

THE SOUTH MCALESTER CAPITAL

South McAlester, I. T.,  
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W. G. D. Hinds,  
B. F. Jobe, Proprietors

AN APPEAL TO GREEN McCURTAIN

The following complaint, drawn by a committee of Atoka citizens, has been forwarded to the Capital for publication:

To the Hon. Green McCurtain,  
Principal Chief of the Choctaw Nation.

We, a committee, selected by the citizens of the town of Atoka to confer with the townsite commissioners, having made repeated efforts so to do, and having been up to this time, ignored by the said commission in each and every suggestion we have made, and believing that they, the townsite commissioners, under a misconception of their duties as imposed by the Atoka Agreement, which is in words as follows: 'Each of said commissions shall lay out townsites to be restricted as far as possible to their present limits where towns are now located in the nation for



which said commission is appointed.' "Said commission shall have prepared correct and proper plats of each town and file one in the clerk's office in the United States district court for the district in which the town is located, and one with the Principal Chief or governor of the nation in which the town is located and one with the Secretary of the Interior to be approved by him before the same shall take effect." And requiring them, as a townsite commission to sell to the present occupant, all lots heretofore occupied by him or her at a reasonable valuation to be appraised and fixed upon same, taking into consideration the market value of the same, and not to include the improvements thereon. See sub-title 'Townsites,' Curtis Bill, page 15.

In as much as it is impossible to arrive at an understanding with this commission, and in as much as they ignore our complaints and suggestions, and in as much as we believe verily that their course in the town of Atoka is calculated to depreciate the value of the property which they are instructed to sell for the reason that they are governed purely by straight lines and streets, regardless of old and ancient usage and



custom of the people of this town. They tell us that the Interior Department will not receive a map of the town of Atoka in its present condition, and we think that this is the extent of their authority, with a few changes wherever they become absolutely necessary, but, we are told that this will be denied or rejected by the Interior Department and in consideration of these statements and the general alteration of the streets as they have been mapped and used by the people of our town since it was laid off by Mrs. E. A. Flack as a town, who has sold town lots to every citizen and the town is now occupied under color of her title.

We have several residents of our town, both Choctaws and non-citizens, who have been residents for the last thirty years, and have concentrated all of their earnings into their little homes who are now informed by the townsite commission, that they must give away and yield their property rights to permit them to make such streets and lines as in their judgment and opinion is necessary. The idea of the townsite commission seems to be that many of us who have long enjoyed the peace and quiet and possession of our homes are to be turned out in the street, rendering our homes



valueless to us, and when we approach them and murmur we are cast off very uncerimoniously. These streets, or lines according to their idea are straight enough it is true, but we of Atoka well know that Atoka is the oldest town in the Indian Territory, with the exception of Doaksville; and can not at this late date be laid off by the townsite commission with a straight line, having never been built with reference to straight streets or lines, and we further say to you that the financial returns of Atoka, when the lots are placed upon the market for sale would be largely enhanced by having a due regard to present possessions of her people. And we as the representatives of the people of Atoka, with a view to saving the homes of our people, will ask you to obtain from the Interior Department such information as may be available, touching the authority of the townsite commission, in such matters. We have, it is true in one of our suggestions to this commission, stated that we had long realized the necessity of widening some of our streets, but this suggestion and statement was not made until we had been positively and emphatically told that such was the intention of the commission, regardless of our wishes.



The threatened course of this commission will certainly render valueless and worthless and place in the streets in whole and in part, many of the old and ancient business sites and houses, thus rendering them worthless, and destroying the salable or market value of the lots situated along side of them, thereby deteriorating the market price of town lots.

We therefore pray that you intercede for us against the exercise of any such unauthorized authority, and we further pray that you adopt our complaint and protest as yours, with us in behalf of the people of the town of Atoka and the Choctaw Nation and assist us in seeking the proper adjustment herein.

Respectfully submitted,

G. A. PATE,

D. C. BLOSSOM,

A. TELLE.