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OKLAHOMA AS INDIAN COUNTRY BEFORE
STATEHOOD.

Old Oklahoma, as it was called, and Indian Territory were separate country or territory. We have learned that all of what is now the state of Oklahoma was included in the Louisiana Purchase, when bought by President Jefferson in 1803. The Panhandle counties of Oklahoma, Beaver, Texas, and Cimarron, were once a Spanish Territory. Afterwards they belonged to Mexico. Later they became a part of Texas after it had won its independence from Mexico.

It was after this purchase that the government saw fit to have the Red men from Mississippi move to the new country to live, make their own laws and follow their own customs. Since the government had declared that this new country was to be a home for the Red man, no white man was permitted to settle in or own any property in this country. It was at this time that the Government brought the Five Tribes of Indians from the State of Mississippi and other eastern states. Later other tribes came to live in Indian Territory, known as the Indian country though it was

not a territory.

Some of the Indians brought Negro slaves with them and later the Indians took part in the War between the States. Regardless of what the Indians had done in taking part in the War of the South and the North, Congress decided that the Indian tribes must give up some of their land and be allotted one hundred sixty acres as their homestead. But before the allotment an amendment was made that the Choctaw Indians were not permitted to allot their land, unless the negro slaves of the Indians were also allotted forty acres of the land. This amendment became a law and it was through this source that the Choctaws were permitted to allot their homestead in the Indian country, and the negro slaves were allotted forty acres.

There were no improvements of any sort in the Indian Country. The land was rich and fertile, a land that would grow anything. Tall grass covered the wide prairies and stayed green throughout the year. There was plenty of wild game and fish. The white men looked with longing eyes upon this valuable

3

empty land. They wished that they could own this land and develop the country, so in 1889 a bill was introduced in Congress asking for the opening of Oklahoma to settlement.

After the passage of this bill in 1889, by twelve o'clock noon there were over fifty thousand people waiting at the boundary line for the signal which would permit them to make the run and claim the land for farm and home sites.

At the sound of the trumpet they came singly and by families in a line of white covered wagons that stretched out for miles and miles. Some came on horseback, while others came on foot. Some came by rail and brought whole houses and other buildings. This was the "run of '89". In 1890, Oklahoma had become a territory under its own government.

As we remember the history of THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE, slavery was not to be permitted in any part of the Louisiana Purchase north of the southern boundary line of the state

of Missouri, thirty six degrees and thirty minutes, except in the newly formed state of Missouri. This law decreed that when Texas came into the Union as a slave state it had to give up a portion of its land north of thirty six degrees and thirty minutes known as No-Man's Land.

In 1906 Congress agreed that Oklahoma and Indian Territory should become one state and on November 16, 1907, the President of the United States declared Oklahoma as the forty-sixth state of the Union.

Since statehood there has been wonderful improvements made. Where once was a vast stretch of prairie land, forest and mountains, we see railroads, cities, towns, sawmills, paved roads and large farms. On these farms we see acres and acres of cotton, corn, wheat, and other kinds of crops that are being raised. In some things Oklahoma leads the states.

Oklahoma was once an Indian country and before white people were permitted to settle here, thousands of cattle pastured on her plains and prairies. The Indians

could not make use of all of the land so they rented to stockmen and lived on the rent. The cattle were mostly range cattle. The land was leased and the herds of many different owners ranged together. Every year there was a round up of cattle in order to brand or mark the new born calves and to sell the cattle.

After the Indian Country was leased to the cattlemen for pasture, beef cattle and thoroughbred dairy cows took the place of the longhorn range cattle.

In some places in Oklahoma one can see oil derricks as far as eye can see, also storage tanks and other buildings. It takes a lot of money invested in the oil well game, nevertheless, in some sections of the country one can see the dotted areas at a distance which shows that there are oil wells.

Such are some of the conditions of the once called Indian Territory, now the State of Oklahoma; a country that has advanced in several ways as well as any of her sister states in the Union.