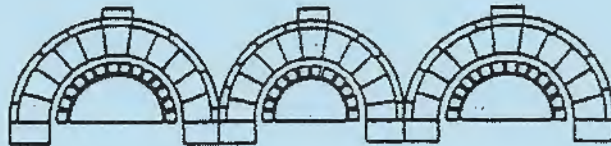


# Payne County Historical Review



The Works Progress Administration



*PAYNE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY*

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## **Remembering the WPA: A Personal Note**

by

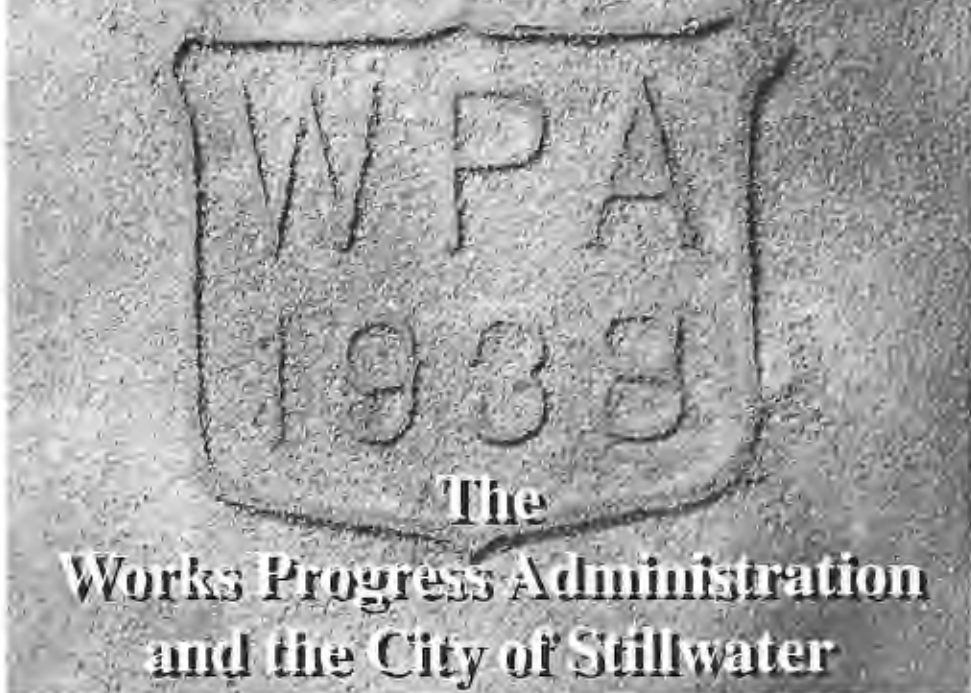
Walter E. Price

I remember the “Great Depression” very well. My father owned a lumber yard, an industry hard hit by the economic downturn. By 1933 he was forced to sell the yard, and we moved from Tulsa to our farm in Mayes County, where you could survive hard times better than in the city. My brother and I loved life on the farm, but it was quite an adjustment for our mom and dad.

When the “New Deal” programs such as the WPA and CCC came into being, many people, including my family, sincerely believed our country was turning to socialism. Over the years my father saw the benefits of many of the programs, particularly the CCC and soil conservation. The WPA got a bad rap, with pictures of men being paid to rake leaves on courthouse lawns and other such activities. Also, the program reeked of politics and patronage at the administrative levels. An interesting paradox is that in the 30’s many people resented the government creating jobs and in the 90’s when a U.S. senator suggested that people on welfare be required to perform public work he was roundly criticized!

Living through the Depression was an interesting experience. I remember many of the “New Deal” programs, and I think you’ll find the following articles provide a well-balanced look at some of the better known of those programs.

Photograph by Lawrence Gibbs



by  
Justin Lenhart

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) was created in 1935 and played an active role in sustaining Stillwater's economy through the Depression. The WPA offered work to those who were in need and able. Stillwater leaned heavily on the WPA, and it helped support a struggling city. Throughout the city of Stillwater there stand today reminders of the strength of the WPA.

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Justin Lenhart grew up in Stillwater, Oklahoma, and graduated from Stillwater High School in 1996. He received his B.A. (2000) and M.A. (2002) in history and museum studies from the University of Central Oklahoma. He has worked as Assistant Registrar at the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C., and is currently Curator of Collections for the Oklahoma Historical Society at the Guthrie Museum Complex. He and his wife live in Oklahoma City.

The Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935 made the WPA possible. This act allocated money for the WPA, as well as the Public Works Administration (PWA), the Resettlement Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Success of the WPA was due in large part to the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935. However, funding was not all that made the WPA operate well. The WPA had well defined policies, and a strict order to it.<sup>1</sup> City Councils, county commissioners, boards of education, and other local agencies planned WPA projects. All WPA plans were submitted to a regional administrator, on to a state WPA administrator, and finally to the federal level before WPA backing was given. To qualify for WPA work, a person had to be eighteen years old, able to be legally employed in the United States, and able-bodied.<sup>2</sup> A person also had to be unemployed and on relief rolls. The federal government was not handing workers jobs, but giving them to those who qualified.

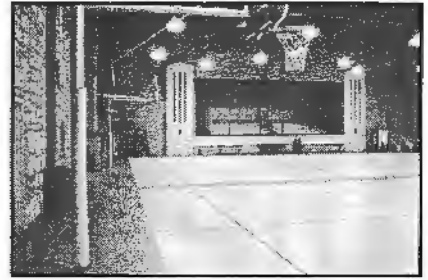
Oklahoma was hard hit by the Great Depression. Stillwater felt the economic crunch with the rest of the state. By 1930, 57 percent of all farms in Payne County were tenant operated. Farm income fell 44 percent by 1934, and 47 percent of all families were on relief rolls in Payne County, with 33 percent on relief rolls statewide.<sup>3</sup> By 1933 Oklahoma was working in a partnership with the federal government to relieve the hardships that had come about as a result of unemployment and drought. In November 1933 the Civil Works Administration (CWA) was established and began to fund projects in Oklahoma, and the Federal Emergency Relief Administration did so after 1934. In July 1935 the WPA took over the relief work in Oklahoma and worked with the state until the program's end in 1943.

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<sup>1</sup>Grace Adams, *Workers on Relief*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939; reprint, New York, Arno Press, 1971), 16.

<sup>2</sup>"Questions and Answers on the WPA," WPA folder, vertical file, Archives and Manuscripts Division Oklahoma, Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

<sup>3</sup>David W. Baird, editor, "WPA Structures Thematic Survey Phase III," 30 August 1987. Oklahoma State Preservation Office, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 5.



The Stillwater armory (photographs by Lawrence Gibbs)

The WPA would not have long to establish itself in Oklahoma before the state's economic condition worsened. In 1936 a severe heat wave settled upon the Southern Plains. Farms across Oklahoma were wiped out, and low prices caused oil and gas production to come to a halt. Stillwater, like many Oklahoma towns, felt the effects of this. However, by 1938 people were being put to work, and needed building and renovation projects were starting to turn Stillwater's economic situation around.

Skilled and unskilled workers alike worked on WPA projects in the Stillwater area. Up to 90 percent of those workmen hired on the WPA projects in Stillwater had to be local employable persons on relief rolls.<sup>4</sup> Most of the projects in Stillwater were labor intensive and fell under the WPA's massive construction program. The WPA as a whole did more than just construction projects. Its goal was to put people to work

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 11.

that best suited their skills. Other WPA projects included federal arts projects, writers' projects, and theater and music projects, as well as historical surveys and reading projects. These programs were smaller than the construction projects but had just as large an impact on the communities. The WPA, as of March 18, 1938, had taught 17,000 Oklahomans to read and write.<sup>5</sup> Men were not the only citizens of Stillwater participating in the WPA. Women participated in sewing projects, served school lunches, and did janitorial work for the Stillwater Public Schools, all of which fell under the WPA.<sup>6</sup>

Given the rural nature of Stillwater at the time, most of the workers were unskilled. Trained workers directed unskilled laborers on projects in Stillwater. Many of those unskilled workers were destitute agriculturalists, oil field workers, and day laborers who had only minimal skills as masons, carpenters, or quarry workers.<sup>7</sup> School buildings, libraries, auditoriums, and government buildings made up the majority of WPA building projects in Stillwater. These building projects followed basically the same design as similar buildings constructed by the WPA throughout the state. WPA workers also developed many outdoor facilities in Stillwater. They built recreational facilities such as parks, swimming pools, athletic fields, and stadiums.<sup>8</sup> Even though structures were simple in design and the labor force largely unskilled, as time went on and experience grew, the quality of the projects improved. With experience, more projects made budget and were finished on time. The pattern in Stillwater followed national trends. WPA projects moved along much more efficiently later in development than in the early days of the program.

Building materials were of the utmost importance, and many times WPA workers used local resources in supplying projects with materials. In Stillwater, however,

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<sup>5</sup> *The Stillwater Gazette* (Stillwater), 18 March 1938, 7.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>7</sup> David W. Baird editor. "WPA Structures Thematic Phase III." 30 August 1987, Oklahoma State Preservation Office, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, 15.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

many buildings were constructed using imported materials. Brick and concrete were used most often in the Stillwater region. The state also began to utilize free labor at the prison in McAlester for brick manufacturing.<sup>9</sup> Some projects used stone and wood shipped to Payne County from other parts of the state.

The construction work done in Stillwater by the WPA was not one-dimensional. The WPA worked mostly on smaller projects, while the PWA handled the larger commercial jobs. This gave the WPA a great amount of diversity. Tennis courts, swimming pools, and airport runways and hangars were all built in Stillwater. WPA workers and money went to large projects to help finish them. Frequently, different agencies worked on the same project. I. C. Haut, Associate Professor of Horticulture, designed a 15-acre park that received two thousand dollars from the CWA.<sup>10</sup> When the CWA began this park, it received additional funding from FERA, and money and workers from the WPA finished it. The park is located at 1015 E. Twelfth Street and was known for many years as Fair Park. Today, citizens of Stillwater call it Couch Park.

WPA officials at the local, state, and federal levels did all that they could to keep the agency running smoothly, but there were complications. In 1936 WPA funds went for the building of a housing addition, the College Gardens, in Stillwater. The WPA promised money, but was late in allocating it. Then the money ran out before the project was finished. By the time the work started, stopped, and began again, many workers had left to find new work.<sup>11</sup> These types of delays led to a shortage of men on WPA projects. The College Gardens addition was typical of early WPA problems.

Stillwater and Payne County were always short of workers. Payne County had some of the lowest numbers of people who qualified for WPA work on relief rolls. This

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>10</sup> *The Daily O'Collegian* (Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Stillwater), 14 February 1934, 1.

<sup>11</sup> *The Stillwater Gazette* (Stillwater), 17 January 1936, 1.



played as large a part in the slow nature of WPA projects in Stillwater as any bureaucratic problem had. It should be noted that Stillwater was in better condition financially than most cities in its district. This was largely because it was one of the largest towns in its district. The Depression hit everyone hard, but the small towns felt it the most. Many small towns in Oklahoma and throughout the country were wiped out, especially those towns dependent on agriculture. Stillwater's small WPA list was not always a negative. In May 1936 many WPA rolls were being cut, and this forced many communities to make massive adjustments, but Stillwater, due to its low numbers, was not affected.<sup>12</sup> As the Depression wore on, Stillwater would come to rely more on the WPA. In February 1937 a report came from Oklahoma City that the WPA quota for Payne County had increased. This increase came after Representative Elbert R. Weaver asked for an investigation of Payne County's WPA rolls.<sup>13</sup> Weaver protested the use of Creek County laborers for work done in Payne County. By 1938 Payne County had 1,704 of Oklahoma's 144,114 unemployed.

One of the main projects funded by the WPA throughout the entire nation was the construction of National Guard armories. The WPA built a National Guard armory in Stillwater in 1936.<sup>14</sup> One of the larger buildings built in Stillwater by the WPA, the armory was built a block west of the Santa Fe Railroad, which runs right through the heart of Stillwater. In July of 1936 the WPA offered to pay for 75 percent of the proposed \$50,000 public library to be built in Stillwater.<sup>15</sup> The Stillwater Public Library was not built until 1938. The work and materials were partly funded by the WPA.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>*The Stillwater Gazette* (Stillwater), 22 May 1936, 1.

<sup>13</sup>*The Stillwater Gazette* (Stillwater), 12 February 1937, 12.

<sup>14</sup>Reconnaissance Level Survey of Stillwater, Oklahoma 1997-1998, by the Department of Geography, Oklahoma State University, Oklahoma State Preservation Office, Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 54.

<sup>15</sup>*The Stillwater Gazette* (Stillwater), 17 July 1937, 10.

<sup>16</sup>*The Daily O'Collegian* (Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Stillwater), 13 December 1933, 1.

The majority of the WPA projects in Stillwater were local structures or paving projects. Sidewalks, bridges, and repair work on older roads generally fell under the same funding and used the same laborers from job to job. Usually, one crew would remain together and work on similar projects, but not always. In Oklahoma many needy farmers were looking for work, and most of the time they signed onto WPA rolls. When the weather and soil conditions began to improve, the farmers would quit their WPA jobs, many times leaving in the middle of a project. Most of those who left the WPA to return to their farms never removed themselves from the rolls. This practice caused many who needed work not to get it because the relief rolls appeared full. Through time, the WPA was able to correct this problem by keeping a watchful eye on Payne County relief rolls.

All the successes and failures Stillwater experienced during the WPA were similar to successes and failures across the country. One element of Stillwater gave it a sense of individuality: Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College (OAMC), or as it is known today, Oklahoma State University. It was another institution with which the WPA worked, and the college served as one of the leading research institutions for soil conservation in the United States during the Great Depression. The extreme droughts and wind conditions that plagued the Southern Plains were of concern to the people of the region. In December 1933 the CWA gave one thousand men to the university's erosion project to work in the Stillwater watershed.<sup>17</sup> OAMC was under the direction of the Department of Agriculture until 1943. This helped push the college into the forefront of soil conservation and irrigation management in the 1930s.

OAMC's faculty played a significant role in the relief agencies in Payne County. The CWA and WPA both utilized the college's faculty and staff in every way they saw fit. In January 1934, C. P. Blackwell, Dean of the School of Agriculture, received \$31,000

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<sup>17</sup>*The Daily O'Collegian* (OAMC Stillwater), 5 January 1934, 1.

from the CWA to conduct a statewide survey. The purpose of the survey was to obtain data on farm real estate transfers and mortgage foreclosures.<sup>18</sup> Many needy workers were put on the project.

FERA's work relief division gave OAMC funding to go towards student work.<sup>19</sup> The WPA was the largest and most active of all work relief agencies on campus during the Depression years.

The Lake Carl Blackwell project was the largest federal relief project in the Stillwater area. The project was a perfect example of city and college resources working together. The Department of Agriculture established the lake project as a Central Oklahoma land utilization project.<sup>20</sup> The WPA played an important role in the completion of the lake project. The WPA built cabins at the site, and WPA workers and funds were also used to build and maintain service roads at the Blackwell site. The largest WPA project at the site was repairing the dam in 1941. The original sandstone dam had eroded at a rapid rate and WPA funding went to replace the old dam with a new limestone dam.<sup>21</sup> When the Blackwell project was completed, the college took charge of the recreational facilities. Camp Redlands, located on the north side of the lake, also received WPA funds and materials for construction of cabins.

Another city-college WPA joint effort took place at the Stillwater Airport. In Europe World War II had been waged for two years, and city and college officials believed that if improvements were made to the airport, the federal government would put a primary training school there. In 1941 a proposal was made to the WPA for \$239,956 for improvements to runways, electrical structures, and fencing around the field.<sup>22</sup> The city believed that if the college submitted the proposal, it would have a better chance of

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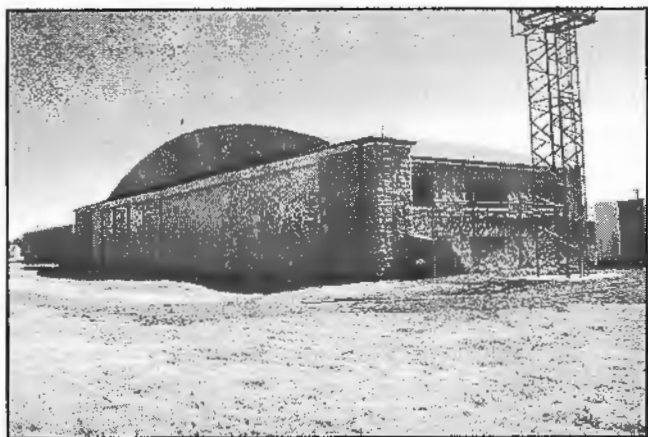
<sup>18</sup> *The Daily O'Collegian* (OAMC Stillwater), 13 February 1934, 1.

<sup>19</sup> J. Lewie Sanderson, R. Dean McGlamery, David C. Peters. *The Campus: A History of the Oklahoma State University Campus: Centennial History Series*. (Stillwater: Oklahoma State University Press, 1990), 378.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 381.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 382.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 371.



The Stillwater airport's hangar is shown from two angles. (Photo by Lawrence Gibbs)

getting passed. So the city donated 335 acres of airport land to the state, represented by the Oklahoma State Board of Agriculture as regents over the college. In March 1941 WPA funds were provided to make necessary improvements to the airport. With problems mounting overseas, President Franklin D. Roosevelt believed that a flight school was a necessity in the nation's heartland. The flight school became a success, and it was one of the largest operations of its kind in the Southwest.

The war did not always help when WPA funds were proposed. In early 1941 an armory building on the OAMC campus using WPA funds was proposed. The state WPA office approved the plan, but the federal office would not give the state the needed funds. By 1941 the only projects that could be built with federal assistance had to benefit the war effort. An armory on campus was never built.

The WPA was active on AOMC's campus through the 1930s. The WPA replaced dilapidated old brick sidewalks with concrete. The WPA also added new walkways to the campus. Often students would create new paths, and the new pavement walkways were laid directly over the paths created by the students.

OAMC looked toward the WPA to improve its athletic facilities. Henry P. Iba, the new basketball and baseball coach and athletic director, wanted improvements made to existing facilities on campus. Iba wanted a larger stadium and field house. In 1936 additional bays were added to Lewis Field. This brought the number of permanent seats to 14,000. At the same time a press box, dressing rooms, and walkways were added. The funds for the project came from \$60,000 in bonds issued by the Athletic Association. On February 4, 1936, a federal grant to match the bonds was secured due to the fact that the WPA performed the construction of the facilities.<sup>23</sup>

The WPA served the city of Stillwater well, and many of its projects still benefit the community today. The WPA gave the people of Stillwater hope and a sense of place in a desperate time. Men and women worked on projects not only to feed their families but to keep the community alive. They worked through the problematic early days and grew to trust the WPA for their livelihood. The city of Stillwater, along with OAMC, contributed greatly to the cause. Today we can see the lasting impression of the WPA throughout the greater Stillwater area.

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<sup>23</sup> Minutes, State Board of Agriculture, 4 February 1936. The Special Collections Archives, Edmond Low Library, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, 1.

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# Some of Payne County's Other WPA Buildings

Photographs by Lawrence Gibbs.



# The Civilian Conservation Corps

by Ted Best

In the 1930's the spirit of the American people was at an all-time low. Millions of youth and adults were aimlessly wandering the cities and the country in search of jobs and a future.

On March 31, 1933, President Roosevelt signed the Emergency Conservation Work Act, which established the Civilian Conservation Corps. The CCC was designed to accomplish three main purposes: soil conservation, reforestation, and the employment of young men.

During the period of April 5, 1933, and June 30, 1942, more than three million men served in 4,500 different CCC camps of about 120 men each throughout the United States.

In Oklahoma over 178,000 men served in more than 80 different CCC camps. It was my privilege to serve 15 months in CCC Company 870 in the Wichita Wildlife Refuge at Cache, Oklahoma. My twin brother, Troy, and a brother, Don, who was two years my senior, also served at the same time. I was a high school dropout between my junior and senior years, so the hitch in the CCC gave me and my family a chance to recoup and certainly encouraged me to complete high school.

My twin brother was presented the flag of the CCC Company 870 when it was closed in May of 1942. The flag was hoisted each day along with the American flag. This flag now resides in the OSU library archives. It is folded for preservation so all you see is the great seal of UNITED STATES CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS.



Ted Best served in CCC Company 870 in the Wichita Wildlife Refuge at Cache, Oklahoma.

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Stillwater resident Ted Best wrote this article for the Sheerar Museum's exhibit on the 1930s. Mr. Best has since passed away.



## *Lake Carl Blackwell*

In the 1930's soil erosion had a devastating effect on farming in the central part of the United States. High wheat prices during the 1920's, along with higher than normal rainfall, had encouraged many farmers to open new, marginal lands to cultivation. Bumper wheat crops in 1930 and 1931 were followed by years of severe drought that produced crop failures.

The Oklahoma Panhandle was the area of the state hardest hit by the drought, but the residents of Stillwater and the farmers of Payne County also suffered as a result of the drought. Summer temperatures often were over 110 degrees and rainfall in Stillwater in 1936 was just 18.29 inches, compared to a normal annual rainfall of 30.58 inches. Oklahoma landowners continued to turn marginal properties over to tenant farmers and by 1935 75% of those farming were tenants. Across the Great Plains windstorms eroded away millions of acres, blowing an estimated 300 million tons of topsoil to the east.

The Resettlement Administration was a New Deal Program created to stabilize American agriculture by locating farmers operating on sub-marginal lands and relocating them to more fertile lands. Faculty and graduates of Oklahoma A&M contributed in significant ways to both relocation and soil conservation programs.

Carl Blackwell, dean of the A&M School of Agriculture and director of the Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station since 1928, was appointed in 1935 to head the Land Utilization program for Region 8 of the country, made up of Texas and

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Thanks go to Stillwater's Sheerar Museum for providing this article. Sources for the information are: *Stillwater Daily Press* articles June 19, June 20, July 26, July 29, July 31, August 2, August 4, 1938, and the *A&M College Magazine*, April 1837, August 1943.

Oklahoma. Almost immediately, Blackwell began the Resettlement Administration project on Stillwater Creek in western Payne County. The project involved relocating an estimated 138 farm families occupying 26,000 acres. The total cost for the relocation was estimated at \$475,000. Initially, there was no provision in the Resettlement Act to impound water, but through a special Act of Congress, a bill was passed appropriating \$1,000,000 in Federal WPA grant funds to build a dam on Stillwater Creek and create a new lake of about 3,000 acres. By mid-1936 much of the land had been purchased and cleared. Cabins and a lodge were built and work on the dam had begun.

By June of 1938 rains returned to Oklahoma and the lake was almost full. Several of the farmers remaining in the lake area petitioned the government to open the outlet valves to lower the water level in the filling lake so that their land would not be inundated, and their final crops could be harvested. The Stillwater Chamber of Commerce opposed this plan, as the water behind the dam was to be Stillwater's new water supply and they believed that the amount of water impounded behind the dam could not be replaced in a year. Judge A. P. Murrah heard the farmers' petition and ruled against opening the flood valves, believing other arrangements could be made that were in the best interest of all parties. Murrah's judgment proved to be correct, and very few crops were lost to rising lake waters.

Dedication and opening of the lake and its lodge and cabins was set for 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, August 3, 1938, as part of the annual Farm Congress on the A&M campus. Six thousand visitors were expected in Stillwater to participate in the events. Clay Potts, director of short courses at A&M, put out an urgent call in the Sunday, July 24, 1938, *Stillwater Daily Press* for homes to accommodate the influx of guests. Potts estimated that from 1,500 to 2,000 rooms would be needed and guests would expect to pay 50 cents a night per person for lodging. Dignitaries attending the opening ceremonies included the head of the Farm Security Administration in Wash

ington, D.C., the regional director of the FSA, Oklahoma's senators and representatives, and Stillwater civic leaders. A&M President Henry G. Bennett presided at the dedication.

The new lake was named in memory of Carl P. Blackwell, who had taken the lead in procuring the project for Payne County. Blackwell had died at his home in Stillwater on March 4, 1937, after a prolonged illness and did not live to see the lake completed.

On August 1, 1938, the new stone and timber lodge building where the ceremonies were to take place burned to the ground. Some suspected arson. The state fire marshal reported that arson could not be determined as the cause, but he did note that there had been hard feelings over condemnation of some land for the recreation project. On August 3 the dedication ceremonies went on as planned, but without the lodge as the centerpiece of the project.

Even without the lodge, the lake area offered a wide range of research possibilities and recreation amenities. In March of 1939 A&M College assumed management of the area under lease from the United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service. College research activities at the lake included wildlife investigations of quail dispersal, experimental angora goat grazing, and testing methods for improving rundown pasture lands.

After the beginning of World War II, recreational uses became more important, as gasoline shortages made the lake a convenient destination for residents of north central Oklahoma. The college offered 31 boats for rent at the concession stand and stocked the lake with 68,000 bass, crappie, channel cat, bream, and blue gill. Season fishing permits cost \$5.00 and a day permit cost 35 cents.

The cabins at Lake Carl Blackwell were built by the Civilian Conservation Corps from native rock and rough-hewn timber. Each cabin was designed to accommodate two or more persons. The August 1943 A&M College magazine noted that the cabins

had running water, shower bath, sanitary sewage disposal system, electric lights, a two burner electric hot-plate for cooking, refrigerators, and a large stone fireplace. Bed linens, towels, and firewood were furnished with the cabins, and ice, milk, cold drinks, coffee, and sandwiches were sold at the concession stand. Dishes, pots, pans, and groceries had to be brought in by visitors.

Recreational features of the area were part of a general research project in the use of land for public purposes. The college magazine noted: "Oklahoma A&M College is using the Lake Carl Blackwell Project for valuable scientific investigations, but at the same time emphasis is being placed on recreational facilities in the belief that a good remedy for 'war strain' is an outing to a place where the beauties of nature have not been despoiled."

# The Final Report of WPA Work in Payne County

## 335 Miles of Roads, Streets Constructed

With the rapid liquidation of the federal works agency's Works Projects Administration in Oklahoma, Ron Stephens, director, has released a final report of the projects of that agency in Payne County, including road, highway and street improvement, flood control work, public buildings constructed, public utilities and sanitation projects carried out, outdoor recreational facilities constructed or improved, airport facilities constructed and many miscellaneous items built or improved upon which services have been rendered by the agency.

### **Highways, Roads, Streets**

Roads and streets constructed or improved in the county total 355.8 miles, with four bridges totaling 352 [feet] in length built and one 530 feet in length reconstructed. One hundred fifty seven culverts constructed, totaling 4,713 feet in length; One and eight-tenths miles of sidewalk, four and one-half mile of gutter have been built, according to the final report.

### **Public Buildings**

One library building, one school building, two gymnasiums, one storage building, and three armories have been built in the county. Reconstruction work has been done on five school buildings, additions made to two schools, additions made to one auditorium and one gymnasium, and three armories reconstructed or improved.

### **Outdoor Recreational Activities**

One stadium of 8,000 seating capacity built; one addition of 3,000 seats to another stadium; two parks reconstructed or improved; two athletic fields, with a total area of

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This article is from the March 5, 1943, issue of the *Stillwater Daily Press*.

21.7 acres, built; 10 tennis courts constructed; one wading pool built, one football field built and one running track reconstructed, are listed as achievements of the WPA in the recreational field of outdoor sports.

### **Public Utilities and Sanitation**

The public utilities and sanitation program of the WPA was one of its major items in Payne county.

One pumping station of 14,000 gallons per day capacity was built; two sewage treatment plants were built, three water wells were drilled and completed, 12.1 miles of water lines were built and one 30,000 gallon storage tank was constructed. Capacity of the sewage disposal plants totaled 230,000 gallons per day.

One storage dam of 15 acre feet capacity was built and one with a capacity of 120 acre feet was reconstructed. Nine and four-tenths miles of storm and sanitary sewers were constructed, with 525 sewerage service connections made and 83 manholes and catch basins constructed. Eight-two water service connections were constructed. One septic tank and 842 sanitary privies were built. One-fifth of a mile of water main was reconstructed and one-half mile of pipeline, other than water and sewer was built.

### **Flood Control**

During the program 2,766 lineal feet of jetties and breakwaters were built, 920 feet of retaining walls and revetments constructed, 2,107 square yards of rip-rapping built and one-fifth of a mile of stream-bed improved.

### **Airport and Airway Facilities**

One emergency landing area of 450 acres in extent was built in the county by WPA and one with 240 acres was improved. One hangar with a capacity of six planes was built; 5,475 linear feet of taxi strip was constructed; 10,000 square feet of aprons were built.

Two airport areas, with a total of 464 acres were drained, 5,508 linear feet of airport drainage pipe constructed. Landing strips totalling 34,420 linear feet were built, 79

landing cones constructed and 98 corner markers erected.

### **Miscellaneous Items**

Miscellaneous items contained in the report show 162 acres of landscaping and beautification, other than roadside parks; 18 miles of fence built; two tunnels, totalling 8,605 cubic yards of crushed stone produced.

In addition to these construction projects, a school lunch program was developed as a government work project for women. Twenty-four schools in Payne county participated in the school lunch program, approximately 8,136 children were served daily. Eight thousand and one hundred-fifteen quarts of vegetables were canned and 34,000 pounds dried on the Gardening and Canning unit, these vegetables were used on the school lunch program and for distribution to the needy.

For the past several years the WPA has operated a sewing room in Payne county, where approximately 1,578 garments were made monthly. These garments were consigned to the sponsor of the project, the county commissioners, who issued them to the needy.

Clerical assistance was furnished to make inventory of county and city records. In Stillwater assistance was also furnished to make [a] survey of church archives.

Three units of library service were in operation with registered readers in Perkins, Stillwater and Cushing benefitting from this service. Two thousand one hundred-forty-two public and school library books were repaired and renovated.

# Payne County Historical Society

The Payne County Historical Society is organized in order to bring together people interested in history, especially the history of Payne County, Oklahoma. The Society's major function is to discover and collect any materials that may help to establish or illustrate the history of the area.

Membership in the Payne County Historical Society is open to anyone interested in the collection and preservation of Payne County history. All members receive copies of the *Payne County Historical Review* free. In addition, the Society sponsors informative meetings and historical outings several times a year.

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Yes, I want to be a member of the Payne County Historical Society. Enclosed is my check for:

- \$12.00 for Individual Membership
- \$17.00 for Family Membership
- \$20.00 for Institutional Membership
- \$100.00 for Life Membership

(Membership includes subscription to the *Payne County Historical Review*.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to:

Payne County Historical Society  
P.O. Box 2262  
Stillwater, OK 74076



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## **Payne County Historical Review**

Editor: Carla Chlouber



PAYNE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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