



LAND RECORDS | RESEARCH GUIDE

Oklahoma Historical Society Research Center www.okhistory.org/research

About Land Records

While Research Center collections do not include original land records, we can offer information leading to land records, which are at county or Federal government offices.

Individual land ownership in Oklahoma has existed for just over a century. In the Indian Territory it began in 1902 with the allotment of lands by the Dawes Commission. Prior to that time, land in the Indian Territory belonged to the respective Indian Nation in which the individual lived.

In Oklahoma Territory, with the exception of Indian allotments made by the Jerome Commission in the late 1880s, ownership began in 1889 and spread with each of the land openings.

The last land opening in Oklahoma Territory, with the minor exception of the salt plains in Alfalfa County, was in 1906. Land ownership in the Panhandle was possible after the first official survey was completed for the area in the 1890s.

Oklahoma statehood occurred November 16, 1907 joining Oklahoma Territory and the Indian Territory.

County Records

The record books of the thirty judicial Recording Districts, the transitional form of government in the Indian Territory just prior to statehood, were not generally preserved by the newly formed state counties. Consequently, the earliest land records in those counties start in November 1907.

In the Oklahoma Territory region including the Panhandle, several large counties were divided into smaller counties. This may affect the location of county land records.

The types and dates of records available varies by county. The Research Center has reference books that provide details regarding county record holdings.

Homesteaders & Federal Land Tract Books

Locating where someone lived can be the most difficult part of researching land records.

The most comprehensive land locator in the Research Center is the index to the homestead files of Oklahoma Territory, known as the **Federal Tract Books of Oklahoma [Territory]**.

The Tract Books consist of 72 volumes on microfilm (**MISC. MF nos. 53-74**). They are arranged by township and range. To search by surname, consult the **Index to Early Oklahoma Land Tract Books F693 .I4 REF** published by the Oklahoma Genealogical Society.

The Tract Books also list American Indian allotments for most of Ottawa County, some of Craig County (the part of Township 29 North, Range 21 East in Craig County), and most of the top row of townships in Delaware County.

► **To obtain homestead files** listed in the Tract Books, contact the National Archives.
(Use NATF Form 84)
www.archives.gov

Smith's First Directory

The second most comprehensive land locator in the Research Center is Smith's First Directory of Oklahoma Territory, August 1st, 1890-91 (Guthrie: James W. Smith, 1890) F692.5 .S65. Smith's First Directory lists individuals living in Oklahoma Territory. A name index for Smith's is also available (F692.5 B3).

► **Search the Index** to Smith's Directory on the OHS website at
www.okhistory.org/research/smiths

School Land

Sections 16 and 36 of government townships (township and range) were usually reserved as School Land. This land could be leased but not homesteaded. The money from School Land was designated by the Oklahoma Territory, and later the State of Oklahoma, to support specific colleges and universities.

Plat Books

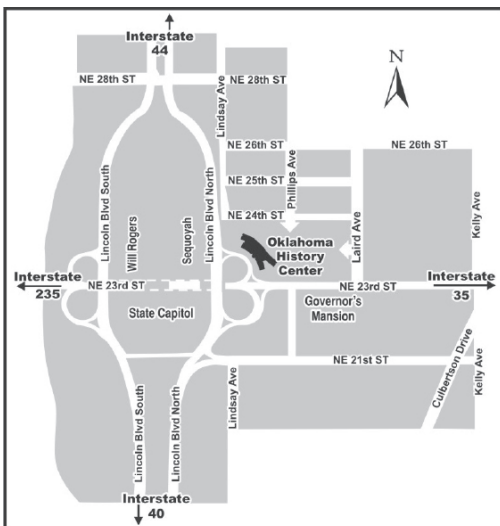
- Ellis County 1910 - G4023 .E4.W4 1910, Microfilm OHS 79, Microfilm OHS 94
- Garfield County 1906 - MISC. MF No. 143, Microfilm OHS 79, Microfilm OHS 94
- Grant County 1928 - G1366 .G75 1928, Microfilm OHS 79
- Harper County 1910 - G4023 .H3W4 1910
- Kay County 1921 - MISC. MF No. 155
- Kiowa County 1913 - G4023 .K5 1913, Microfilm OHS 94
- Noble County 1912 - G4023 .N5035 1912, Microfilm OHS 94
- Oklahoma County 1907 - G4023 .4035 1907, Microfilm OHS 78
- Payne County 1907 - Microfilm AMD 78, MISC. MF No. 601
- Woods County 1906 - G4023 .W603 1906
- Woodward County 1910 - G4023 .W7W4 1910

▶ **School Land Tract Books** are kept in the State Archives of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries.
www.odl.state.ok.us

County Directories

The following county directories list legal land descriptions (section, township, range) or provide the name of the township in which the person resides:

- Custer Co. Oklahoma Land Deed Map ca. 1910, F702.C9 L3 1990
- Directory of Garfield County (1896) - F702.G25 C7
- Business and Resident Directory of Guthrie and Logan County, Ok. - (Sept. 1, 1892) City Directory Guthrie/1892
- Official Directory of Guthrie and Logan County (1898) - F704.G9A2 1898
- Oklahoma City and County Directory 1900-1901
- Oklahoma City 1900-1901
- The Homesteaders of Oklahoma County, Oklahoma - F702 .O55 .H3 Vol. 1 & 2
- Woods County Directory (1895) F702 .W8.A2



Oklahoma Historical Society

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Research Center

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www.okhistory.org/research

Research Center Hours

Tuesday - Saturday
10:00am to 4:45pm

The Research Center is closed on all state holidays.