklahoma by Claude Du tisme (2)

.....September 27<sup>th</sup> . Made alliance with Pawnees or Panis (2) and later visits the Grand Saline on the lower Neosho (1)

*FACTOID: Claude Du tisme entered Oklahoma traveling southwest from the great Osage village located northeast of today's Nevada, Missouri. The route of his journey to establish trade with Indian tribes is disputed, but it generally included northeastern Oklahoma. Du tisme noted that he traveled "40 leagues in four days southwest from the Osage village," an average of about 25 miles a day. At least, 40 leagues might have been 96 miles (2.4 x 40) placing him near Chelsea or Vinita, OK or, at most 184 miles (4.6 x 40) which would have been much further southwest. The distance and his mention of later visiting Grand Saline on the lower Grand River, favors the estimate to the Chelsea/Vinita site.*

**1719** September. La Harpe visits Tawakoni village of 6000 between Bixby/Jenks. The Tawakoni coalesced with others to form part of the Wichita Tribe. (2) (24)

*FACTOID: Among other gifts , Bernard De La Harpe was presented with an eight year old Apache slave who was missing a finger from each hand. Noting the interest of his guest, the Tawakoni chief apologized for having only one slave to offer as a gift. If the French trader had come a month earlier, the chief explained, he would have been able to provide 17 slaves, but they had been consumed in a public feast. (24) p. 2.*

**1719** October 13. La Harpe returns to trading post near Texarkana, Texas. (24)

.....November 1st. Du tisme returns to Fort Kaskaskia, Illinois. (4)

**1749** Auguste Chouteau I b. (23)

**1755** July. French enlist Osage and other tribes to fight against the British and General Braddock in the French and Indian War. (4)

**1758** October 17. Jean Pierre Chouteau b. New Orleans. (3)

**1759** September 13<sup>th</sup> . Fall of Quebec, Canada to the British, France decides to leave America because they cannot adequately defend their territory. (4)

**1763** France sells Louisiana to Spain (4). The territory covered an area from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains.

August 3. The New Orleans trading firm of Maxent & Laclede sponsored an expedition to Ft. Chartres along the Mississippi River near Kaskaskia, arriving in November with Auguste Chouteau. 14 (22)

.....December. West bank of the Mississippi explored and a site for St. Louis, Missouri is determined. (22)

**1765** Founding of St. Louis (4) Supervised by Auguste Chouteau, age 14, older brother of Jean Pierre Chouteau. First house constructed. (22) p. 3.

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**FACTOID:** *A study of a map of early St. Louis indicates that Jefferson Memorial Park, site of the Gateway Arch, approximates the boundaries of the original city. Further, that the northern base of the Arch is very near the site of the Jean Pierre Chouteau residence.*  
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**1779** Jean Pierre Chouteau and Auguste Chouteau become business partners. (23)

**1786** Auguste Pierre Chouteau b .... Jean's first son. (23)

**1789** Pierr "Cadet" Chouteau, Jr. b .... Jean's second son. (23)

**1792** Paul Ligest Chouteau b .... Jean's third son. (23)

**1794** Jean Pierre Chouteau commissioned as a major by Spanish government and placed in command of Fort Carondelet. (23)

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**FACTOID:** *Fort Carondelet, was named in honor of Baron de Carondelet, Governor of Louisiana, and was located northeast of present day Nevada, Missouri along the Osage River. It was financed by the Chouteau brothers in exchange for exclusive trading rights with the Osage. However, shortly thereafter, the territorial governor awarded these same rights to other traders. This prompted the Chouteau's to explore southwest toward the Grand River region and eventually establish a trading post at present day Salina, OK.*  
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**1796** March. Chouteau names the Grand River. (115)

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**FACTOID:** *After traveling approximately 90 miles southwest of Ft. Carondelet, Chouteau and his party encountered a sizeable stream the Osage Tribe called 'Ne-o-zho.' Impressed by the river, Chouteau remarked "suivons cette grande riviere ci," that it was a grand or large river. In fact, over the years the Neosho has been given eleven names ranging from Nion-chou to Six Bulls. However, from the confluence of the Neosho and Spring Rivers near Twin Bridges State Park to Three Forks near Muskogee, it is today the "Grand River."*  
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**1796** "La Saline" (Salina) trading post established by Jean Chouteau. (22)

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**FACTOID:** *Although the trading post was established in 1796, it was abandoned after Chouteau found there were no Indian villages in the region to generate fur trade. He returned to Fort Carondelet and, by 1802 had persuaded two Osage chiefs, Casheseagra and Clermont to move their tribes further south. Chief Clermont moved to the Verdigris River six miles northwest of today's Claremore and Casheseagra moved to the Three Forks area north of Muskogee. Claremore was originally named Clermont, but in 1882, a clerk, while recording the town as having a post office, spelled the name incorrectly as Claremore. (12) p. 1*  
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**1797** Francois Gesseau Chouteau b .... Jean's fourth son. (23)

## **SETTLING THE TERRITORY 1800 - 1900**

**1802** Cyprien Chouteau b .... Jean's fifth son. (23)

.....Cashesegra (Big Track) and Gla-mo (Clermont) band together and by 1804 relocate: Clermont near Claremore and Cashesgra at Three Forks. Verified by a report of U.S. Army Lieutenant James B. Wilkinson in 1807. (23)

....."La Saline" trading post reopened. (23) (56)

**1804** Nathan Pryor explores the Louisiana Purchase with Lewis and Clark. (108)

.....Jean Pierre Chouteau & Osage Chief Pahiuska (White Hair) visit President Jefferson. (23) (34)

**1806** Louis Pharomond Chouteau b .... Jean's sixth son. (23)

.....August 28. Zebulon M. Pike visits the Osage (Missouri) village and reports an exact location of "Camp Independence near the Osage town" as well as conditions for future development of the area. (4) p. 14

.....Auguste Pierre Chouteau Jean Pierre's son, graduates from West Point. (23)

.....December 23. Lieutenant James Wilkinson, traveling down the Arkansas as a detachment of the Pike expedition, reaches Three Forks, Cashesegra's camp. (121) p. 15

.....December 12. Stand Watie b Georgia. (29) p. 21

**1807** Joseph Bogy, French Canadian Trader, settled at the Three Forks Region (19)

.....Manuel Lisa establishes Fort Raymond in Montana. (33) p. 129 (37)

**1808** Charles B. Chouteau b .....Jean's seventh son. (23)

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***FACTOID:** Although Manuel Lisa and the Chouteau's originally were in conflict over trading rights with the Osage, in 1809 they combined efforts and formed the St. Louis Fur Company near Three Forks, the confluence of the Arkansas, Grand, and Verdigris Rivers. Lisa also explored the Missouri River further north and built Fort Raymond at the mouth of the Bighorn River in Montana and also Fort Lisa, north of present day Omaha, NE. (23)*

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.....First successful steamboat invented by Robert Fulton. Steamboat travel on Mississippi boosted travel and westward settlement in Oklahoma. (33) p. 117

.....Frederick Chouteau b .... Jean's eighth son. (23)

**1812** Mathias Splitlog b.... Canada. (32)

**1817** October. Battle of Clermont (Claremore) Mound. (12)

.....December, Fort Smith established. (12)

.....Auguste Pierre Chouteau takes control of Grand River trading posts. (23)

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*FACTOID: During October, 1817 Western Cherokee's and their allies with a total fighting force of 700, overwhelmed the lightly defended Osage village of Chief Clermont. The tribes had been bitter enemies for years. Most of the village warriors, including Clermont, were away hunting bison for the winter supplies. Women, children, and elderly men remained and approximately 80 villagers were killed, an additional 100 were taken hostage and the village was burned.*  
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**1818** Treaty between the United States and Osage Tribe ceding territory north of the Arkansas River on both sides of the Oklahoma/Kansas border. (10)

**1819** New Echota, Cherokee Capital in Georgia established. (30)

.....August Pierre and Paul Ligest Chouteau become partners. (23)

.....July 17. Famed botanist Thomas Nuttall visits the Saline Creek salt works, Nuttall was on a mission to traverse the Arkansas and classify plants. (117) p. 46.

**1820** The Shawnee Trail/Texas Road becomes an established northbound trail in Northeastern Oklahoma. It possibly was called "Shawnee" in the early years because it passed a Shawnee village in north Texas. (20) (21)

.....September 1. Captain John Bells' detachment from Longs Expedition reaches Clermont's village on the Verdigris River. (117 ) p. 54

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*FACTOID: During the 1820's settlers bound for Texas followed an Osage trace (trail) that passed east of present day Vinita, across Cabin Creek, through Pensacola, on to Pryor then continued south entering Texas territory near Denison. The trace became known as the 'Texas Road' to immigrants moving south. Later, cattle were herded north to the railheads in Kansas and Missouri along a similar route known as the Shawnee Trail. It paralleled both sides of the Grand River.*  
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**1821** Auguste Pierre Chouteau becomes permanent resident of the Salina post.

.....June 24. Joseph Revoir, partner in the trading firm, killed by a party of Cherokees supposedly because of favoritism to the Osage. His wife was Osage. (23)

.....Union Mission established in Mayes County. (20)

**1822** Texas Road. According to the Oklahoma Historical Society it "Entered Oklahoma's N.E. Corner & then to Muskogee; angled southwest, east of the Cross Timbers & crossed the Red River at Colbert's Ferry. U.S. 69 generally follows the old Texas Road. (35) (49) p.70-71 (75)

**1823** Hopefield Mission established south of Pensacola in Mayes County. (16)

.....Auguste Pierre Chouteau purchases Three Forks and constructs flat boats. (23)

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*FACTOID: Three Forks trading post was a few miles north of present day Muskogee near Okay. An ideal departure point for shipping furs to New Orleans, it was located near the confluence of the three rivers, it also was the departure and returning point in October, 1832 for Washington Irving, author of "A Tour of the Prairies" and his party.*  
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**1824 April 21. Establishment of Fort Gibson. (12)**  
 .....April. Three Forks fur traders shipped nineteen tons of furs and hides to New Orleans. (23) p. 23

**1825 Rev. Epaphrus Chapman, Union Mission d Oldest marked grave in Oklahoma. (26)**

**1827 Col. David Brearley founded the Western Creek Agency at Okay. (26)**

**1828 The Cherokee Phoenix newspaper established, Elias Boudinot, Editor. (30)**

**1829 August Chouteau I d. (23)**  
 .....Spavinaw (Lynch’s Mill) established. (59)  
 .....Chief Clermont d. (25)  
 .....Sam Houston and Tiana Rogers Gentry, build the “Wigwam Neosho.”  
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*FACTOID: Sam Houston, former Governor of Tennessee and future President of Texas and his Cherokee wife Tiana, lived in a cabin located between Okay and Ft. Gibson for four years. Houston had established a close relationship with Cherokee leaders while in Tennessee and represented their legal interests. (118)*  
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*FACTOID: Charles Rogers came to Spavinaw Creek in 1829, built a dam and erected a mill. Later, the mill fell into disrepair but in 1846 a group of Mormons, on their long trek westward, stopped to camp for a night. However, they stayed much longer before moving on to join their leader, Brigham Young, in Utah.*  
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**1832 March. United States Supreme Court rules in favor of the Cherokee Nation’s land rights. Andrew Jackson refuses to recognize the ruling and the purge of Cherokee Indian land begins. (30)**  
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*FACTOID: Although the Supreme Court ruled in favor of letting the Cherokees keep their Georgia land, President Andrew Jackson ignored the ruling. In defiance, Jackson stated that “Since (Chief Justice) John Marshall had made this ruling, he could enforce it.” Jackson’s refusal to comply set in motion a sharp division of thought among factions of the tribe, some wanting to resist, others negotiate. This later led to violence. Jackson’s ruling ultimately led to the removal of Cherokee’s by force in 1838. This mass deportation became known as the “Trail of Tears.”*  
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**1832 Cherokee Chief John Ross replaces Boudinot with Elijah Hicks as editor of the Phoenix, an influential newspaper. Later, with the help of Georgia authorities, Stand Watie and Boudinot (Treaty Party) seize it back. (30)**

**1832 August. Auguste Pierre Chouteau guides the Ellsworth (Irving) mission to Three Forks. (16)**

**1832 October 8. Washington Irving and his party arrive at Fort Gibson. (25)**  
 Irving, Latrobe and Ellsworth tour Oklahoma resulting in Irving’s book, “A Tour of the Prairies.” (23) .....see p. 25 of that text for Irving’s description of Three Forks.

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***FACTOID: Irving’s book, ‘A Tour of the Prairies’ described his month long journey through Indian Territory in October, 1832. Irving actually accompanied a party led by Henry Ellsworth, a government official. Ellsworth was charged with studying the country and defining its boundaries, as well as contacting Indian tribes. Generally following the Arkansas River north to Tulsa, then proceeding west to Stillwater and south to Shawnee, the party passed through an ancient forested area known as “Cross Timbers” returning to Three Forks and Fort Gibson by the end of October. Irving’s written impression of the tour helped expose the Indian Territory to easterners and encouraged later settlement.***  
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**1832 A. P. Chouteau establishes a sub-agency near Okay. (26)**

**1836 Stand Watie signs the Treaty of New Echota and acquires the enmity of those opposed to removal. (29) p. 21**

**1837 Major Ridge & John Ridge settled in their homes on Honey Creek. (103) p. 405**

**1838 Trail of Tears forced march begins. (30)**

.....Francois Gesseau Chouteau d. (23)

.....Auguste Pierre Chouteau d. (23)

**1839 Eucha established near the headwaters of Brushy Creek. It was named for Oochalata, who built the first building at the town site. (103) p. 571**

**1839 June 22. John Ridge murdered by Chief John Ross’ Knights of Death (secret police) at Honey Creek. (30)**

.....June 22. Elias Boudinot murdered by the Knights at Park Hill. (30)

.....June 22. Major Ridge murdered in Washington County, Arkansas. (30)

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***FACTOID: These murders were the result of a long standing dispute between two factions of Cherokee’s. One group did not want to negotiate and move from their homes in the south. The other, was called the “Treaty Party” and included the Ridges, Boudinot and Stand Watie who attempted to negotiate with the government.***  
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.....Josiah Gregg discovers a shorter route to Santa Fe from Fort Gibson, later used extensively by California bound gold seekers in 1849. (117) p. 101

**1840 Joseph Lynch Martin, “Greenbriar Joe,” establishes 100,000 acre Pensacola Ranch with ranch headquarters 2 ¼ miles north of present day Pensacola. (40) (55)**

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***FACTOID: Carey’s Ferry, (now inundated by Carey Bay) was established in 1840 by Thomas Carey. Located on the east side of the Grand River, north of Grove, it was a primary avenue for crossing the river from Southwest City to Vinita and on west. The ferry headquarters included small bedrooms and in 1873, a post office was opened. The ferry was used extensively by troops during the Civil War. In 1904 it was replaced by a toll bridge. (103) p. 260***  
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**1842 November 15. Cherokee Nation slave revolt at Webbers Falls (69) (109)**

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*FACTOID: Slaves, captives from other tribes, were frequently found among Indian tribes. However, it also was common practice among southeastern tribes to acquire Negro slaves and, when they moved west their slaves accompanied them. Some plantation owners acquired as many as 100. In 1842, about 25 escaped and met at Webbers Falls. Subsequently, they were rounded up and returned to their masters.*  
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**1843 Mathias Splitlog and 800 Wyandottes migrate to Kansas and purchase land northwest of present day Kansas City. (32)**

.....Nathan Boone’s Expedition leaves Three Forks to explore northwest. (117) p. 111

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*FACTOID: Mathias Splitlog, the “Indian Millionaire”, was regarded as a mechanical genius and became wealthy when the Union Pacific Railroad purchased some of his land near Weston, Missouri in 1863. He also sold real estate still referred to as “Splitlog Hill” in today’s Kansas City, Kansas. The town began its growth southeast of Weston near the location of the Oregon and Santa Fe Trails from Independence and the military road nearby connecting Fort Leavenworth, Kansas with Fort Smith. Later, Splitlog, moved to Indian Territory in 1874 and founded Cayuga. There he built a saw mill, gristmill, and provided ferry service across the Elk River. In 1889, he financed a railroad from Joplin through Neosho to Cayuga. Cayuga is most commonly identified with the Methodist Church he completed in 1896 which is still in use.*  
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**1845 Middle section of the National Military Road completed.**

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*FACTOID: The military road was an ambitious project initiated in 1835 to enable protection of the western frontier at the time. Designed to move military supplies from fort to fort, construction was divided into sections for development. One section connected Fort Snelling, Minnesota on the north to Fort Des Moines, Iowa with Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The second segment constructed from Fort Leavenworth south to Fort Gibson, Arkansas was completed in 1845. A third was developed from Fort Gibson to Fort Towson, Oklahoma which then connected to an existing road to Fort Jesup in Louisiana. The middle section, completed to Fort Gibson in 1845 was particularly useful in transporting supplies and troops from Fort Scott to Fort Gibson.*  
(114)

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..... Osage Trace/Shawnee Trail/Texas Road in use.

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*FACTOID: The Shawnee Trail was the first used to move cattle from Texas to markets in Kansas and Missouri. The trail was not ideal because of the timber and mountainous landscape of the region. Tribes charged trail herders for its use. By 1866, western trails such as the Chisholm and Great Western became more popular.*  
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**1849** Jean Pierre Chouteau d at Fort Gibson on Christmas Day and is buried there. (23)

**1850** June 1. Letter of Father Bax, Jesuit Mission, St. Francis, Harmony, Missouri referring to Osage villages on the Neosho and Verdigris. (4)

.....June 10. Letter of Father Bax referring to Chief Pai-nonpake of the Great Hill village on the Verdigris River. (4)

**1851** Paul Liguist Chouteau d. (23)

**1855** May. The Knights of the Golden Circle organized. (109) p. 88

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*FACTOID: The Knights of the Golden Circle were labeled “progressives” and led by Stand Watie. They were bound by oath to support slavery in Kansas, in the Cherokee Nation and elsewhere.*

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**1859** Pin Indians or Keetoowah Society organized prior to the outbreak of the Civil War. (79) p. 109

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*FACTOID; The ‘Pin Indians’ or Keetoowah Society, “traditionalists” who supported the old ways, were a secret order of mainly full blooded Indians who favored abolition. Purportedly organized by Evan Jones, a Baptist missionary, they wore crossed pins on their shirts or coats as a badge of recognition.*

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**1860** Splitlog constructs steamboat. (32)

**1862** June 8. A battle between Indian troops commanded by Stand Watie and 1000 2<sup>nd</sup> Ohio Cavalry Federal troops, fought at Cowskin Prairie near the Grand River. The Ohio troops, under the command of Col. Charles Doubleday, pursued Watie to the Spavinaw Hills then to Locust Grove. (30) p. 60 (31) p. 43

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*FACTOID: Brigadier General Stand Watie became the highest ranking Indian officer in the confederate army. He also was the last confederate general to surrender his troops at the conclusion of the Civil War. (Doaksville, Indian Territory, June 23, 1865) Watie was a resident of Delaware County spending many years farming on Honey Creek and the O’Fields Bend area, where the river curved south of today’s Monkey Island.*

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**1862** July 3. Stand Watie’s men at Spavinaw Creek, skirmished, were defeated and retreated to Locust Grove. (31) p. 46

.....July 3. Clarkson’s defeat at Locust Grove. (31) p. 47

.....October 22. Fighting at Old Fort Wayne or Beattie’s Prairie, four miles west and south of Maysville, Arkansas Cooper and Waite with 3000 men lost four cannons to Federal General Blunts expedition. (30)

.....December 27. Confederate Fort Davis, a cantonment near Muskogee, was captured and destroyed by Union Troops. (75) p. 142

**1863** Splitlog amassed a fortune from sale of land to Union Pacific at Weston, as well as land sold to a syndicate platting Kansas City. (32)

.....July 1. First battle of Cabin Creek. (30) p. 100

.....July 17. Battle of Elk Creek or Honey Springs. (30)

**1864** May 10. Stand Watie awarded rank of Brigadier General. (30)

.....September 16. Battle of Flat Rock Creek (31) p. 98

.....September 18. Second battle of Cabin Creek. (29) p. 22 (31) p. 103 (30) p.157

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***FACTOID: The second battle of Cabin Creek has been called the worst defeat in the trans-Mississippi west for the North during the Civil War. The Confederates captured clothing for 2000 men and nearly a million dollars in supplies and munitions. Equally as devastating was the loss of those supplies to Federal troops awaiting them at Fort Gibson and Fort Smith.***

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**1864** September 19. Battle of Pryor Creek. (31) p. 105 (48)

**1865** Monroe Grove, referenced for a Cherokee family who farmed the area. (8)

**1865** June 23. Stand Watie surrenders troops at Doaksville near Ft. Towson. (29) p. 22

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***FACTOID: Although not as well known as second Cabin Creek, several important Civil War battles also impacted the war in northeastern Oklahoma.***

- ***Cowskin Prairie, Delaware County, June 8, 1862. Col. Charles Doubleday and a detachment of 1000 Federal troops routed encamped confederates led by Col. Stand Watie in the vicinity of Round Grove. Morale among the Federals soared when they learned they had defeated the Cherokee Mounted Rifles, considered the best southern troops in the territory.***
- ***Old Fort Wayne, Delaware County, October 4, 1862. Troops led by Federal General James Blount and Confederates under the command of General Douglas Cooper clashed near the old fort four miles west of Maysville. The northerners were victorious, gaining control of territory reaching as far west as the Arkansas River.***
- ***Pryor Creek, Mayes County, September 19, 1864. The evening after the 2<sup>nd</sup> battle of Cabin Creek, Watie's troops and their captured supplies were confronted by Federal troops. However, during the night, the Confederates left the area and successfully out maneuvered the Federals, crossing the Verdigris River near Claremore and the Arkansas near Tulsa.***

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**1867** Stockbridge Indian Tribe, originally moved from Massachusetts to Kansas in 1839 then, in 1867 settled in Indian Territory as citizens of the Cherokee Nation. (66)

.....Ottawa Indian Tribe moved to Indian Territory south and east of present day Miami. (66)

.....Rev. James E. Ketchum, a Delaware Indian, purchases home from Johnson Thompson located on Grand River (38) in Mayes County. (74)

.....Cooweescoowee District Court House, Cherokee Nation, built just south of Clermont’s Mound. (54)

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*FACTOID: After the Federal Indian Removal Act of 1830, tribes either voluntarily or forcefully were removed to the new “Indian Territory.” They brought varying degrees of governance and wealth with them. In all, 67 tribes from various regions of the United States were ultimately removed to the new land now called Oklahoma.*

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**1868** Baxter Springs, Kansas incorporated and dubbed “the first cow town in Kansas” because Texas cattle were driven up the Texas and Shawnee Trail to a railhead shortly after in 1870. (62)

**1870** July 12. MK&T Railroad reaches Kansas/Indian Territory border (18)  
Incorporated May 23, 1870. (61)

.....July 15. The precursor to Pryor, the Archer & Bryan Store, on the Texas Trail, housed the first post office known as ‘Pryor’s Creek.’ The MK&T railroad determined the final location of Pryor in 1871, when it opened a depot in what was then the locale called Coo-Y-Yah. (52) (112)

.....Downingville (Vinita) established. When railroads were extended into the area the next year (1871) the town was renamed Vinita by promoter E. C. Boudinot in honor of artist Vinnie Ream in 1871. (111)

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*FACTOID; Following the Civil War as settlers begin occupying Indian Territory, small towns emerged to provide various services. Some became centralized locations for government entities, others became way stops for railroads, and some were founded in out of the way regions to supply the needs of farmers.*

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**1871** January. The Bender Murders. (75) p. 120 - 122

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*FACTOID: Lawlessness was rampant in Indian Territory and the surrounding region.. One example of a particularly heinous crime nearby in southern Kansas involved the Bender Family. The family lured travelers into their home to eat and gamble, then robbed and killed them. When lawmen unraveled the crime, they arrived at the farm and discovered eleven bodies in a well and others buried in the vegetable garden. By popular count the fate of some thirty missing victims became known. However, the Benders had disappeared and were never found.*

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.....Louis Pharamond Chouteau d. (23)

.....September 9, Stand Watie d. and is buried in the Polson Cemetery, Delaware County. (29)

.....May 22, The Atlantic and Pacific Railroad reached the banks of the Grand River on the Ottawa County border. (41) (75) p. 105

.....July. MKT Railroad reaches Chouteau. (75)

.....October. Col. Stevens fetes Gen. William Sherman of Civil War fame for his influence. He re-routes the MKT across the river to Muskogee instead of following the Texas Trail east to Ft. Gibson. (75) p. 116 - 117

.....October. Vinita “Axe Handle Battle.” (75) p. 128

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*FACTOID: The “Axe Handle Battle of Vinita” in 1871 resulted from fierce competition between railroads. Construction workers employed by the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad threatened to cross, east to west, the north to south bound tracks placed by the MKT railroad. Upon receiving this report while laying track near Muskogee, MKT officials halted work, loaded workers into cars and rushed north to stop the crossing. Armed with ax handles, the MKT workers met the Atlantic and Pacific force east of town and, not only prevented the crossing of tracks, but tore up A&P track in the process. Later, the two railroads negotiated an agreement and the Atlantic and Pacific extended its rail service to Tulsa.*  
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1872 January. MK&T Railroad reaches Muskogee. (18) p. 144 (75)

.....Society of Friends (Quaker) missionaries establish the Seneca Indian School for Seneca, Shawnee, and Wyandotte. (109) p. 58 – 60

.....Adair established by the MKT Railroad. (118) p. 349

1873 November 5. Post Office established at Carey’s Ferry on the Grand River and located in William Curtis’ store. (103) p. 260

1874 Elias Splitlog moved to Indian Territory and named a large spring on his land “Cayuga” in honor of his wife who was a member of the Cayuga tribe. (32)

.....Grove Springs established, also called Monroe Grove and Round Grove, included a general store and blacksmith shop. (8) (103) p. 39

.....June 24. Henry Covell Holderman born and later credited with the first vision of a dam to be constructed on the Grand River. (107)

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*FACTOID: Although occupied by farm families in the area for many years, “Grove Springs” was a welcome campsite for travelers on the trail between Southwest City, Missouri and Vinita, Indian Territory. The large grove and spring provided fuel, fresh water and shelter for the travelers.*  
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1875 Needmore, located on Monkey Island is established with one store on the site. (8) (103) p. 246

.....“Hanging” Judge Parker appointed. (70) p. 25

////////////////////////////////////  
*FACTOID: Land west of the Arkansas, including Indian Territory, was a haven for criminals because Indian Tribal Laws did not often recognize or have jurisdiction over the crimes of the white man. Judge Isaac Parker hired Federal deputies and sent them to all parts of the region to capture and return these criminals. In all, Parker sentenced 160 to die and oversaw the hanging of 79 of them.*  
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**1876** September 7. St. Louis – San Francisco (Frisco) Railroad incorporated. (11)  
.....Wyandotte established. The town was first named Prairie City, then Grand  
River and finally Wyandotte, October 3, 1894. (79) p. 20

**1880** Indian Boarding Schools established by federal government. (33) p. 131

**1881** Atlantic & Pacific extends its line from Vinita to Tulsa which it reached  
August 21, 1882....subsequently, bought out by St. Louis and San Francisco “Frisco”  
Railroad. (75) p. 245

////////////////////////////////////  
*FACTOID: Since its introduction in Boston in October of 1826, the railroad spread  
dramatically as a means of transporting people and goods. Growth depended on  
financing and, as a result, many small independent lines in eastern Indian Territory  
were forced into bankruptcy. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, only the MKT (Katy); the  
MO&G; and the Union Pacific Railroads remained in northeastern Oklahoma.*  
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**1881** August. Cole, Mayes County settlement, founded by Daniel Boone Cole. (45)

**1882** Lewis Dalton family moved to Locust Hill, near Vinita. (63) p. 39.

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*FACTOID: Emmett Dalton, considered the most accomplished gunfighter and  
youngest of three brothers that comprised the Dalton Gang, once lived with some of the  
family in the Locust Hill area south of Vinita. Later, he was joined by Grat and Bob in  
conducting train and bank robberies in the region. Included among those was the well  
publicized robbery of the MKT train at Adair on July 14, 1892.*  
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**1882** September 19. Claremore founded after the Frisco Railroad was  
constructed. (11) The town’s original name came from an Osage Chief called “Gra-  
moi,” however French traders in the area pronounced his name “Clermont.”

**1884** June 11. Cayuga post office established. (28)

**1887** Kansas & Arkansas Valley Railway began building from Ft. Smith to  
Coffeyville, Kansas. It reached Wagoner’s Switch in 1889 and eventually to  
Coffeyville. (75) p. 244

.....Splitlog completes a railroad, the Splitlog Line, from Joplin to Neosho,  
Missouri. (32)

.....Patrick McCarty Hung. McCarty was convicted in Judge Parker’s  
courtroom of killing and robbing Thomas Mahoney and his brother north of Vinita.  
(70) p. 221

**1888** MK&T developed or acquired feeder routes in Indian Territory. (18)

.....Willie Hasell College opened in Vinita and later attended by Will Rogers.

**1889** April 22. The Unassigned Land run opens, 2 million acres. (26) (64) p. 338

.....June 30. The Splitlog rail line completed to Cayuga, Indian Territory. (32)

**1890** February Grat Dalton, deputy marshal, Vinita. (63) p. 45

////////////////////////////////////  
*FACTOID: According to the Encyclopedia of Western Gunfighters, (104) approximately one in four gunfighters was a former lawman. Many had been cowboys, ranchers, and farmers who became outlaws for money and the lack of law enforcement between the end of the Civil War and Oklahoma statehood in 1907. As the age of gunfighters passed, a new breed of criminal appeared in northeast Oklahoma, particularly through the depression years of 1930 to 1940. The Barker Gang, Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker and "Pretty Boy" Floyd all frequented the region creating havoc for lawmen.*  
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**1890 Fort Gibson abandoned.**

.....May 2. The Organic Act creating six counties in Indian Territory. (63) p. 29

.....Zena post office established. (103) p. 429

**1891 February 28. The Dawes Act is invoked allocating each member of an Indian tribe 80 acres of land regardless of age or sex. (63) p. 130**

.....Frederick Chouteau d. (23)

.....September. The Dalton's and Bill Doolin rob MK&T train at Leliaetta north of Wagoner. (63) p. 70 and 117 (113) p. 134

.....September 22. Sac-Fox-Iowa-Potawatomi Land Run. (64) p. 338

**1892 Henry Holderman, age 17, conceives of building a dam across the Grand River while herding cattle to Chetopa. (9) p. 2**

.....March 14. Spavinaw post office established. (116)

.....April 19. Cheyenne – Arapahoe Land Run. (64) p. 338

.....July 14. Dalton's rob MK&T train at Adair. (119) (63) p. 85 (75) p. 257

////////////////////////////////////  
*FACTOID: The fact that the Dalton's were going to rob a train was well known. Authorities had information that the gang was going to rob the train at Pryor and had placed 20 armed deputies on board. But instead the gang moved the robbery site to Adair. When the train stopped, the eight gang members opened a withering fire lasting about 20 minutes and succeeded in obtaining \$27,000. By some accounts, the deputies never fired back. (119)*  
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.....Worcester Academy opened in Vinita.

**1893 May 2. Henry Starr gang robs the MK&T train at Pryor Creek. (113) p. 134**

.....September 16. Cherokee Outlet Land Run. (64) p. 338

**1894 Cayuga Springs post office established. (32)**

.....Rolston Cemetery land on Monkey Island donated by Lewis Rolston, Jr. (29)

.....May 10. Bill Doolin and the "Wild Bunch" robbed bank at Southwest City. (63) p. 191. (Wild Bunch; Bill Doolin, Little Dick West, Dynamite Dick Clifton, Red Buck Waightman and Bill Raidler) (63) p. 320.

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*FACTOID: Bill Doolin was shot in the head but survived during the attempted bank robbery at Southwest City, Missouri near Honey Creek on May 20, 1895. A posse pursued the gang west, but lost the trail after they crossed the Grand River near Grove.*  
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- 1894** December 14. Needmore post office established. (28)  
**1895** May 3. Kickapoo Land Run. (64) p. 338.  
 ..... Needmore school built on land donated by Lewis Rolston, Jr. (29) p. 18  
**1896** Henry Holderman surveys Grand River for a dam site. (9) p. 1  
 .....May 9. Fairland incorporated. (79) p. 15

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***FACTOID:** In 1896, Henry Holderman, his brother Bert, and two classmates from the Spaulding Institute in Muskogee, seeking a site for a dam on the Grand River, built a raft and floated from its source to the confluence at Three Forks near Muskogee. They surveyed all possible sites and concluded that a site near today's Pensacola Dam seemed to be the most practical. Holderman pursued the dream to construct a dam for the rest of his life, but he never secured appropriate financing. He died in 1951 at the age of 71 and is buried in the cemetery north of Wyandotte in Ottawa County.*  
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- 1896** Pensacola Post Office opened by Richard Martin. (9) p. 5  
 .....Locust Grove founded. (51)

**1897** Adair, Mayes County incorporated. (116) p.25

**1898** Centralia, Craig County founded. (27)

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***FACTOID:** In 1898, a halberd or spearhead with a small battle axe attached was found by workers excavating a cellar for a home in Kansas City. The halberd was a weapon used by the Spanish and probably from Coronado's expedition, provided evidence of their presence in the area during the 1500's. A similar weapon was found in Tennessee and may have belonging to a member of Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto's party when they explored that area in 1541. (4)*  
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**1899** The Ketchum settlement and post office, located along the Grand River about one mile north of his home, was established and named in honor of Rev. James E. Ketchum. (38) The Postmaster was Jesse M. Gallman.

## 1900 – 2000

**1900** Excavation of the 'Afton Spring.' (79) p. 12

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***FACTOID:** The Afton Spring, located about two miles northwest of town became a source of interest to the Smithsonian Institution after Dr. D. H. Harper was credited with having recovered over 150 specimens of flint and bone artifacts either from the spring or nearby. After excavation, the spring yielded weapons as well as bones of pre-historic animals. It ceased to flow when water, which was pumped from the Pitcher – Cardin mines 20 miles away, destroyed the underground stream that fed it.*  
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**1905** Toll Bridge replaces Carey's Ferry - Grove Springs to Echo. (29) p. 61  
 (18)

////////////////////////////////////  
**FACTOID:** *Through the 19<sup>th</sup> century, ferries were abundant along the Grand River Valley. Among others, ferries were available just below the confluence of the Spring and Neosho Rivers that form the Grand River; Turkey Ford Ferry on the Elk River; Carey’s Ferry near Grove; Anderson’s Ferry near Cleora; Ketchum’s Crossing Ferry; the Salina Ferry; and further down river, Markham’s Ferry near Locust Grove. Ferries transported people, wagons, livestock and other goods. Most utilized a cable strung across the river and a few used pike poles if the current wasn’t swift. Costs for using the ferry ranged from five cents a passenger, 25 cents for a horse, and 40 cents for a team of oxen. (105)*  
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**1905** S.M. Porter made a “portion of a survey” for an irrigation project on the river. (9) p. 1

**1906** Dennis store built south of Grove, named for Peter Dennis. (103) p. 330

**1907** January 31. Cyrus Avery and associates filed for incorporation of the Grand River Power Company to build a dam. (9) p. 2

**1908** December 8. Jay becomes the new Delaware County seat. (103) p. 445

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**FACTOID:** *By a slim majority, voters approved moving county records from Grove to Jay primarily based on its more central location. However, legal and armed resistance to recognizing Jay continued for several years and involved the governor, the state Supreme Court and militia. (103) p.448 - 451*  
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**1910** March 10. Kansas Oklahoma and Gulf Railway Company re-chartered as the Missouri Oklahoma and Gulf Railway. (60)

**1911** Holderman attempts to interest the Muskogee Chamber of Commerce in financing the building of a dam. (9) p. 2

**1912** ‘Old’ Bernice named for Bernice Mode by father, Ross Mode. (103) p. 242

**1913** Kenwood community developed from timber rights purchased by John W. Hoffman. (103) p. 606

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**FACTOID:** *Kenwood , in Delaware County, boasted a population of 1000 by 1920 with running water and electric lights. It was acclaimed as the most modern city in Oklahoma for its size. The source of Kenwood’s prosperity was a lumber mill that employed 300 men. The town also had a railroad spur which transported the lumber to main lines. However, by 1929 the timber supply was depleted and the fortunes of the town had fallen to the point it was declared “Oklahoma’s deserted village.”*  
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**1913** February 14. Missouri Oklahoma & Gulf Railroad connecting Baxter Springs, Missouri and Denison, Texas meet at Strang. (57)

.....October 8. Holderman, in another attempt to build a dam, incorporates the Grand River Power and Electric Company. However, the charter was cancelled March 28, 1934 for non-payment of license fee to do business. (9) p. 2.

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**FACTOID:** *Strang, in Mayes County, was born with the “Golden Spike Ceremony” on February 14, 1913 when two segments of the Missouri Oklahoma and Gulf (MO&G) Railroad were united from Neosho, Missouri on the north and Muskogee, Oklahoma from the south. A railroad official christened the town in honor of his new daughter – in-law. A post office and general store located nearby were original buildings moved to the new site. According to reports, a crowd of 1,500 attended the event.*  
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**1913** February 12. Old Bernice post office established. (28)

**1915** The Barkers, Arizona (Ma) and her five sons move to Tulsa. (71) p. 249

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**FACTOID:** *The Barker Gang was among the first “modern outlaws” to emerge after Indian Territory became Oklahoma. Ma Barker and her five sons along with Alvin Karpis and “Machine Gun Kelly” defied law enforcement officers until 1931. Four of the Barkers are buried at the Timber Hill (Williams) Cemetery near Welch.*  
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**1916** June 2. Pitcher post office in Ottawa County established. (28)

**1917** August 5. Grand River Hydro-Electric Power Company is incorporated by Holderman and others. (9) p. 2....This charter was also cancelled March 28, 1934 for nonpayment of license fee to do business. (9) p. 3.

**1918** Cardin, Ottawa County, founded. (27)

**1920** Federal Power Commission (Grandfather of FERC)) is established for jurisdiction of hydroelectric development on navigable, and some instances non-navigable, waters. (9) Sec. X, p. 1. (Grand River is considered non-navigable)

**1922** June 19. Grand River Hydro Electric Company filed for a permit to build in the approximate locality of Pensacola Dam. (9) p. 3

.....August 28. Boatman Post Office, Mayes County, established, originally Bryan Chapel or “Dogtown” named to honor Merchant Joe Boatman. (116) p.461

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**FACTOID:** *Almost every application for a post office, which might be established in businesses or in homes was approved before 1890 after which some restrictions were applied. For example, during the early history of Mayes County, 38 post offices were approved over an approximate 100 year period. (116) p.469*  
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**1924** Spavinaw Lake water project completed. Sec XV p. 140

**1925** State highway #25 constructed east from Vinita through Bernice to Grove and on to the Missouri State Line. (29) p. 61.

January 14, Ballerina Moscelyne Larkin born in Miami, (67)

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**FACTOID:** *Moscelyne Larkin, world famous and one of the internationally known Oklahoma Indian Princess Ballerinas, was born in Miami and, at age 15, toured the western hemisphere with the Original Ballet Russe. In 1954, she moved to Tulsa and formed the Tulsa Civic Ballet and School, now the Tulsa Ballet Theatre.*  
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**1926** March 9. Grand River Hydro Electric Company applies for options to build four dams on the Grand River. (9) Sec. I, p. 3.

.....November 11. Route 66, Will Rogers Highway, part of The Mother Road, is built through Commerce, Miami, Afton, Vinita and on west. (72)

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*FACTOID: Principally promoted by Tulsa businessman Cyrus Avery, Highway 66 was signed into law in 1927. With the exception of New Mexico (487 miles), Oklahoma (432 miles) included the longest stretch of the road. Entering the state in Ottawa County and continuing through Craig in northeast Oklahoma, the highway was completely paved from Chicago, Illinois to Santa Monica, California in 1938.*

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**1929** November 6. Grand Hydro Company incorporated. (9) Sec I, p. 4

.....Ballerina Myra Yvonne Chouteau Terekhov b. g g g granddaughter of Jean Pierre. (23)(68)

**1931** July 14. Application submitted by Grand Hydro to build a dam at Tynon's Bluff. (9) Sec I. p. 4

.....August 29. Application approved, but no subsequent action.

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*FACTOID: Many attempts were made to build a dam and create hydro-electric power on the Grand River. In 1907, the Grand River Power Company was formed by Cyrus Avery; in 1911, Henry Holderman attempted to persuade the Muskogee Chamber of Commerce to invest; in 1913 he formed the Grand River Power and Electric Company; then in 1917 formed the Grand River Hydro Power and Electric Company; and finally in 1929 another group attempted to organize the Grand Hydro Company.*

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**1933** December. Prohibition repealed. (71) p. 252.

**1934** April 6. Commerce policeman Wm. Campbell killed by Barrow gang. (77)

.....May 23. Bonnie & Clyde killed in Bienville Parish, LA (77)

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*FACTOID: Murder, robbery, and kidnapping were the signature crimes of Clyde Barrow and his accomplice, Bonnie Parker, who met in January, 1930 and whose lives ended in violent death in Louisiana in May, 1934. The pair, with their associates, traveled in a circle of five states exploiting the state line rule that prevented officers from one state going in to another. A considerable amount of the gang's time was spent in Miami and Commerce, Oklahoma and Joplin, Missouri.*

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**1935** April 14. 'Black Sunday,' the name "dust bowl" was created after a dust storm with 60 mile per hour winds developed.

.....April 28. Enabling Act creates GRDA .(9) Sec. II, p. 9

.....August 2. GRDA Board Meets, Langley elected as chair. (9) Sec. II. p. 8

.....October 1. Ma Barker, killed in Ocala, Florida, is buried at Welch beside her son, Herman who committed suicide in 1927 at a Wichita road block. (76) (79)

**1935 – 37** "Grandma's & Rainbow Chasers" active in promotion. (9) Sec. II. p.9

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*FACTOID: The idea for building a dam across the Grand River had been discussed ever since Henry Holderman's initial dream in 1896. Between 1907 and 1935, five previous attempts were made to seek private funding to build the dam. However, after the Federal Government developed the Tennessee Valley Authority project in the early 1930's, no concerted effort had been made to build a dam on the Grand River. Early in 1935, after an enabling act had been passed by the state legislature, two groups were formed, the "Grandma's" led by J. Howard Langley, a Pryor attorney, and the "Rainbow Chasers" led by Congressman Wesley Disney. The "Grandma's" stayed at home and sought local and state support for the project, and the "Rainbow Chasers" traveled to meet with government officials and congressmen in Washington.*  
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**1937** Holway mentions that the "toll bridge west of Grove had been taken over by the state as part of highway 25." (9) Sec. IX, p. 1

**1937** Disney, established by promoter C. D. Armstrong. (103) p. 564  
.....Langley established. (50)

..... June 6. Twenty million earmarked for Pensacola Dam.(9) Sec. II. p 11

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*FACTOID: Upon returning from a campaign trip to Texas in 1936, President Roosevelt reportedly made an unscheduled stop at Vinita. According to one version, the Vinita City Council had passed a resolution, noting that 'all sitting United States President's must stop in Vinita for 20 minutes.' Another version indicated that it had become Oklahoma law. Never-the-less Roosevelt did stop and was made aware of the project and ultimately the promoters received the funding.*  
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**1937** September 18. Roosevelt approves \$20 million allocation. (9) Sec. III. p.1

.....October 22. Holway & Neuffer selected as engineers. (9) Sec. 111. p. 9

.....October 25. GRDA opens office, First Nat'l Bank. (9) Sec III, p. 11

**1938** The unfinished bridge. (29) p. 63

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*FACTOID: The unfinished bridge located on Horse Creek has been the source of curiosity for years. In 1902 a three steel span bridge had been erected across the Grand River replacing the Carey Ferry north of Grove. Prior to flooding the reservoir, which would become Grand Lake, the bridge was dismantled with one span allocated to County District #2 and two spans to District #1 where some road damage was perceived to occur. The District #2 span was used on upper Honey Creek. The two spans allocated to District #1 were moved to the upper reaches of the Horse Creek arm of Grand Lake where a connecting road and creek crossing was contemplated. But construction was halted and not resumed, presumably for lack of funding.*  
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**1938** January. First contract let for East Spillway and second for Core Drilling. (9) Sec. III. p. 12

.....January. Dam site moved "several hundred yards north" to avoid Seneca Fault. (9) Also, see photo, Sec. VII. p. 14

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**FACTOID:** Originally, the west end of the Pensacola Dam was slated to be constructed several hundred feet downstream from its present location. However, engineers determined that the original surveyed location lay over the Seneca Fault, a fracture in the earth's surface. The Seneca Fault extends from a point several miles northeast of Spurgeon, Missouri to a point about 70 miles southwest between Pryor and Chouteau, Oklahoma. After thorough study, engineers concluded that the new site was very satisfactory and would not require deep excavations. (9) (106)

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**1938** April 13. KO & G spur constructed from Pensacola to site. (9) Sec VII. p.15  
.....June 17. Contract signed to quarry limestone at Copeland Switch utilizing KO&G to haul to the dam site. The limestone quarry site is located in the lake midway between Echo Bay and Sailboat Bridge. (9) Sec. VII. p. 18  
.....August 16. Massman sub-lets earth & rock excavation. (9) Sec. VII, p. 20

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**FACTOID:** Langley was originally established as a construction camp for the W. R. Holway engineering firm. Named for J. Howard Langley, it became a boom town and the streets were originally platted with Cherokee Avenue, the main east- west street to lead to the dam and through downtown. However, when issues involving the Seneca Fault caused the dam to be moved approximately 300 yards north, the main street with buildings constructed, or under construction, remained as designed.

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**1939** January. Work started on raising/relocating KO&G/Frisco tracks and bridges near Twin Bridges state park. (9) Sec. VII. p. 27  
.....Archaeological excavation occurs in Woodward Hollow and other areas to be inundated by the lake. (103) p. 436  
.....Gove Bunch names Monkey Island .1938 (29)  
.....Summer. Governor Phillips recommends change in appointment of GRDA Board. (9) Sec. IV p. 8  
.....September 7. The original "road/bridge" agreement between the state and GRDA breaks down after "Red" Phillips becomes governor. (9) Sec. IX. p. 4  
.....November. Disney founded. (116) p .365

////////////////////////////////////  
**FACTOID:** Archaeological excavations were underway in Woodward Hollow in 1939 and layers of debris showed that four separate cultures had occupied the shelter, the Woodland, Hopewellian, Neosho and Spiro. Each had left definite strata including bits of pottery and arrow projectile points. Over 200 village and burial sites were discovered in the area. Artifacts are stored at the Museum of Natural History, Norman, Oklahoma.

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**1940** March 13. State militia called out by Governor Phillips and encamped at Wagner. Phillips was fearful that the gates would be closed and water would engulf the roads. (9) Sec. IX. p. 12 U.S. Secret Service Men, requested by the Congressional delegation, were very unobtrusively present, ready to counter the Militia, if necessary.

.....March 21. Pensacola Dam gates closed. (29) p. 89 (9) Sec. VII. p. 22  
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*FACTOID: The contentious behavior of Governor Phillips with regard to the Pensacola project reached a boiling point when Phillips called out the State Militia to prevent the closing of the remaining temporary gates of the dam, then W.R.Holway, the chief engineer ordered them closed. While officers of the National Guard were patrolling below the dam in the power house area, the contractor was driving timber gates on the upstream side, closing the temporary openings. When confronted the next day by the Chairman of GRDA who had promised the Governor that he would notify him before the gates were closed, Holway stated that he had heard the conversation, but that he had promised nothing. Phillips charged that "Holway, went down like a thief in the night and closed the gates of the dam." Of course, when the openings were closed, it was too late to prevent the lake to begin filling. Closing the gates in March had been projected to accommodate anticipated spring floods. (9) Sec. IX p. 14*  
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**1940** April 15. First generating unit tested & power delivered to Disney. 27,000 acres had been inundated and the lake was approximately ½ full. (9) Sec. VII p. 22

.....Monkey Island connected with electric lines running 10 miles to Progress School. (29) p. 87

**1941** April flood waters reached the 755 marker from 740 in four days @170,000 cubic foot per second (cfs) In October that same year the lake flooded @ 140,000 cfs, and in May of 1943, 300,000 cfs. (9) Sec. VII. p. 24 and 25. Fortunately, the greatest drought recorded since 1895 had occurred when the dam was being built.

.....November 19. U.S. Government takes control of Pensacola Dam, as a security measure, prior to the Second World War. (9) Most of the power, after the Government take over, was directed to the aluminum plant in Malvern, Arkansas, Camp Gruber, Oklahoma and the Oklahoma Ordinance Works south of prior and municipalities and cooperatives. (9) Sec. XI, p.6 and Sec. XII, p. 6

.....December 7. Japanese bomb Pearl Harbor, Hawaii... War declared.

**1942** Lake Center Baptist Church organized. (29)

**1945** Monkey Island Airport dedicated. (29) p. 92

.....August. The war with Japan ends. (9) Sec. XIII. p. 9

**1946** June 26. Government returns Pensacola Dam. (9) Sec XIII, p. 10. Sec. XII, p. 6 August 31, 1946 the dam was formally turned back. (9) Sec. XIII p. 17

**1947** Current Lake Center Baptist Church built. (2)

**1948** April 9. Chouteau Steam Plant, formerly the Oklahoma Ordinance Works, acquired by GRDA for \$3,500,000. (44) (9) Sec. XIV

**1949** During "liquor by the wink" Wayne Padgett, "King of the Tulsa Bootleggers" hauls Bud Allen's whiskey from Joplin on highway 66. (71) p. 52

**1954** Lake reaches its lowest level of 712 ft.(29) p. 94 (9) Sec XV. p. 12

**1959** Summer. Shangri – La Resort opens. (29)

**1960** Mid-America Industrial Park founded, 9000 acres south of Pryor. Over 70 firms are located within the Park including operations of seven Fortune 500 companies.

.....December. State Highway 125 dedicated. (29) p. 89

.....Kansas, Oklahoma and Gulf Railroad (K.O. & G) through Bernice, abandoned. (28)

**1962** January 2. Ground breaking for the Markham Ferry project. (9) Sec XV. p. 107 (9) Board names Markham Ferry project dam, ‘Robert S. Kerr’ and the lake, ‘Lake Hudson’ in honor of Wash Hudson.

.....January 1. KO&G railroad removed from the lake site.

.....May 26. KO&G railroad sells 105 miles of railroad to GRDA @ 3.5 million, subject to Interstate Commerce Commission agreeing to abandonment from Okay, Oklahoma to Baxter Springs, Kansas. (9) Sec XV. p. 130

.....Summer. Salina Dike Built (58) at a cost of \$357,793. (9) Sec. XV p. 111 / Sec. XV. p. 141

**1964** KO&G Railroad abandoned because of the filling of Lake Hudson. (9)

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*FACTOID: The Kansas Oklahoma and Gulf Railroad followed the shores of the Grand River in several places. When Lake Hudson was completed, most of the railroad bed from Locust Grove to Strang was underwater. Further north the railroad crossed Horse Creek and, when Grand Lake inundated that area, a portion of the bed was moved along the lake shore from Cleora, through Bernice to Copeland Switch near present day Tom Cat Corner. When the railroad was dissolved, the railroad fill and concrete bridge constructed by GRDA at Bernice was used as a portion of the new county highway. Sec. VII p. 27 (9)*

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..... July. Markham Ferry project completed. (42)

**1967** July 21. Salina Pump back completed. (9)

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*FACTOID: Regarded by some as “highly experimental” at the time, the development of pump back stations occurred in Europe as early as 1882. By the 1950’s several were in operation in the United States. The concept behind the idea was that water could be pumped to a “holding lake” then released to a lower level when needed. The falling water would then be used to turn turbines at the lower level and generate electricity. According to a report “The gimmick that makes this seemingly absurd program exceedingly practical is the fact that one mill electricity will be used to pump the water to the new power reservoir, where it will be released to create new power .....such power brings five mills or more on the market .....if needed. (9) Sec. XV. p. 50*

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