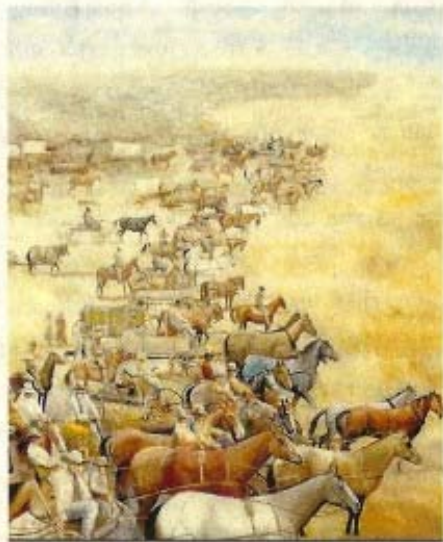


“This is the site for a new city. With such good water and a location on the Railroad near the river crossing, it is an ideal site for a city!”

- B.S. Barnes (1893)



Oklahoma Land Run of 1893

*Information for this brochure was partially taken from past newspaper articles and the article The Founding of Ponca City from the Chronicles of Oklahoma.



Ponca City Main Street

516 E. Grand Avenue
Ponca City, Oklahoma 74601

www.poncacitymainstreet.com
580-763-8082

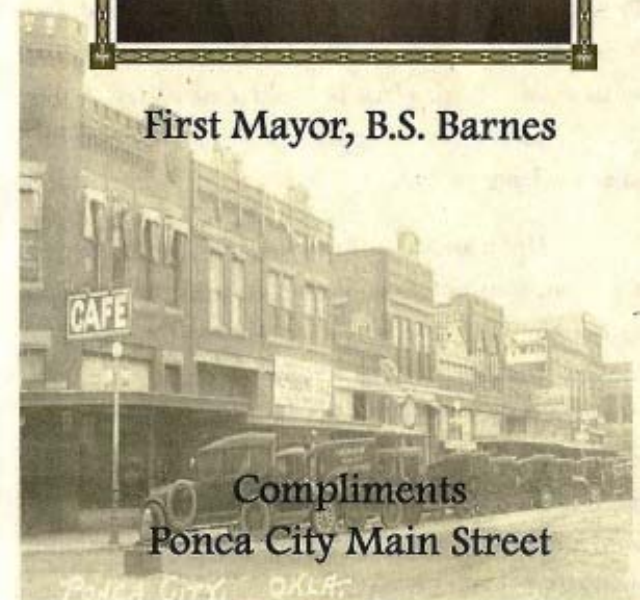
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PCMS Executive Assistant,
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“A Visionary’s Promise”

A Short Story on
The Founding of Ponca City



First Mayor, B.S. Barnes



Compliments
Ponca City Main Street

The Founding of Ponca City, Oklahoma

A man's vision of building a city full of opportunity and new beginnings for its citizens...B.S. Barnes' uncompromising passion was the foundation of what is now known as Ponca City.



Corner of 2nd and Grand Avenue looking west

Burton Seymore (B.S.) Barnes left his home in Michigan after the depression of 1892 forced him to close his furniture manufacturing business and headed to Arkansas City, Kansas. President Grover Cleveland had just declared the "Cherokee Outlet" south of Kansas open for settlement. With plans to build a new city in this "Strip", Barnes saw an opportunity to start a new life in a new land.

Upon arrival in Arkansas City, he purchased a wagon, two horses and enough food and supplies to last a month. He headed south into the territory looking for the perfect townsite. Along the old trade route (now HW 177) he found a big spring with fresh water where he stopped to water his horses. To the east was a river crossing and to the west a railroad. This location met the requirements perfectly for his new city.

He then returned to Arkansas City to form the "Ponca Townsite Company", a group of individuals who all wanted to take part in starting a city. Barnes and one of his partners, James W. Dalton, sold approximately 2300 certificates at \$2 each allowing the holder the right to a residential or commercial lot.

Following, Barnes made the Land Run of 1893 on Saturday, September 16, along with 30,000 other people and claimed one quarter of his hoped for square-mile city, eventually acquiring the other three quarters. Five days later on September 21, the land had been surveyed and the names of the certificate holders were placed into a box with the legal descriptions in another box.

Standing on what is now Grand Avenue between 3rd and 4th Streets, two little girls assisted by Barnes were appointed to draw from each box matching a name with a lot description. The next day hundreds of new citizens gathered and elected B.S. Barnes as Mayor and Ponca City was born.



The "Big Spring"
13th and South Avenue



Santa Fe Railroad Station

Within weeks, frame structures, a school, a post office, and the Methodist Church were already being built. On December 19, 1893, the city was regularly incorporated and on February 2, 1894, the first official municipal election was held in which the offices of mayor, treasurer, clerk, and councilmen were elected.

In September of 1894, after much persuasion and many months of quarreling with the people of Cross, a town just north of Ponca City, the Santa Fe Railroad authorized the rails to be cut, a spur put in and a boxcar depot placed south of the Grand Avenue railroad crossing on the east side of the tracks. The railroad was probably best known for the hospitality that was shown to visitors as they arrived at their destination...boys and girls gave cigars to the men and bouquets of wildflowers to the ladies with ribbons attached that read, "The train stops here just the same as in Chicago".

Ponca City was up and running and soon became the largest and most progressive city in the Cherokee Strip!