

ESTABLISHMENT OF RALSTON, OKLAHOMA

Material gathered from several
sources, by Goldie Turner,
Field Worker, July 22, 1937.

Clipping from an early Ralston paper, given
by Mrs. Spaulding.

On June 11, 1894, the United States Government
issued a townsite patent to Walter McCague. The town
was first called Riverside but was soon changed to
Ralston.

In 1902 the Santa Fe Railroad came to Ralston. On
June 17, 1902, J. O. Cales opened the depot as first
agent. The first train came to Ralston under conductor
McClinchey. No other railroad was ever built through
here. This soon became a large shipping point. Mr.
Cales had to have the assistance of seventeen men to
care for the business, including a day and night cashier.
An average of thirty tickets were sold daily. People
drove over from Pawhuska to catch the early morning
train. They would come over in the evening and stay all
night. The hotel was full of people most of the time.

This was in the days before prohibition and Ralston
had saloons. On account of Indians the government
would not permit saloons in Osage County so Ralston was
often visited by many thirsty criminals and gamblers
from the Osage hills as well as Indians and cowboys
from across the river.

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At first there wasn't much government in the town of Ralston. Before a jail was erected the unruly drunks were tied up to trees with ropes until they sobered up. Of course any dangerous persons were taken to Pawnee and put in jail there.

The most commonly used ford that the Indians and cowboys used was a mile or two north of Ralston, although there was another ford closer to the town which was used when the water was low.

The railroad went no farther than Ralston from 1902 to 1904 until the railroad bridge was built across the river. There was a government operated ferry there for a few years but it didn't operate many years.

The first school in Ralston was a little frame one room building. There were no rural schools so the country children who attended would ride in on horseback. The first school opened in October and closed the last of December. The first year or two there was an enrollment of about eighty children each year. The first teacher was Mrs. Williams and the second teacher was Mrs. Whiles. Mrs. Whiles taught there two or three

years. Their salaries were \$30.00 a month the first term and \$35.00 a month the next year.

The cowboys often came in and shot up the town but no one was ever killed during their ferays.