

**HARDY•HECK•MOORE & ASSOCIATES, INC.**

Cultural Resource Management, Austin, Texas

**HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY OF  
THE SOUTHERN HEIGHTS/EAST PARK PROJECT AREA  
ENID, OKLAHOMA**

**OCTOBER, 1997**

**AN INVENTORY PREPARED FOR**  
The City of Enid

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We are particularly grateful to Mrs. Carrie Foreman, Mr. Estell Laster, Mr. Clayton Nolan, Mr. Jesse Ware, Mr. Henry Newton, and Rev. Hulon Mitchell, Sr., who graciously shared their time and memories of Enid's historic black community with us. We would also like to acknowledge contributions made by the late Mr. Hallie Nash, whose taped television interviews with Clayton Nolan were of great value to this project.. Finally, we extend our gratitude to Mrs. Dorice Allen, whose interest and energy brought all of these people together to remember Enid's black community. She is a shining light and a model of tolerance and community spirit for all of Enid's citizens, black or white.

The cover photograph and the photograph of the first Booker T. Washington School are from the McConkay Collection of the Museum of the Cherokee Strip, Enid, Oklahoma. They are used by permission of the museum and the Oklahoma Historical Society. We wish to thank Jamie Nossaman, photoarchivist at the Museum of the Cherokee Strip, for copying the historic photograph for our use. The circa 1947 photograph of the Booker T. Washington High School marching band is from the personal collection of Dorice Allen and used with her permission. All other photographs are from the Mary Umstead scrapbook in the possession of Mrs. Allen and used with her permission.

## **ABSTRACT**

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In May 1997, Hardy•Heck•Moore & Associates, Inc. (HHM) completed an intensive level architectural and historical survey of the Southern Heights/East Park project area for the City of Enid, Oklahoma. The scope of work consisted of: 1) conducting a survey of all built resources in the project area regardless of age, condition or architectural integrity; 2) researching the history of the neighborhood and its individual properties, within the context of the area's identification as a traditionally black community; and 3) compiling the survey and research results into a final report, which will be used by the City of Enid in future planning efforts.

This report includes a discussion of the research design and project objectives; a description of the project area; a definition of survey methodology; survey results; a description of property types found in the project area; the historic context, which describes the evolution of Enid's black community from its origins in the 1893 Cherokee Strip Land Run, to school integration and the area's subsequent decline in the 1960s; an annotated bibliography; and maps of the project area that show the survey boundaries, identify contributing and noncontributing properties and depict periods of construction for the properties within the survey area.

Southern Heights/East Park survey products include architectural and historic data, as well as photographic documentation, for each property surveyed by HHM. In this survey, 254 properties were documented. Of those, 103 are considered to be contributing properties within the Southern Heights/East Park project area. Three of the contributing properties have been determined individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. One of the three, Jackson School, has already been listed in the National Register (1989). Booker T. Washington School, Enid's only black school for nearly three decades, is listed in the Oklahoma State Register of Historic Places (November 15, 1984). A private dwelling at 451 E. Owen K. Garriott Road may also be individually eligible for listing in the National Register. Built about 1925 for Rev. Charles L. Williams, a black minister, the house has been associated with a number of Enid's black community leaders and it retains its architec-

tural integrity to a remarkable degree. A third educational property in the project area, George Washington Carver School, may be individually eligible for National Register listing when it attains 50 years of age in 1999. The remaining 151 properties were determined to be noncontributing due to age, alteration, or both.

Over the course of its history, the Southern Heights/East Park neighborhood has experienced successive redevelopment intended primarily to improve housing stock and living conditions. Residents typically replaced their small one- or two-room frame houses with larger, but often older, houses moved to the neighborhood from other areas of town. Thus, some dwellings in the survey area, relocated from older neighborhoods, predate the establishment of the Southern Heights and East Park additions where they now lie. During the past two decades, building activity in the area has been limited primarily to the city's removal of deteriorated or substandard housing, although several older homes have been moved into the area and renovated for new occupancy. Many residential lots, and some entire block faces, have been cleared and numerous surviving houses lay vacant, particularly in the historic black section, east of Leona Mitchell Boulevard. Loss of building stock, combined with the closure of community schools following integration in the 1960s, has resulted in diminished residency and vitality in the community. Due to an the overall lack of cohesion and loss of historic architectural integrity, the Southern Heights/East Park project area is considered to be ineligible for listing as a historic district in the National Register of Historic Places.

Despite its lack of architectural distinction, the Southern Heights/East Park neighborhood retains important associations with the history and development of Enid's black community. Most of Enid's historic black congregations continue to worship in churches that lie within or are adjacent to the old Southern Heights/East Park additions and there is city-wide support for programs conducted at Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver schools. Because the neighborhood has important historic associations with Enid's largest ethnic minority group, and with the effort to integrate public schools in the 1950s, it may warrant reconsideration in the future when more of its properties achieve the 50 year age criterion for National Register eligibility.

## **INTRODUCTION**

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In January, 1997, the City of Enid contracted with Hardy•Heck•Moore & Associates, Inc. (HHM) of Austin, Texas, to conduct an intensive level survey within a project area identified as Southern Heights. Subsequent historic investigations revealed that the section of the overall project area that is associated with Enid's black community was originally known as East Park, for the earliest and largest addition. Because so much of the current project is focused on the growth and development of Enid's historic black community, the project area is herein identified as Southern Heights/East Park in this report.

An important component of this report is the historic context which discusses the evolution of Enid's separate black community from its humble beginnings, through the growth of its separate neighborhoods and schools, and its ultimate diffusion throughout the city as a result of school desegregation in the 1960s. While many of Enid's younger black families have moved to other parts of Enid following the closure of neighborhood schools in the area, some maintain strong ties to Southern Heights/East Park through their churches, family members who remain in the area, and their social affiliations.

HHM's field investigations were begun in January and completed in February, 1997. Southern Heights/East Park and/or properties within the Southern Heights/East Park neighborhood were mentioned in previous overview surveys of Enid conducted by Debbie Randolph and Meacham & Associates. Although no earlier comprehensive architectural surveys have been undertaken in the Southern Heights/East Park neighborhood, one property in the project area, Jackson School built in 1936, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (1990). A second school, Booker T. Washington, was listed in the Oklahoma State Register of Historic Places in 1984.

The current survey effort includes a comprehensive inventory of all historic and non-historic resources within the Southern Heights/East Park project area. HHM documented all of the extant properties regardless of age, condition or type. Field investigations consisted primarily of photo-documenting and recording all of the properties in the project area, with the ultimate goal of achieving 100 per-

cent coverage in the target area. HHM accomplished this task by completing Historic Preservation Resource Identification Forms for 254 properties in the Southern Heights/East Park project area as identified in the scope of work. In nearly every case, the surveyor took oblique views of each property, capturing two and often three elevations in the two photographs.

A historic context that addresses the origins, growth, and ultimate dispersal of Enid's historic black neighborhoods is included in this report. The context discusses the earliest known black presence in Enid, beginning with the Cherokee Strip Land Run of 1893. It traces the history of Enid's earliest black enclaves within the city and how they eventually coalesced around Government Springs Park, where the first permanent black school and two of the earliest black churches were built, around the turn of the 20th century. It sketches the development of the East Park Addition, a southerly extension of this community, as the first addition intended for black settlement. Ultimately, the black community expanded into the Southern Heights additions, west of the East Park Addition, in the decade following World War II. Since that time, the combined area has generally been known as Southern Heights. The context chronicles the changing demographic and development patterns of Enid's entire black community, with specific focus on the project area.

The Southern Heights/East Park neighborhood traditionally associated with Enid's African American community lies to the southeast of the original townsite of Enid (Figure 1). Although the area is now more widely known as Southern Heights, for two of the main additions that comprise the neighborhood, historically, the East Park Addition was more closely identified with Enid's black community in the decades that preceded World War II. Platted in 1905, the East Park Addition was a southerly extension of a historic black community that centered around Government Springs Park in the south/central part of the original Enid Townsite. Within a few years of the city's founding in 1893, black residents formed a Baptist church, now known as Grayson Baptist Church, on the west side of the park. By 1901, the town's separate black school was established on the east side of the park and the two institutions subsequently attracted black families to the area.



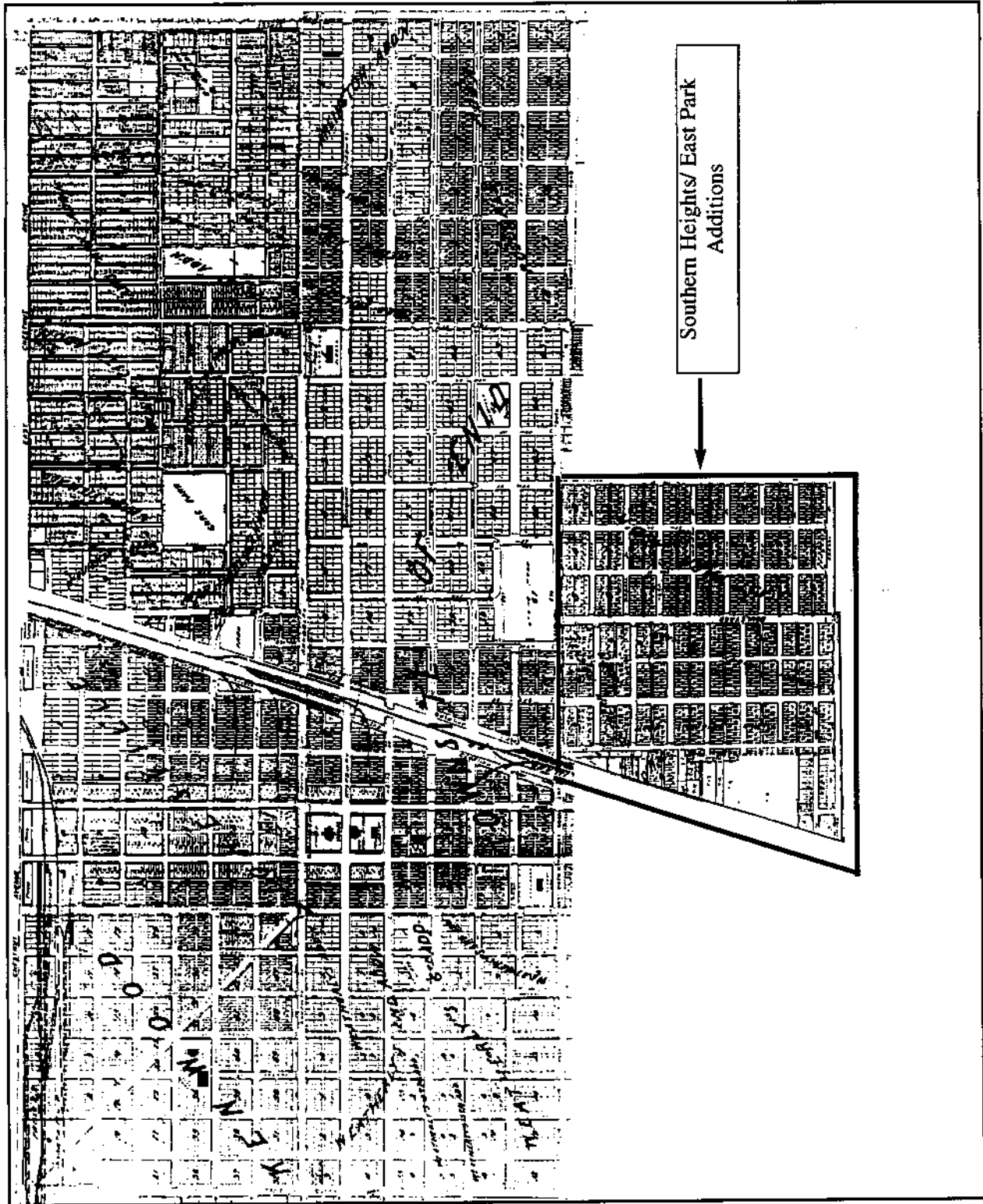


Figure 1. Map of Enid with Additions. On file at Garfield County Court Courthouse.

Although no direct evidence was found to prove that East Park was platted and developed exclusively for Enid's black families, its immediate proximity to the existing black community during a period of rigid racial segregation in Oklahoma, would almost preclude white settlement in the new addition. Furthermore, when the addition was platted in 1905, it was isolated from other non-black development. No other additions shared a boundary with East Park and the only access to the newly platted addition was through the existing black community around Government Springs Park. Its platting, immediately south of the black church, black school and black residential enclave, undoubtedly indicated the existence of that established community. The earliest residents known to have lived in the East Park Addition were black, according to the 1910 city directory. East Park continued to be an exclusively black neighborhood at least through the 1930s, and probably through the 1950s. It remains largely a black community to this day.

In contrast, the several Southern Heights additions, lying directly west of East Park, were not developed for black occupation. The earliest inhabitants of the first Southern Heights Addition, platted in 1910, were working class white families. Judging from the many German, Polish and Slavic derived surnames that appear in city directories during the 1910s and 1920s, Southern Heights may been a haven for recent immigrants. By the 1930s, many Hispanic surnames appeared in the Southern Heights additions, according to city directories for that period. In fact, by the 1940s and 1950s, more Hispanic surnames appear in Southern Heights and East Park than in any other part of Enid during that period. In the years following World War II the Southern Heights/East Park additions, like many communities across the nation, experienced the beginnings of "white flight". As white residents migrated out of Southern Heights, black families from the adjacent East Park Addition began moving in.

In the past several decades, since school integration in the 1960s eased racial barriers that once segregated Enid's black citizens to this area, Southern Heights/ East Park has suffered from abandonment and neglect. It has lost more of its historic architectural fabric than most other late-19th and early 20th-century neighborhoods in Enid. As a result, while the neighborhood — particularly the section

encompassed by the East Park Addition — retains strong historic associations with Enid's largest ethnic group, it is not considered eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district. However, because the neighborhood retains important historic associations with Enid's largest ethnic minority group, and with the effort to integrate public schools in the 1950s, it may warrant reconsideration in the future when more of its properties achieve the 50 year age criterion for National Register eligibility.

HHM conducted the survey in accordance with the scope of work, following guidelines used in previous surveys throughout the city. Individual buildings within the project area were assigned contributing or noncontributing status, as if they were being assessed as elements of a historic district, for the purposes of the survey. In addition to the many demolitions and subsequent vacant lots, many historic dwellings within the Southern Heights/East Park project area have been altered by the removal, replacement, or covering of original materials with synthetic, non-historic or other incongruous materials. Common alterations of this type include the exchange of original wooden porch posts for wrought iron or aluminum supports and the application of synthetic siding and storm windows and doors. These alterations may not, in themselves, cause a building to be designated noncontributing. However, if the synthetic siding seeks to replicate a material other than the original, such as the replacement or covering of weatherboard with permastone or asphalt resembling brick, the appearance is so greatly altered that the property will be designated noncontributing in nearly all instances.

Some properties have been altered to increase living space by adding rooms, a second story or by enclosing porches. The degree to which an altered building retains its historic character largely depends on the extent to which its historic features have been obscured by such alterations. Some changes occurred within the historic period and thus reflect historic trends of their own. Alterations that greatly compromise the integrity of historic buildings in the district to the degree that they no longer contribute to its historic character include the removal or enclosure of front porches and the enlargement, reduction, or eradication of the original fenestration pattern. Of the 254 identified properties, only 103, or approximately 40 percent of the total number, have been determined to be contributing. This

number includes Jackson School which is already listed in the National Register of Historic Places and two other buildings (Booker T. Washington School and the Williams-Criddle-Smith House) that have been determined eligible for NRHP listing. The remaining 151 resources were determined to be non-contributing elements, either due to age, alteration or both. Because the noncontributing properties constitute slightly more than 60 percent of its total resources, the Southern Heights/East Park area retains its original early 20th century character only to a minimal degree. Moreover, the area's overall loss of historic building fabric, adds to the neighborhood's lack of cohesion. As a result, the project area is considered to be ineligible for nomination as a historic district.

Although no historic district was determined to currently exist within the project area boundaries, survey information collected will be useful and necessary to the city of Enid for a variety of purposes. Materials generated by the intensive survey will enable city staff to assess undertakings that might affect properties determined to be individually eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or contributing to a potential NRHP-eligible historic district. HHM completed its portion of the project in accordance with the guidelines and standards of the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office, the National Park Service, and the U.S. Department of the Interior.

## **PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

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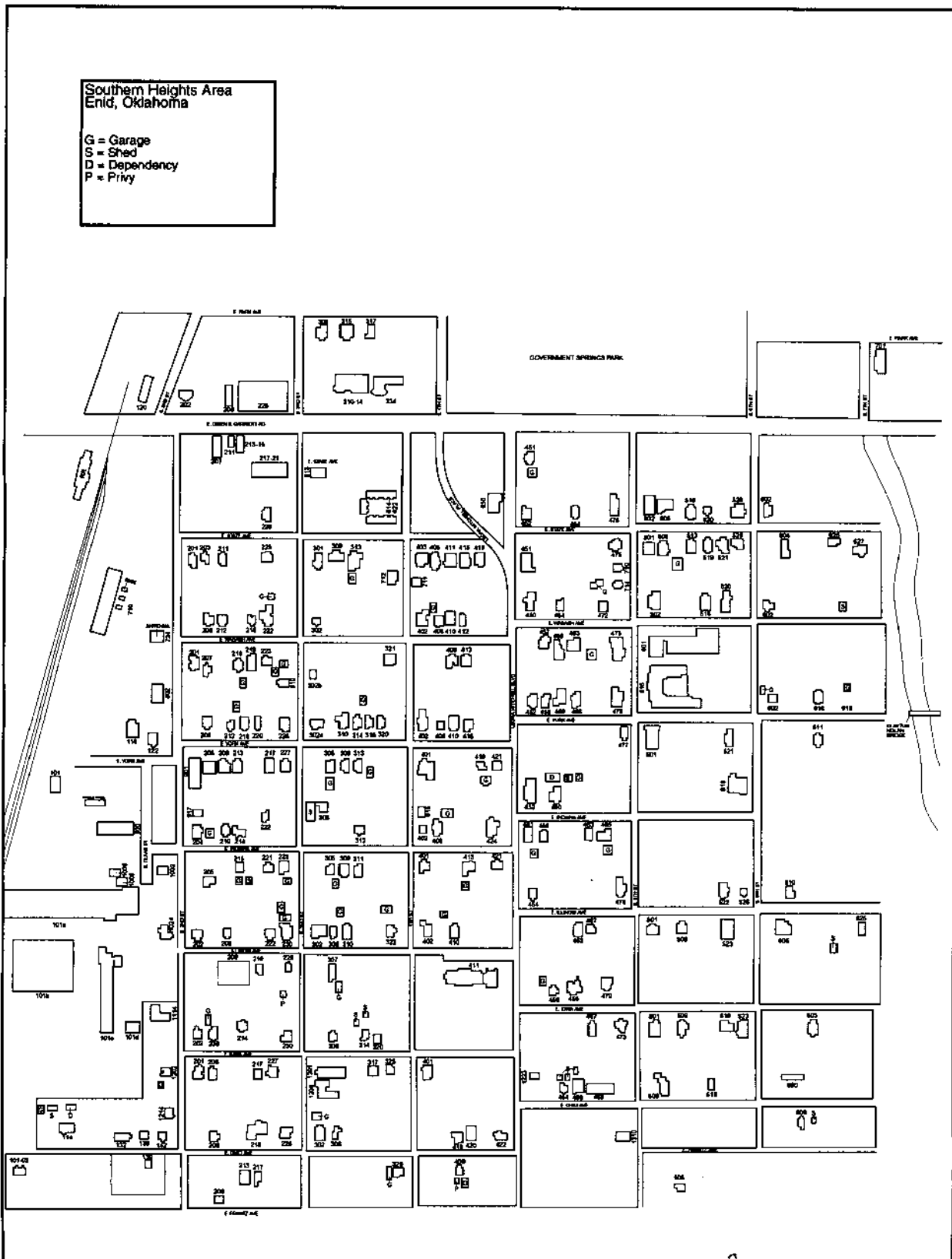
1. Document and research all previously unsurveyed properties within the Southern Heights/East Park project area boundaries as established by the City of Enid. Take at least two elevation photographs and complete a Historic Preservation Resource Identification Form for each property.
2. Delineate boundaries for any proposed historic districts.
3. Assess architectural and historical significance for each surveyed property.
4. Determine Contributing/Noncontributing status for each property within the boundaries of the survey area.
5. Identify which, if any, surveyed properties may be eligible for NRHP listing on an individual basis.
6. Prepare maps that illustrate the survey findings by delineating the survey area, defining the boundaries of any potential historic district, and identifying Contributing/Noncontributing status of all properties.
7. Research and prepare a historic narrative that places the Southern Heights/East Park project area in its proper historic context, both in relation to the city of Enid and to the development and growth of the city's black community.
8. Complete a project report that contains the following: an abstract; an introduction; research design and survey methodology; project objectives; survey results; a list of specific properties identified, including individual properties and districts that are potentially eligible for NRHP listing; a list of properties and/or areas that do not meet NRHP criteria; a historic context; an annotated bibliography; and a concise project summary.

9. Submit survey data in a format compatible with the database system used by the City of Enid Community Development Office, enabling City staff to easily access the information for planning purposes. Submit a copy of the data to the SHPO, as well.
10. Integrate survey results into a database system that uses dBase III+, dBase IV, or ASCII text file.

## **AREA SURVEYED**

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The original project area, as stated in the scope of work, was bounded by Owen K. Garriott Road on the north, Frantz Avenue on the south, the railroad tracks to the west and South Eighth Street and/or the creek on the east. Survey efforts were expanded slightly during the course of the project to include selected properties along the north side of Owen K. Garriott Road and the south side of East Park Avenue which were historically part of an earlier black community surrounding Government Springs Park (Figure 2). Expansion of the earlier community may have prompted the platting of the East Park Addition, to the south. Although much of the domestic fabric that once contributed to this earlier neighborhood is now gone, two significant black churches and a handful of residential properties remain intact.



**Figure 2. Properties Identified in the Southern Heights/East Park Survey Area**



## **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

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### **FIELD INVESTIGATIONS**

Principal Investigator Terri Myers supervised all field investigations. Ms. Myers and surveyor Elliott K. Wright conducted the work in two site visits. The field team project obtained project area maps including city maps made from aerial photographs taken in 1985 and Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps from 1925, 1930 and 1947. Field maps were compiled from these materials.

The first site visit was conducted during the week of January 27, 1997. At that time Terri Myers and Elliott Wright conducted a windshield survey of the Southern Heights/East Park area. During the overview, Ms. Myers identified the kinds of properties that existed within the project area. She also determined that the survey area should be extended to include certain sites that lay north of Owen K. Garriott Road, the original project area boundary. Selected properties on East Park Avenue, including St. Stephen's African Methodist Episcopal Church and several houses, were documented along with those contained in the original survey area boundaries.

Following the overview, the surveyor conducted the intensive level survey as defined in the scope of work set forth by the City of Enid and the State Historic Preservation Officer. Initial field investigations for the intensive level survey were concluded on February 8, 1997, with the complete documentation of all the historic properties within the original and expanded project area. Upon completion of the survey, the principal investigator and research assistants (see Research) augmented field investigations with archival documentation and oral histories. Field investigations and research concluded in May 1997.

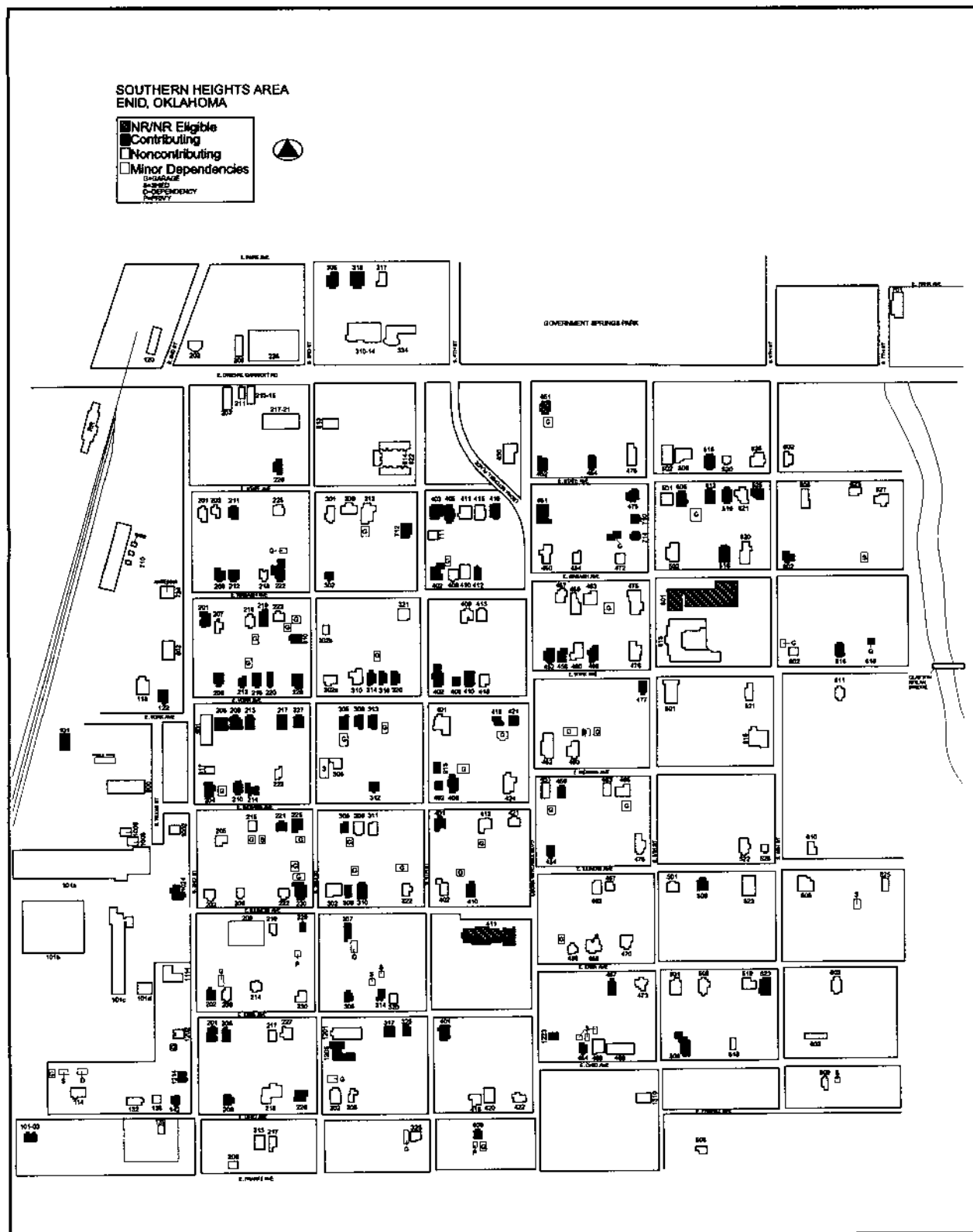
During the site visits the surveyors recorded the address, property type classification, actual or estimated date of construction, and major physical features and materials of every extant building, structure or object. Property type classification identifies the resource by its original or intended use and is explained in greater detail in the Results section of the report. For most of the properties, survey crew members estimated approximate construction dates in five-year increments (e.g., 1900, 1905). These

dates were later revised following an analysis of city directories, Sanborn Maps, and Garfield County records (see Research). Surveyors noted the number of stories and all materials, physical attributes and stylistic influences evident from the public right-of-ways.

Following completion of the overview survey, crew members began a detailed, property-by-property analysis of the targeted buildings. Surveyors used Kodak T-Max film, ASA 100, for photo-documentation purposes, and took at least two photographs of each property. With rare exceptions, each view was an oblique that included two elevations of the individual property. A handful of buildings were sited in such a way it was difficult, if not impossible, to follow this format. In such cases, survey crew members stated in the comments line (Item 44) of the Historic Preservation Resource Identification Form, why the property had only a single oblique view taken, or why the second view included a front or side elevation, rather than an oblique view. Besides photographing each previously undocumented property in the district, the field crew also took at least one streetscape view of the district's character-defining streets within the project area.

The field crew also assigned a preliminary priority assessment of contributing or noncontributing for each property. This evaluation reflected the property's current level of integrity and the degree to which that resource contributes to, or detracts from, the historic character of the district in which it is located. Final assessments were determined after further research and consultation with the Oklahoma SHPO (Figure 3). The contributing category includes those properties that retain their historic integrity to an exceptional degree and which may be candidates for individual NRHP listing. It also includes historic properties that have been moderately altered. Although alterations to buildings in this category may detract from their historic character, overall the property continues to maintain its integrity. Contributing status indicates that the property would be a contributing element within a historic district.

The noncontributing category includes: 1) historic resources so severely altered that their integrity has been compromised, or 2) properties that are less than 50 years old and thus not considered



eligible for listing in the NRHP. Properties in this category would be classified as noncontributing to a historic district.

Surveyors also completed the physical description section of the Historic Preservation Resource Identification Form and the information was subsequently entered into a database program designed specifically for the project. The program is built upon Borland's dBase IV software, version 2.0, and conforms to requirements stipulated by the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office. The following information was recorded:

- Photograph Log
- Address
- Property type
- Historic and Current Function
- Estimated Year of Construction
- Areas of Primary and Secondary Significance
- Architectural Style
- Foundation Material
- Primary and Secondary Exterior Materials
- Roof/Wall/Window/Door Types and Materials
- Noteworthy Features or Details
- Condition of Resource
- Narrative Description and Comments

## **RESEARCH**

The research team consisted of principal investigator Terri Myers, surveyor/historian Elliott Wright and research assistant Gretchen Bostedt. HHM staff supplemented data and photographs from the survey with information gathered from both primary and secondary sources. While in Enid, Ms. Myers conducted interviews with local informants to gain specific information regarding the city's historic black community and its development. She met with members of an ad hoc committee called by Mrs. Dorice Allen., director of the Booker T. Washington Community Center, to identify buildings and other landmarks within the project area that had historic significance for the city's black community.

Following field investigations and research efforts in Enid, Terri Myers and Gretchen Bostedt used Enid city directories, Sanborn Maps, and the two-volume *Garfield County History: 1893-1982* to document the establishment of the East Park and Southern Heights additions and to identify ownership and construction dates for individual properties within the project area. Myers augmented these research efforts with resources used during previous surveys of Enid by HHM including books, articles, documents, legal records, and other materials containing relevant information regarding Enid's general development. The purpose of the research was to construct a historic context to serve as a basis from which the significance of individual properties and historic districts would be determined; including elements within the project area that are potentially eligible for listing in the National Register. The historic context and an annotated bibliography of sources reviewed and consulted are included in this report.

Sources for archival information for this report include City of Enid offices, the Enid Public Library (Marquis James Room), the Garfield County Courthouse, and the Museum of the Cherokee Strip at Government Springs Park in Enid. The Museum of the Cherokee Strip has very little information on Enid's black community, but some research was conducted at the museum, including viewing of a videotaped lecture on ethnic contributions to Oklahoma's development. Several historic photographs of both the 1901 and 1921 Booker T. Washington schools were on file at museum and they are included in this report. The Oklahoma Collection in the Marquis Room at Enid's Public Library yielded valuable reference materials, such as city directories dating from 1901, vertical files on Enid architects, builders and developers, and published local histories, including the *Garfield County History: 1893-1982*. The library's vertical files also contained historic promotional materials and contemporaneous and retrospective newspaper articles covering relevant aspects of Enid's growth and development. In addition, it contained articles on historic black teachers, school desegregation and other information related to black history in Enid.

To assist in the survey, the City of Enid provided the consultants with copies of previous survey reports, including Debbie Randolph's, *The City of Enid, Oklahoma: Historic Architecture Survey*

(1985), and Meacham & Associates' "Architectural/Historic Survey of Certain Parts of the City of Enid" (1992). City staff also furnished the consultants with a complete set of Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps covering the period from 1894 to 1930. The research team had access to all previous survey data on file at the City of Enid.

Research at the Garfield County Courthouse yielded original plat maps of the Southern Heights, Rock Island Heights and East Park Additions, as well as an early plat of the original townsite that includes Government Springs Park, around which one of the city's earliest and most sustained black neighborhoods developed. Other historic maps at the courthouse depict Enid's incremental growth from the town's founding through the 1930s. These maps show the original townsite and the location of subsequent additions and subdivisions. Legal descriptions and approximate dates of construction for properties in the survey area were gleaned principally from Sanborn maps. Dates from the Tax Office were used only for reference purposes, as many tax records proved to be inaccurate.

Oral interviews proved to be the best source of information about historic black community development in Enid. Working with Mrs. Dorice Allen, director of the Booker T. Washington Community Center, Ms. Myers conducted a series of group interviews at the center and several one-on-one interviews with individuals at their homes or at the school. In addition, Ms. Myers met with Mr. Clayton Nolan who toured the project area with her, pointing out specific historic landmarks throughout the neighborhood. Mr. Nolan also copied two videotaped interviews that he had conducted with Mr. Hallie Nash in 1995. Mr. Nash is now deceased but his interviews contained valuable information about early black development in the city.

Scholarly articles, dissertations, and theses available at central repositories including the library and archives of the Oklahoma Historical Society, the Western History Collection of the University of Oklahoma, and the Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin, provided additional historical information.

Of the numerous research materials investigated, city directories proved to be among the most valuable resources for dating buildings, locating original or early property owners, and tracking development trends in historic districts. The municipal library maintains an extensive collection of city directories. Although the earliest publications date to 1901, Enid's city directories did not list buildings by street addresses until 1923, making it difficult to accurately date properties or to identify early owners before that time. Nevertheless, early city directory statistics and narratives provided valuable information on prevailing economic and social conditions throughout the historic period of development. Information from deed research enabled the research team to examine pre-1923 city directories for a selected number of properties. As the research team identified early residents or property owners, city directories were used to note their occupations and businesses, thus revealing valuable historic demographic information for the district. The entire 1910 city directory was scrutinized for specific information about buildings and their occupants at that time. Of particular help in this project was the identification of black residents by the letter "c" for "colored" in city directories through the 1930s. This identifier was used to trace patterns of black settlement throughout the city from the late 19th century through the Great Depression.

The list of Properties Documented (Appendix D) includes the name or names most associated with the surveyed properties. In nearly all instances, the names provided are the first known owners or residents of the individual property according to city directories. In cases where two or more names identify the property, the first known owner or resident is listed, as well as subsequent owners or residents who may have lived in the dwelling for a relatively long period of time.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps provided important documentation for properties in the project area. Although the City of Enid furnished copies of the maps dating as early as 1894, only the 1925 and 1930 maps contained sections of the specific survey area. The earlier maps were used to identify black churches, schools and residential areas that predated the platting of the Southern Heights and East Park additions that comprise the project area. In addition to the Sanborn Maps provided by the city, the prin-

principal investigator obtained a ca. 1947 "pasteover" map of the same area on microfilm at Central Oklahoma University in Edmond. The maps, which have now become an invaluable research tool, show building "footprints" that indicate exterior shapes, construction materials, the number of stories, and functions of the buildings. This information helped to document each building's physical evolution and enabled the research team to more accurately estimate the dates of construction for the targeted properties. Using the three separate maps enabled researchers to determine the type of changes made to individual buildings within the project area for those time periods, as well.

Unfortunately, Sanborn Map coverage for the project area was limited to parts of East Market (now Owen K. Garriott Road) and East State Avenue, two properties on East York, and parts of only three block faces for East Wabash. Coverage of the historic black section of the overall project area was notably lacking. South of East Wabash Avenue, only Booker T. Washington School and two nearby properties were depicted in a special detail map.

The city provided planning maps made from aerial photographs of the project area from 1985. Using the Sanborn and city maps as models, the research team generated a map (Figure 4) that shows actual or estimated dates of construction for all properties in the project area. The map reveals important developmental patterns and is extremely useful in determining historic district boundaries. Maps included in this report show building footprints and are coded by the period in which the buildings were erected. Specific data gathered from local repositories and oral histories were combined with general information gleaned from quantitative and scholarly research to provide the basis for the historic context and the framework within which the significance of individual properties and the district has been evaluated.



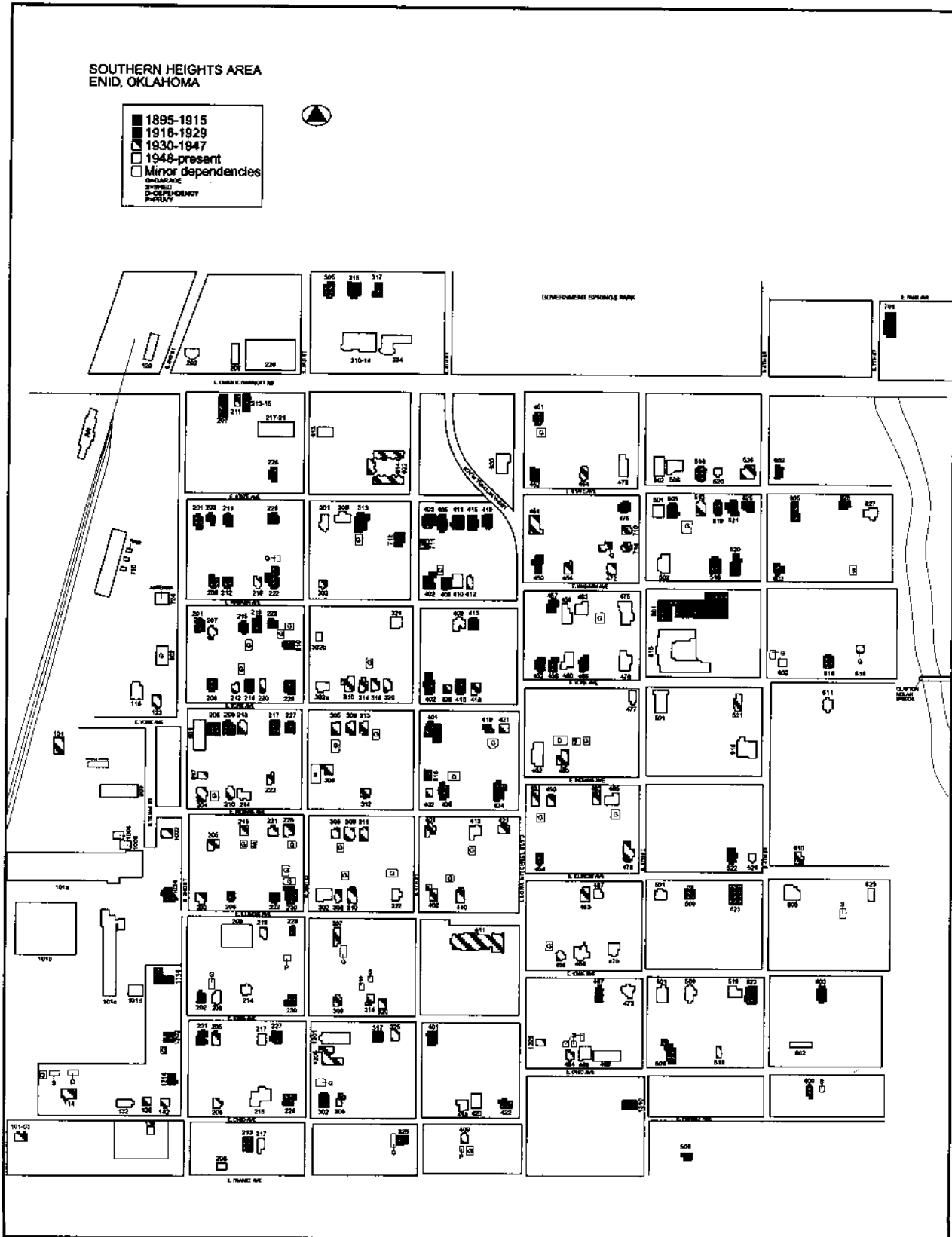


Figure 4. Estimated Dates of Construction in Southern Heights/East Park Survey Area

## **PROPERTY TYPES**

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The property types identified in Southern Heights/East Park are predominantly residential, but also include commercial, institutional, social and industrial buildings, as well as landscape features. The following table lists the architectural styles within the project area and notes the number of examples within each category.

**ARCHITECTURAL STYLES DOCUMENTED IN THE  
SOUTHERN HEIGHTS/EAST PARK PROJECT AREA**

<b>Architectural Style</b>	
<b>Bungalow/Craftsman</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Folk Victorian</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Colonial Revival</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>National Folk</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Classical Revival</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Tudor Revival</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Spanish Colonial Revival</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>International Style</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Shotgun</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Inapplicable</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>No Distinctive Style</b>	<b>125</b>

## **DOMESTIC BUILDINGS**

Domestic building types found in Southern Heights/East Park are categorized by a broad range of architectural movements, forms, and stylistic influences. Almost all are single-family homes, with the only significant multiple-family dwelling being the apartment complex at 614-622 South Fourth Street, formerly used as military housing at the Vance Air Force Base and moved to their present location in the early 1950s.

Most domestic buildings in Southern Heights/East Park can be defined either as vernacular forms common to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, or as components of popular American architectural movements of that time. Within these subgroups, domestic buildings are discussed according to plan or form type in the case of vernacular forms, or by stylistic influences in the case of popular movements. The exception to this arrangement is the Folk Victorian house type, which was influenced by the Victorian houses of the nineteenth century, but is grouped here with the vernacular house types.

## VERNACULAR FORMS

Vernacular dwellings are perhaps better understood by an analysis of their plans rather than their stylistic influences. Typically, vernacular dwellings are much smaller than contemporaneous high-style houses, and the use of space and arrangement of rooms was of greater concern to the builder than stylistic detail. Simple one-story center-passage, L-plan, modified L-plan, and square-plan dwellings are among the most common vernacular forms and a number from the first half of the twentieth century survive in Southern Heights/East Park.

While these house types can be found throughout the United States, disseminated by the advent of a widespread railroad system and the development of cheap building materials, region dictates dominant shapes, materials, and ornamentation. Most of the houses in the study area have porches, simple gabled or hipped roofs, wood siding, and minimal ornamentation. The application of asbestos, asphalt, or vinyl siding over the original cladding is common. Few of the houses appear to retain their original wood porch supports, with the most popular replacement material being wrought iron.

### *1. SHOTGUN HOUSES*

Shotgun houses are among the most prevalent dwelling types associated with urban blacks in the South from antebellum times through the first half of this century. They are believed to have evolved

from similar housing forms in Africa and the West Indies. Shotgun houses are one of the most distinct vernacular house types, distinguished by their elongated plan, one room wide and two to four rooms deep.

Shotgun houses are typically front-gabled dwellings with a full-width porch supported by wooden posts, either under the main roof or with a separate shed roof. Virtually all are of wood-frame construction with clapboard siding and pier-and-beam foundations. Although their low cost and utilitarian function precluded elaborate ornamentation, shotgun houses are occasionally found with turned porch posts with decorative braces and balustrades.

Most shotgun houses in the Southern Heights/East Park area have been altered by the construction of additions, the replacement of the original porch columns with wrought-iron supports, or the application of synthetic siding. Such is the case with the dwelling at 227 E. Iowa Avenue, where the original form of the house has been all but concealed by the construction of a large garage addition on a side elevation. The house at 229 E. Illinois Avenue is a rare and excellent example of an unaltered shotgun dwelling in the survey area, distinguished by a narrow rectangular plan, front-gabled roof with exposed rafters and an offset porch with tapered box columns.

## *2. FOLK VICTORIAN HOUSES*

Houses of this type generally display a modest amount of Queen Anne-inspired stylistic detailing applied to a simpler L-plan form, but lack the asymmetrical, complex plans, ornate ornamentation, and projecting secondary elements characteristic of that style. Most of the examples in the study area have a steeply-pitched hipped roof with lower cross gables over an L-plan and a full- or partial-width porch with a separate roof. Queen Anne-inspired details are limited to fishscale shingles in the gables, pedimented gables or eave returns, bay windows, and classical columns. The lack of spindlework porch detailing and turned porch posts common to most Folk Victorian houses may be attributable to the fact that most of the existing examples in Southern Heights/East Park were moved there from other loca-

tions, at which time these features may have been removed and replaced by the wrought-iron columns evident in most cases. An excellent example of the style is the Clarence W. Steele House at 315 E. Park Avenue, built circa 1905. No houses built in the Queen Anne style were found in the study area.

### *3. OTHER FOLK FORMS*

Other vernacular house forms found in Southern Heights/East Park include the following types, grouped by general shape and plan: the I-house, hall-and-parlor, and pyramidal forms. An early, though considerably altered example of an I-house is the Henry and Louella Caldwell House at 602 E. State Avenue (1905). Although the shape of the house has been changed by several additions, and any ornamentation has been obscured by the application of vinyl siding, the original form (side-gabled roof over a two-story plan two rooms wide and one room deep) is still evident. Several houses exhibit the hall-and-parlor form, similar to the I-house, but lacking the second story. A noteworthy example is the house built circa 1910 at 201 E. Iowa Avenue, which has a steeply-pitched roof with pedimented gables and a shed-roofed porch with turned columns. These dwellings are generally expanded by rear additions.

A good and relatively unaltered example of a pyramidal folk house, identified as such by its square plan and steeply-pitched hipped roof is the Albert Veal House, built circa 1915 at 452 E. York Avenue.

### POPULAR AMERICAN MOVEMENTS

Development in the Southern Heights/East Park project area coincided with the emergence — and enthusiastic acceptance — of what has become known as Popular Plan Type houses. These new domestic styles were promoted in popular reading materials by the early 1900s. House plans were supplied by mail order companies or published in plan books available at local lumberyards. Mail order firms like Sears, Roebuck and Company offered house kits that could be delivered by rail to virtually any location in the nation. Consequently, local traditional buildings forms yielded to Popular Plan Types such as the Four-Square and Bungalow because they were stylish, affordable and easily available. The

area's domestic resources are largely represented by Popular Plan houses, especially bungalows which account for 70 houses. Other Popular Plan Types found in the project area include a single Colonial Revival dwelling, two Classical Revival dwellings, and five Tudor Revival houses.

### *1. COLONIAL REVIVAL*

The Colonial Revival style is based on the Georgian, Federal, and Dutch Colonial houses of the eighteenth century found primarily on the east coast, adopting their symmetrical facades, emphasized entrances, and boxed eaves. The sole representative of the Colonial Revival style in Southern Heights/East Park is the circa 1925 Williams-Criddle-Smith House at 451 E. Owen Garriott Road. This two-story house is a good local example of the Colonial Revival style, displaying a full-front gambrel roof with shed- and gambrel-roofed dormers, and a full-width hipped porch. The application of asbestos-shingle siding, however, detracts from the historic appearance of the house.

### *2. CLASSICAL REVIVAL*

Revivals of the classical architecture of ancient Greece and Rome have manifested themselves in multiple forms over the centuries. The latest incarnation of that tradition, the Classical Revival style, was popular throughout the United States in the first half of this century. Classical Revival dwellings incorporate many elements derived from their antecedents, specifically symmetrical facades, full-height porches supported by classical columns, boxed eaves, and pedimented elements. Most Classical Revival dwellings in Southern Heights/East Park are simple one-story houses with hipped roofs and full-width porches.

Two noteworthy examples of this style are the D.R. Bishop-A.C. Prince House at 405 E. State Avenue and the C.L. Connor-William and Sarah Humphrey House at 415 E. State Avenue. While nearly identical in form, both having a steeply-pitched hipped roof with a centered hipped-roof dormer, much of the ornamentation of the latter house has been obscured by the application of asphalt siding. Still in

evidence on the house at 405 E. State Avenue, however, are the classically-inspired corner pilasters, frieze board, and window cornices. The hipped porch features wrought-iron replacement columns. Although Classical Revival dwellings generally appeared around the turn of the century, both of these examples were built around 1920.

### *3. TUDOR REVIVAL*

The Tudor Revival style is loosely based on Medieval English precedents, borrowing from a wide variety of building forms and ornamentation. Although the style has several manifestations, they are typified by: steeply-pitched complex gable roof, masonry exterior, prominent chimneys, and arched openings. Although the style experienced widespread popularity in the United States, only two examples were identified in the study area. Features of the one-story Mary Christensen-Louis R. Robinson House at 305 E. Park Avenue (1925) that identify it as a good example of the Tudor Revival style include the steeply-pitched, front-gabled roof, projecting entrance bay with one flaring eave, and round-arched window.

### *4. BUNGALOW/CRAFTSMAN*

The Craftsman bungalow, inspired by the Arts and Crafts movement, originated in California but quickly spread through the rest of the United States. By the second decade of this century, it had become a major housing form in many parts of the country. The bungalow is the most prevalent housing type in the Southern Heights/East Park area, as these were the peak years of its development.

Craftsman bungalows typically have a low-pitched side-gabled, front-gabled, or cross-gabled roof with wide overhanging eaves over a one-story rectangular plan. The most common exterior details are triangular knee braces and exposed rafters and beams under the roofline, as well as a full- or partial-width porch supported by tapered box columns on brick piers.

Good and relatively unaltered examples of Craftsman bungalows are located at 209 E. York Avenue (1920), 456 E. York Avenue (the 1920 Thomas Duncan-Rhollie Johnson House), and 226 E. State Avenue (1925). Many of the bungalows in the study area have been altered by the application of synthetic siding, the replacement of the original porch columns with wrought-iron supports, or the removal of the exposed rafters.

## **COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS**

The Southern Heights/East Park area of Enid has no distinct historic commercial district of its own; instead, commercial buildings are interspersed throughout the residential community. Although most of these buildings are of the modern convenience store variety, several earlier examples remain; primarily along Owen K. Garriott Road. Among these are the 1949 Gehay Building at 901 S. Second Street, a concrete-block building with a parapeted roof, embellished with transomed doors and corner pilasters, and the Chas. Busheen Grocery Store at 477 E. York Avenue. The latter, constructed in 1930 as a neighborhood grocery store, displays a facade with a stepped parapet applied to a front-gabled, rectangular-plan building with exposed rafters.

## **INSTITUTIONAL BUILDINGS**

Designed for governmental, educational or religious activities, Institutional Buildings are places where people congregate, socialize, obtain services and perform other activities most often undertaken in groups. They represent the efforts of organizations such as church groups, city councils, school boards and fraternal orders to create an appropriate facility and project a suitable image to convey pride, growth and success. Institutional buildings typically occupy corner lots, full or half blocks or other prominent and highly visible sites. Three of the most historically significant and architecturally distinguished properties in the Southern Heights/East Park project area are schools which fall into the category of Institutional Buildings.



## EDUCATIONAL

The educational buildings in Southern Heights/East Park represent the most sophisticated building design found in the study area. The Booker T. Washington School was constructed at 801 S. Fifth Street in 1921, and enlarged to include a gymnasium circa 1925. A local landmark, the 3-story red-brick building is distinguished by curved parapets with cast-stone coping over a symmetrical facade with large, square multi-light windows and geometric cast-stone panels. The building is now used as a community center and is listed in the Oklahoma State Register of Historic Places (1984).

The 1936 Jackson School at 411 E. Illinois is a noteworthy example of the melding of the Mission Revival and Spanish Colonial Revival styles, both of which originated in the southwestern region of the country. The mission-inspired parapets, tile roof, arched windows and porch openings, and cast-stone trim of the building are identifying characteristics. The school is currently used as a day-care center, and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (1989).

George Washington Carver School, located at 815 S. Fifth Street, adjacent to the Booker T. Washington School, was begun in 1949 and enlarged in 1951. It displays architectural detailing that is mildly characteristic of the International Style as applied to an educational building, including the flat roof with wide eave overhang, ribbon windows, and small entry porch with round supports. Now the Carver Educational Center, it serves as an adult educational center among other uses. It is a good, relatively unaltered educational property that should be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places when it meets the age criterion in 1949.

Necessitated by the segregationist policies of the state, Washington and Carver schools were built to serve the black children of the area. After segregation was declared unconstitutional by civil rights legislation in the 1960s, the two schools were closed and children were bused to other schools in the city. While no longer serving their original function, the buildings provide much-needed centers of community life for an otherwise fragmented area.

## RELIGIOUS

The oldest extant church in the survey area is the St. Stephen's African Methodist Episcopal Church (1909) at 701 E. Park Avenue. The simple frame building, typical of vernacular churches of the time, has a steeply-pitched hipped roof with a hipped steeple. Unfortunately, the application of vinyl siding altered the original fenestration pattern and has obscured any ornamentation that may have existed.

Several other frame churches were built in Southern Heights/East Park in the first part of the century; but, most have been replaced by larger masonry buildings to support their growing congregations. The Grayson Missionary Baptist Church and the First Indian Baptist Church are representative of this trend. The former, a brick church, was built in 1981 on the site of the demolished frame Second Baptist Church (1925) and the 1930 Grayson Chapel. The First Indian Baptist Church, built in 1955 at 1201 S. Third Street, was constructed alongside the intact wood frame First Baptist Chapel (1940).

## SOCIAL

Currently a vacant restaurant, the former Washington Recreation Center, built at 451 E. State Avenue in 1946, is the only social hall identified in the study area. Also known as the Negro Teen Town, the building replaced a frame Knights of Pythias Hall built on the site about 1925. The first Washington Recreation Center replaced the Knights of Pythias Hall in 1938. It also served an unknown function for the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in 1940 (City directory, 1940). This building was either replaced on site or extensively remodeled following World War II, according to newspaper accounts of that period (Umstead scrapbook, n.d.). The one-story concrete-block building features an L-plan with a steeply-pitched hipped roof. The sole ornamentation are the beams that pierce the elevations beneath the brick coping of the roofline, and a trabeated entrance.

## **INDUSTRIAL**

A distinct industrial district, including an oil-pumping facility, automobile-repair shops, an antenna, and various warehouses, emerged along the railroad tracks to the east of South Second Street. The existing buildings are largely limited to those built after 1970, with the exception of the Texas Oil Company Building at 101 E. York Avenue. This small side-gabled warehouse, constructed in 1930, features a gabled roof dormer, window cornices, and frieze board, distinguishing it from the later utilitarian structures.

## **LANDSCAPE**

Government Springs Park, the sole park in the Southern Heights/East Park vicinity, is situated on four city blocks between East Park Avenue and East Owen K. Garriott Road. The springs, around which the park was created, played a significant role in Enid's selection as a county seat. Several important historic black institutions were built near the park including Grayson Baptist Church, Saint Stephen's AME and the original Booker T. Washington School (razed). The park now contains a museum, faux historic village and modern landscape and memorial features.

## **HISTORIC CONTEXT: SOUTHERN HEIGHTS/EAST PARK**

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### **INTRODUCTION TO SOUTHERN HEIGHTS/EAST PARK**

Although African Americans have lived in Enid since the Cherokee Strip land run of 1893, they have generally lived apart in enclaves separated from the larger white community by railroad tracks, industrial areas, or creek beds. In the first decades of the city's development, several small clusters of African American households were scattered throughout the original townsite. Eventually, a distinct black community began to form in the southeast quadrant of the city around Government Springs Park, where the first Booker T. Washington School was built in 1901. From that time, the southeast quadrant of the city became identified with the black community where most of the community's professional families, ministers, lawyers, and teachers lived in frame houses on East Market (now Owen K. Garriott) and East Park avenues near the school and several black churches ( Figure 1). In 1921, a new Booker T. Washington School was built in the East Park Addition, located further south of the earlier black community. The new school and residential neighborhood that developed around it drew even more black families to the area in subsequent years. From about 1920 through World War II, most of Enid's black families lived in the East Park Addition and along East Park and East Market avenues at the southeast corner of the original townsite. Following World War II, the several Southern Heights additions, wedged between East Park on the east and the railroad tracks on the west, also became identified with the black community. By the 1950s, all of Enid's black churches, schools and businesses were concentrated in the Southern Heights and East Park additions or in the adjacent blocks of East Park and East Market avenues, where many black professionals continued to live.

Even though Enid's black community appeared to be deeply entrenched in the city's southeast quadrant in the early post-war period, several forces were already at work that would ultimately unravel those associations. In the 1950s, the historic black residential blocks along East Park and East Market avenues were identified for redevelopment as part of a large hospital complex. Many of the houses that lined the 400-600 blocks of East Market and East Park were demolished for the new hospital facilities,

professional offices and parking lots in the 1950s and 1960s. Then, school desegregation in 1959 and the subsequent closure of the area's neighborhood schools in the 1960s, prompted black and white families alike to leave the area for other sections of Enid. As younger families moved out of the old neighborhood, some to be closer to their children's new schools, many of the older homes were abandoned and fell into ruin as their original owners aged and passed away. Today, many block faces contain only one or two houses where eight or more once stood.

Although the depletion of the Southern Heights and East Park residential housing stock renders the area ineligible for listing as a National Register district, the neighborhood retains important historic associations with the aspirations and achievements of Enid's black families who struggled to make lives for themselves in a segregated society. And, while the residential component of the neighborhood has been diminished, Booker T. Washington and the adjacent George Washington Carver schools have reopened as community activity centers that benefit citizens throughout the city, regardless of color. Today, several traditionally black churches are among the most visible and most enduring elements of Enid's racially separate heritage. Each Sunday, congregants from across the city return to Southern Heights and East Park churches that sustained their families in what was once Enid's traditionally black neighborhood.

### **BLACKS IN OKLAHOMA BEFORE 1893**

African Americans first appeared in what is now the state of Oklahoma as early as 1835 when they were forcibly removed from their homes in Georgia, Alabama, and the Carolinas, and sent to live in Indian Territory along with their Native American masters. As slaves of the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek and Seminole nations—the so-called Five Civilized Tribes—they traveled along the infamous Trail of Tears to what was then called Indian Territory, settling in the lands set aside for them in present eastern Oklahoma. Although each tribe followed different policies regarding the treatment and status of slaves, it is generally conceded that they were treated better by the Native Americans than

by whites during the same period. Seminole and Creek tribes, in particular, allowed their slaves a great deal of participation in tribal affairs and many were allowed to gain their own freedom and achieve stature within the tribe. Emancipated along with southern slaves during the Civil War, slaves of Native Americans were thenceforth known as Freedmen of their particular nation.

Marriage between Native and African Americans was not uncommon among the resettled tribes, both before and after the Civil War. Creeks intermarried with slaves to such an extent that by the 1890s, when the Dawes Commission began enrolling members of each tribe for individual allotments of land, more than one-third of the Creek population was determined to be of African descent. The town of Okmulgee, capital of the Creek Nation, for example, was originally settled in large part by Creek Freedmen whose allotments adjoined the townsite. Once emancipated, most Freedmen remained on the tribal lands and farmed or worked as laborers for the coal mines and railroads that began to criss-cross their way across Indian Territory after 1865 (Morgan and Morgan, 1977: 62).

Emancipation, however, proved a strong impetus for the resettlement of southern freedmen. Immediately after the Civil War, many freed southern slaves traveled west; some entered the Indian Nations where they joined enclaves of Indian Freedmen, although it was not legal settlement under the terms of agreement between the United States and the five nations. When Oklahoma Territory was opened to homesteading, blacks joined the multitudes in the various land runs, often at great risk to their lives and families. Some blacks, like Edward McCabe, a New Yorker who migrated to Kansas in the 1870s, lobbied Congress for the establishment of an all-black state in Oklahoma. Such visionaries were vastly outnumbered, however, and whites, wielding more power and clout, acquired the best land.

Some black settlers in Oklahoma chose to build all-black towns, self-segregating themselves for autonomy and greater security. Langston was one of the most successful of the 28 all-black towns (and one black colony) established in Oklahoma between 1865 and 1910. As part of his attempt to establish an all-black state, Edward McCabe purchased a parcel of land about 16 miles east of Guthrie after the Oklahoma Territory was opened for settlement. There he founded the town of Langston, named for a

black U.S. senator from Virginia. Hoping to generate sufficient enthusiasm among southern blacks to cause a mass-exodus from former slave states to Oklahoma Territory, McCabe recruited tirelessly throughout the south for settlers to his colony. He solicited, but received little support from the Republican party. By the time Oklahoma petitioned for statehood, Democrats had taken control of the territory and had swept the statehouse, thus ensuring that Oklahoma would not become an all-black state. Black hopes were dashed as the white majority sought to disenfranchise them in Oklahoma as they had throughout the south. A disappointed McCabe left Oklahoma but Langston remained a significant black community; particularly because of Langston University (Colored Agricultural and Normal University), which opened in 1898 (Baird, 1994: 423). Many of Oklahoma's black school teachers and school administrators, including those in Enid, received their training at Langston University before integration allowed African Americans to enroll at the state institutions (Figure 5).

In contrast to the numbers of Indian and southern freedmen who inhabited eastern Oklahoma and the all-black towns, few blacks ventured into the region of the Cherokee Strip, even after it was



Figure 5. Langston University, ca. 1920 (Mary Umstead Collection)

opened to settlement in 1889. Some of the first blacks to pass through the area that now includes the city of Enid may have been Texas cowboys herding longhorn cattle along a branch of the Chisholm Trail. Government Springs, in the southeast quadrant of the original Enid Townsite, was a well-known source of

clean water and a regular stop on the dusty cattle trails. As early as 1871-1872, government surveyor Theodore H. Barrett mapped the path of the "Abilene Cattle Trail" as it passed by the springs, the only noteworthy landmark for miles. Government Springs ultimately attracted official notice as the likely site for a county seat when the Cherokee Strip Land Run opened the territory to settlement. Later the park that surrounded the springs became the focus of the city's first sustained black community.

### **THE LAND RUN OF 1893**

The Cherokee Strip Land Run, which opened the former Cherokee Nation grazing lands to outside settlement, resulted in the establishment of seven territorial counties with Enid as the seat of "O" (later Garfield) County. It has been estimated that at least 100,000 people participated in the land run (Smith, 1986: 12). Blacks constituted a small number of the would-be settlers, both when compared with whites who made the run and with black participation in earlier land runs (Tolson, 1966: 85). Although exact figures for black participation in the Cherokee Strip land rush are not known, by 1900 only an estimated 1,553 blacks lived in the seven-county region compared with 127,239 whites (Tolson, 1966: 86). Garfield County ranked second among the seven counties in total numbers of black residents with an estimated 368 blacks, but that figure represented only 1.67 percent of the county population of 22,072 (Tolson, 1966: 86). Of Garfield County's 368 black residents in 1900, 140 lived in or around Enid, some of those having reportedly made the land run (Edson, 1988: A-1). Among the participants were former slaves hoping for a fresh start in a new territory. Others were army scouts or "Buffalo Soldiers". Buffalo soldiers played another part in the land run - members of the 9th and 10th Cavalry and the 24th and 25th Infantry regiments guarded the starting line to keep "Sooners" from prematurely crossing over the starting line into the homestead territory.

Some blacks who successfully staked their claims were cheated out of the land or threatened by whites and forced to abandon their claims. In her book, *Prairie City*, renowned Oklahoma historian Angie Debo recorded a story told by several white settlers after they made the Cherokee Strip Land Run.



The men laughingly recounted a trick they had played on a "Negro" who participated in the run: by threatening to hang the man, they frightened him sufficiently to abandon his claim. According to Debo, the listeners added their assent: "That's right; we don't want any niggers in this country," (Debo, 1944: 48). Such tactics apparently didn't work in all cases because a number of blacks did indeed successfully complete the land run and filed claims for farms and homes in and around the newly established city of Enid.

The city of Enid was founded in the land rush. Officials had already determined that Government Springs was an ideal location for a county seat prior but the townsite existed only on paper before September 16, 1893, the day of the land run. By nightfall, Enid had become a hastily erected tent city inhabited by an estimated 15,000 residents (Smith, 1986:12). Angie Debo described Enid that day:

The 'city' consisted of the frame shack that housed the Government land-office, but people were swarming all over the townsite, staking lots and setting up tents, and some lumber was already on the ground (Debo, 1944: 45).

Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps, drawn a year after the land rush, show the downtown district as filled with frame storefronts and a handful of tents serving as offices, restaurants and saloons. Most of the construction appears to have been of a temporary nature, reflecting the speed with which it was built. Scattered throughout the townsite, away from the downtown blocks, were numerous tents and cabins, as well as "tenements & shanties", according to the Sanborn maps. Hotels, boarding houses and camp houses, described by Debo as "great, spreading frame buildings with stalls for horses, a rude kitchen with pine tables and a cook stove or two, and tiers of bunks filled with hay" (Debo, 1944: 75) were home to many of the residents who had no permanent quarters.

While whites comprised the majority of Enid's early population, several blacks are believed to have been among the city's original residents. According to Sister M. Eskridge, she and the other founding members of Enid's first black Baptist church participated in the historic land run. A church history prepared in 1990 recorded Sister Eskridge's original narrative of the event:

Every living thing was choked by the perennial hot winds and dust from the hoofs of [a] thousand impatient horses out on the plains now known as North Western Oklahoma. September 16, 1893. Through out the United States depression reigned. Along the borders of the Cherokee outlet were gathered crowds that became victims. These people had been attracted by the prospects of free land, and the opportunity for a new start in life in the place where the last American Frontier was about to be closed. The Founders of First Baptist, made the run in the strip opening. Stakes driven where their home life would start (Eskridge, n.d., in *First Baptist Church History, 1893-1990*, 1990).

According to Eskridge, the Baptist church was organized as early as the fall of 1893, at the home of Revered S.S. Jones, on "D Street", now Main Avenue. Among those present were G.S. Ross, Reverend W.M. Lake, Revered Tipes, Judge D.L. Banks, Judge Daniel Lewis, Sister S. Jones, Sister M. Johnson, Sister M. Eskridge, and Brother Charlie Yates. The group elected Jones as pastor and Banks as the first deacon and held meetings in different homes in the area. These houses may have been tents or some of the many temporary buildings erected in the new townsite. Soon after the congregation was organized, its members bought a parcel of land on E. Broadway where they erected a tent for Sunday worship. New members were baptized in the stream, a branch of Boggy Creek, that ran through the property (Eskridge, n.d., in *First Baptist Church History: 1893-1990*, 1990). These black church members are among Enid's founding citizens.

Church establishment notwithstanding, Enid was a rough and tumble town in its early years. An inordinate number of saloons and billiard parlors appear in the 1894 maps, possibly reflecting a large population of single men who made the land run and who were just beginning to settle down. A single block in the downtown area contained six saloons, a beer storage building and a variety theater known as the "Zoo". In the same block (Block 13, Lot 24), fronting onto what is now Main Avenue between Grand and Second streets, a small frame dwelling was denoted as a "Negro" house. It is the earliest

known written record of an African American residence in Enid, dating to the first year of the town's settlement (Figure 6).

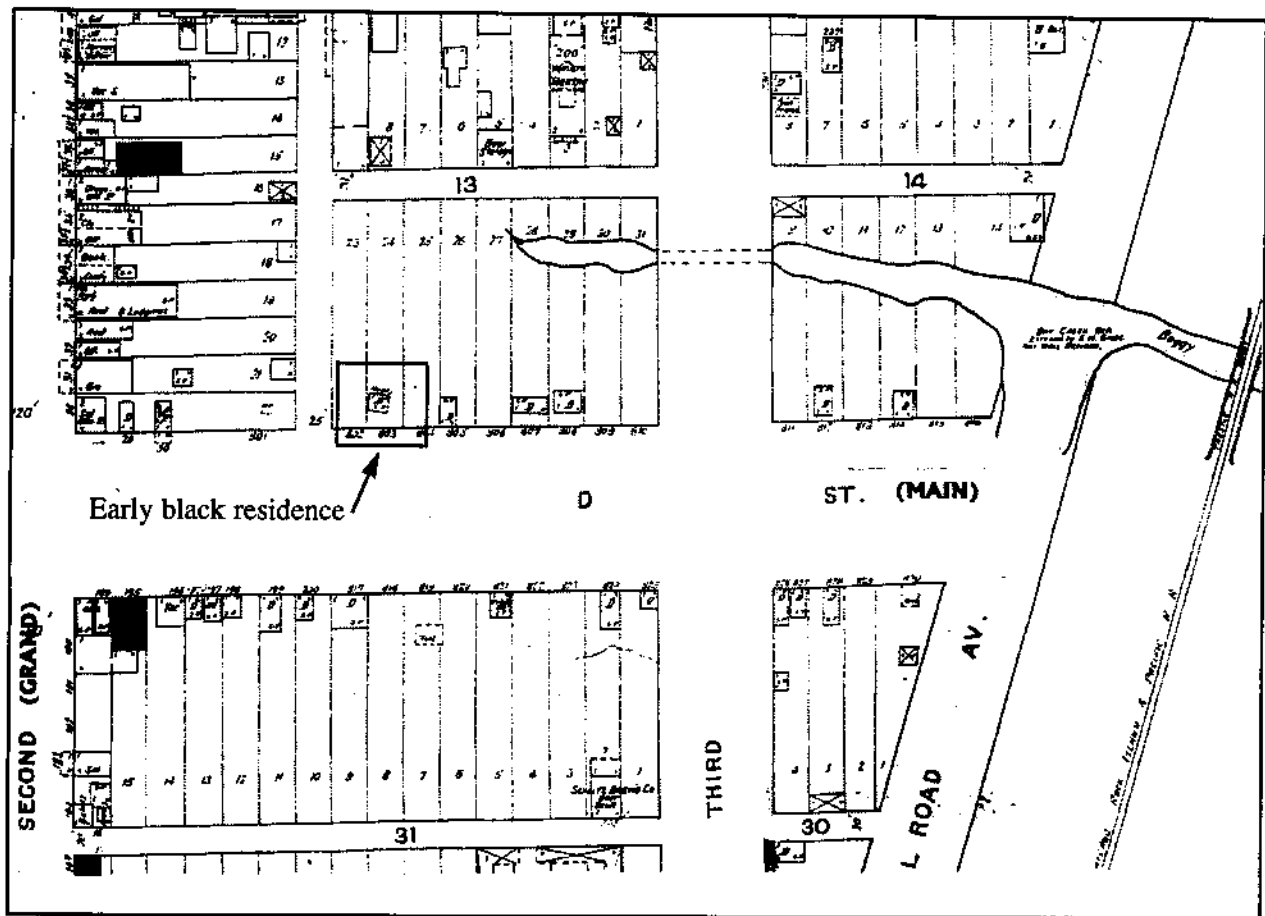


Figure 6. "Negro" Dwelling, 1894 (Sanborn Maps, 1894)

### EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF ENID AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BLACK COMMUNITIES

By 1895, only two years after the great land rush, many of Enid's hastily erected tent and frame commercial buildings in the downtown business district had been replaced by brick storefronts. Likewise, most residents quickly replaced their original cabins and tents with frame houses. People who had the means to do so built their houses as far from the railroad tracks that bisected the townsite on a slight north/south diagonal, as they could. While the railroad provided a lifeline to outside markets and economic development, few wanted to live near the mills, lumber yards and industrial plants that sprang

up along its frontages. In addition to attracting industrial development and transient labor, Enid's railroad lines separated the business district from an emerging residential district on the east side of town. Modest frame houses and small businesses formed a buffer zone between the railroad/industrial zone and the city's first exclusively residential neighborhood, known as East Hill. East Hill was located in the city's northeast quadrant, beyond the offending railroad tracks and far from the bustle of the commercial district. Situated on a rise overlooking Government Springs Park, to the southwest, East Hill attracted Enid's more prosperous white families who built stylish houses with wrap-around porches and bay windows.

In contrast, numerous "cabins", "shanties" and "tent-on-frame" dwellings remained scattered throughout the central city, particularly in the flood-prone areas along the meandering path of Boggy Creek, and in blocks near the railroad tracks and developing industrial zones. Some of Enid's earliest black residents lived along the southwestern arm of Boggy Creek, near the railroad crossing at East Park Avenue (then "A" Street). Cabins like the ones shown in the 1895 Sanborn maps may have housed some of these early black citizens (Figure 7).

As the city grew in the years following its founding, additions were platted for further development. Some of the additions were strictly residential but others featured multiple uses. One of Enid's earliest additions, a small part of which lies within the current Southern Heights/East Park project area, was platted in 1897 by a coalition of entrepreneurs led by Samuel R. Marshall and C.E. Gannon. Although the South Side Addition was primarily residential in character, it spanned the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad and lots along the tracks were sold for industrial warehouses, grain elevators, meat packing and other types of industrial uses that benefitted from railroad frontage. Within three years of its platting, South Side Addition had become the city's major manufacturing and milling location (Randolph, 1985: 19). Residents of this addition tended to be working class white families who lived in modest frame houses. The addition's least affluent citizens, including black men and women, lived in small, box-like frame dwellings or roomed at factories and warehouses that fronted onto the railroad tracks near South Second Street.

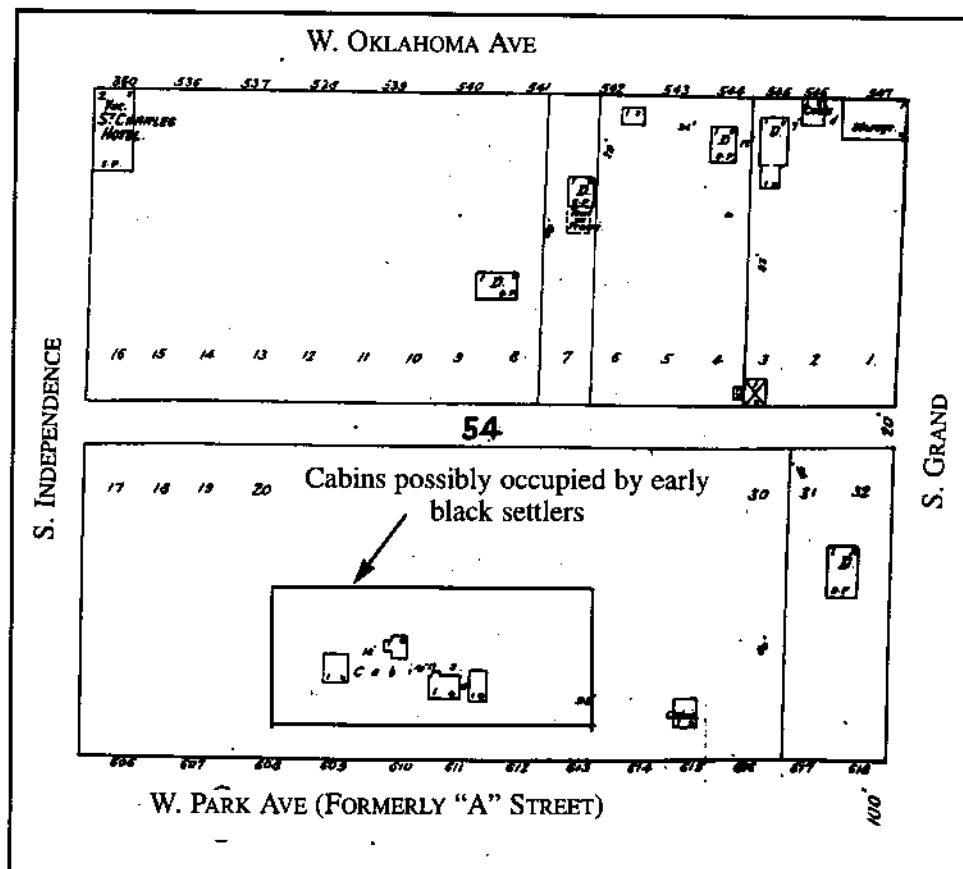


Figure 7. Cabins, 1895 (Sanborn map, 1895)

## BLACK COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ON THE EAST SIDE

By the time South Side Addition was platted, a more distinct black community was beginning to take shape on the city's east side. In 1895, the black Baptists replaced their tent church with the city's first permanent church building for a black congregation. The "Colored" Baptist Church appeared in the 1895 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps in block 17, at what is now the northwest corner of South Fifth Street (then Sixth Street) and East Broadway (Figure 8). Enid's white Baptist congregation donated an unfinished "open box building" to the black Baptists. The black congregation purchased additional lumber from the H. D. Lumber Company to complete the building. Female parishioners painted the new

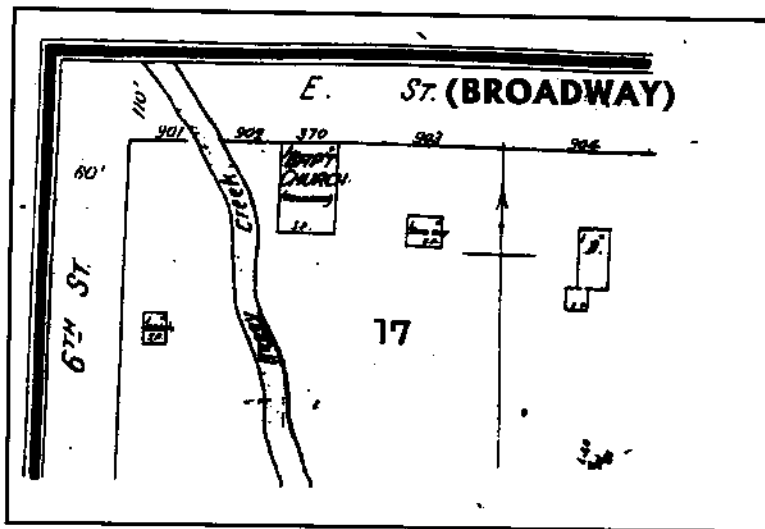


Figure 8. "Colored" Baptist Church & Dug Out, 1895 (Sanborn Map, 1895)

church and installed light fixtures.

After W.H. Parks was called to pastor, the congregation laid a brick foundation under the building (Eskridge, n.d.).

The church was separated from central Enid on the west by a branch of Boggy Creek that passed through the site, occasionally flooding the building (Eskridge, n.d.). The small

frame church shared the lot with a tiny cabin and dugout that may have sheltered early church members. Although neither the cabin nor the dugout were identified as being occupied by black families in the Sanborn maps, their proximity to the church implies that they were.

The black Baptist congregation may have also played a role in creating the city's earliest school for black children. According to Enid reporter Bill Edson, classes for black students were first held in a tent at Broadway and Fifth Street near an early black Baptist church. It is undoubtedly the same one identified as a "Colored" Baptist Church on the 1895 Sanborn maps. W.J. Johnson served as the teacher (Edson, 1988: A-3). Despite the presence of the church and early school, and the likelihood that parishioners and families with children would live nearby, no distinct black residential pattern developed around the church. It is probable that growth in the adjacent white residential district of East Hill discouraged appreciable black development around the First Baptist Church.

Instead, black families began building a substantial community about five blocks to the south of the first black church, possibly in response to the erection of a school for their children in that area. Named for Booker T. Washington, Enid's first permanent school for black children was established in 1896, only three years after the land run. Classes were held in a frame building at East Oklahoma

Avenue and Seventh Street, near the northeast corner of Government Springs Park. Three years later, classes moved to Grayson Baptist Church, then known simply as the "Second Baptist Church (colored)", at the northwest corner of present East Owen K. Garriott Road and South Fourth Street. The church lot lay directly west of Government Springs Park where its congregation remains to the present. This forerunner of what is now called Grayson Missionary Baptist Church, formed in 1893, immediately after the opening of the Cherokee Strip. The group of settlers who comprised the founding congregation, met at the home of a Mr. and Mrs. Grayson, about ten miles northwest of Enid before moving to their present location about 1899 (Grayson Baptist Church History, 1968).

By the turn of the century, the area around Government Springs Park had become identified with the city's black institutions and leadership, including its teachers, doctors and ministers. The earliest black residences appeared primarily along East "B" Street (now East Oklahoma), "A" Street (later, East South Park and now East Park Avenue) and South Boundary (later, East Market and now Owen K. Garriott Road), near their intersections with South Fourth and South Sixth streets. This small cluster of early black settlers ultimately formed the nucleus of a historic black community that endures to the present, nearly a century later.

## RESIDENTIAL PATTERNS OF ENID'S BLACK FAMILIES

In 1900, the U.S. Census counted 140 black residents in the city of Enid. That figure constituted nearly 40 percent of Garfield County's 368 black residents but little more than 4 percent of the city's overall population of 3,444 (Smith, 1986: 12; Edson, 1988: A-1). Because the earliest city directories for Enid, dating to

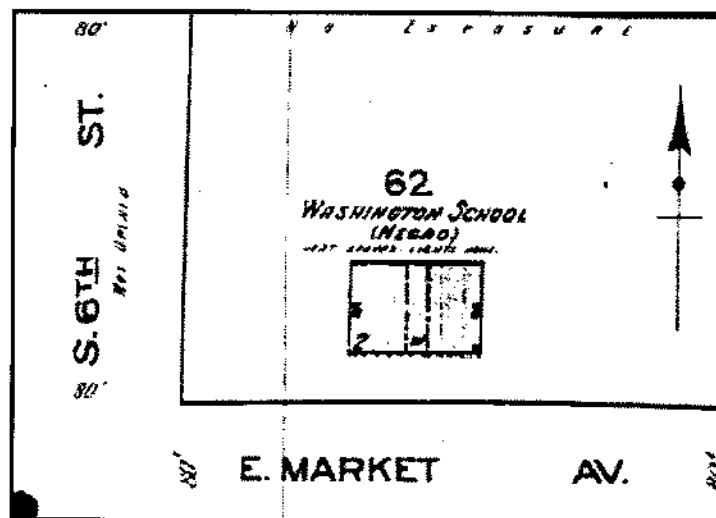


Figure 9. Washington School built 1901 ( Sanborn Map, 1917)

1901, either did not indicate race or simply did not include black citizens, it is difficult to identify black residential nodes before about 1906. Through Sanborn maps, church histories and interviews, however, it appears that black residents lived throughout the city in its formative years, in addition to the known enclaves that formed around the black Baptist church on East Broadway and the larger community in the vicinity of Government Springs Park.

Not all of Enid's early black residents lived such marginal lives, however. By the turn of the century, a substantial community of families, including black professionals such as teachers and ministers, had taken root at Government Springs Park, drawn by the institutions that flanked its grounds. Black students had attended school in the area since 1896, first in a small frame building at the corner of East Oklahoma Avenue and Seventh Street (1896-1899) and then at Grayson Baptist Church (1899-1901), but the growing community required a larger facility. In 1901, Enid's black citizens celebrated



**Figure 10.** Washington School Photo, ca. 1910 (Courtesy Museum of the Cherokee Strip, Oklahoma Historical Society and the McConkay Collection)



the completion of their first brick school building on the east side of Government Springs Park, at the northeast corner of South Sixth Street and East South Park (now Park) (Figure 9). The two-story, brick edifice was a notable improvement over the earlier, makeshift schools. It contained central halls flanked by two large rooms on each floor. Also named for Booker T. Washington, the school served black students of all grades and quickly became the center of black community life in Enid (Figure 10).

### **EAST PARK ADDITION**

By 1901, Enid's developers were poised to begin new residential construction in additions to the north and northwest of the original townsite. Both the Jonesville (north) and Kenwood (northwest) additions were initially platted as separate townsites but by the turn of the century they were engulfed by neighboring Enid to accommodate the city's expanding population. As Enid continued to grow in the early 20th century, new additions, including the Weatherley and Waverly tracts to the west of the city, were platted for residential development.

Although East Hill remained a respectable neighborhood, by 1905 it no longer enjoyed its original "Silk Stocking" status. In fact, all of the east side neighborhoods declined in popularity among white families as Enid's wealthier residents moved to the new, exclusively residential neighborhoods west of the central business district. Over time, commercial and industrial development encroached upon the area, and the neighborhoods became an eclectic tapestry of industrial complexes and private housing. The east side became increasingly identified with working class families as the new century progressed. With the exception of students and professors who attended or taught classes at Oklahoma Christian University (Phillips University), Enid's professional and middle class families moved to the more exclusive west side additions. As this transition took place, the black community around Government Springs Park began to expand. However, early Sanborn maps and city directories for the years 1901-1910 show little evidence of the community's existence. Enid's earliest city directories

(1901-1906) did not indicate blacks with the designation (c) — for “colored” — as they did in later years. In fact, many blacks known to have been residents of the city by that time, were not included in the books. The First Baptist Church, with its dug out still extant, was the only building identified with blacks in the Sanborn Maps, from 1895 until 1911. Sanborn maps for this period did not include the Second Baptist (Grayson) Church and school (1899), St. Stephen’s AME church (1909), the first (1896) or second (1901) Booker T. Washington schools, or the black residences cropping up along East Market Avenue, even though all of these sites lay within the original townsite (Sanborn maps, various). It was almost as if the community, as represented by its major institutions, was invisible in these records.

Nevertheless, the community did grow and in 1905, the East Park Addition (Figure 11) was platted adjacent to the existing black neighborhood that had grown up around Booker T. Washington School and Grayson Baptist Church at Government Springs Park. C.H. Sexton, a civil engineer, filed the East Park Addition to the City of Enid for the property owners, H. H. Temple and J.H. Baker, on November 10, 1905. The addition consisted of about 25 acres of land, more or less, and included 32 city blocks lying between what was then First (now Tenth) and Seventh (now Leona Mitchell) streets on the east and west, and between Market Avenue (now Owen K. Garriott) and Frantz Avenue, on the north and south. Temple and Baker were partners in the Enid Investment Co., headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri (Randolph, 1985).

Although there were no stated restrictions or any other indications in the plat that the addition was to be developed as a “Negro” or “Colored” residential neighborhood, it may have been planned as such due to the area’s proximity to the school and established black district along East Market and East Park avenues. It was a natural extension of that neighborhood and some blacks may have farmed in the area before it was officially platted. Like other properties associated with Enid’s early black development, there is little evidence of its development in early city directories or Sanborn maps. From 1905, when it was platted, and throughout the ensuing two decades, Sanborn maps did not depict the details of the black addition. The 1911 Sanborn Map does feature an overview of the area that shows how the

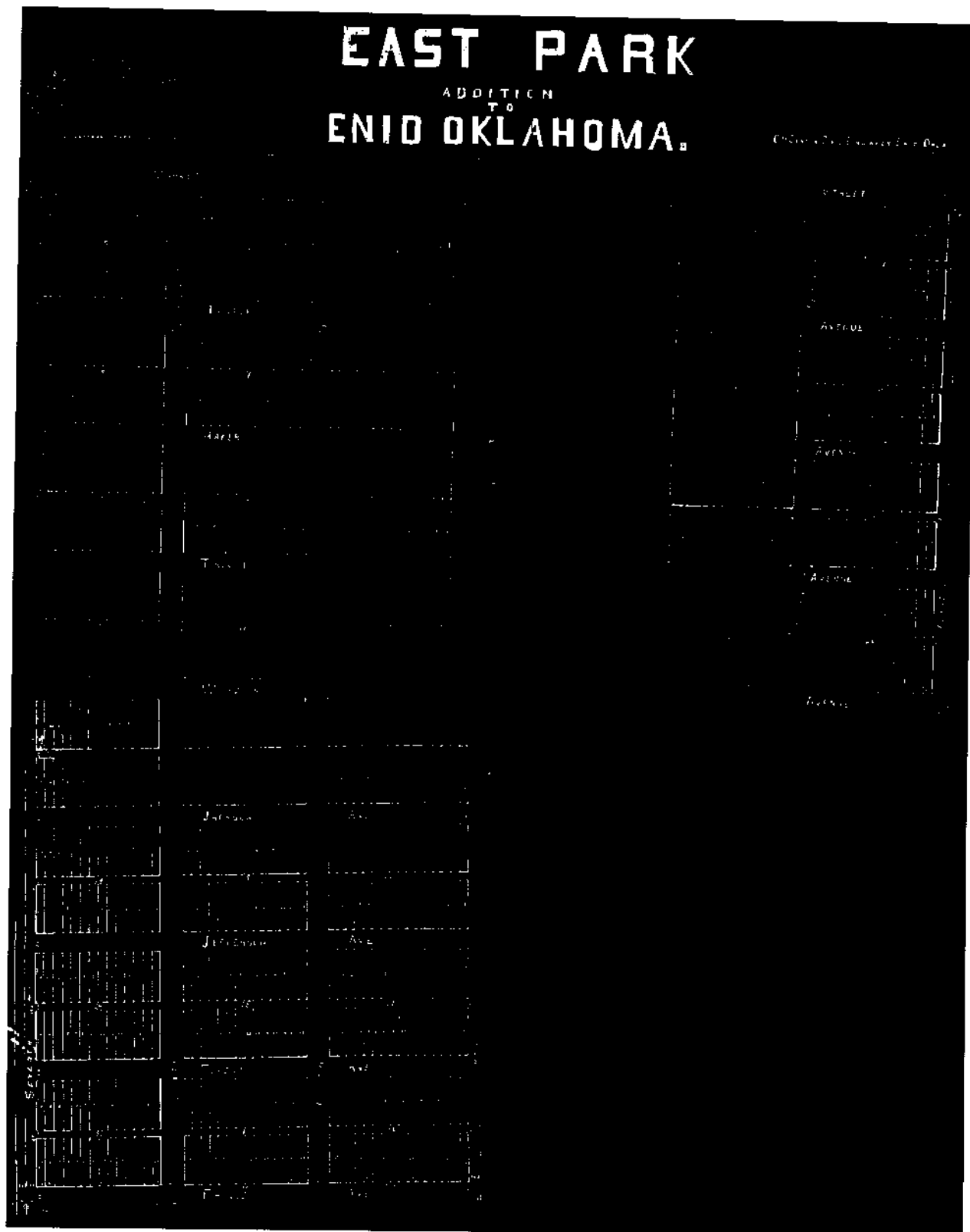


Figure 11. East Park Addition, 1905

addition extended south from Government Springs Park. The map also graphically depicts the additions isolation from Enid's white neighborhoods (Figure 12).

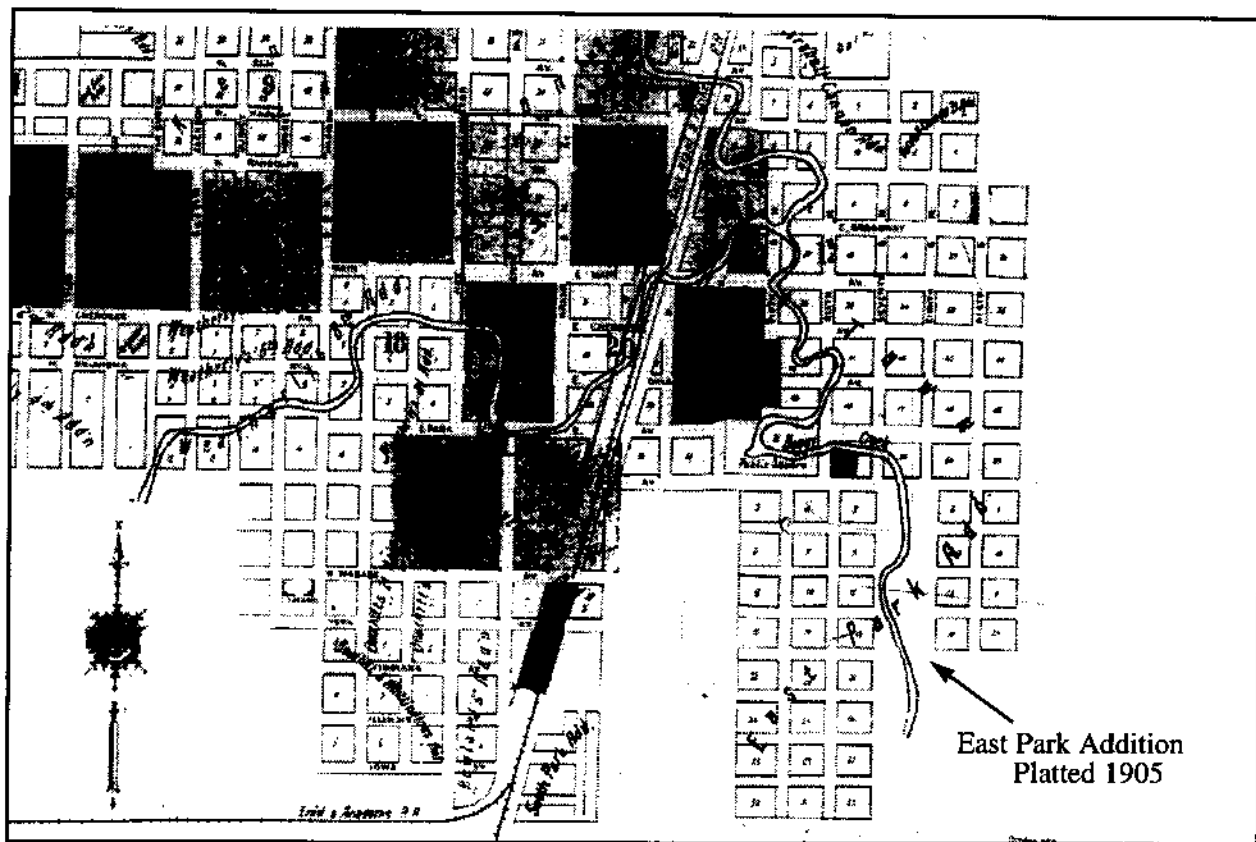


Figure 12. East Park Addition (Sanborn Map, 1911)

### OKLAHOMA STATEHOOD AND EFFECTS ON THE BLACK POPULATION

Before statehood in 1907, the majority of African Americans in Oklahoma lived in cities like Muskogee and Okmulgee, both part of the Creek Nation, and Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Guthrie and Ardmore (Edson, 1988: 1). The all-black towns, by-passed by the railroads, dwindled in size and influence compared with the rising black presence in larger urban areas. By statehood, blacks outnumbered both Indians and first- and second-generation Europeans in Oklahoma. A census taken that year counted 137,612 "Negroes", 130,430 European-born and children of European-born residents, and only 74,825 Indians in the new state (Morgan and Morgan, 1977: 62).

Unfortunately, Oklahoma statehood codified racial prejudice, segregation and second-class citizenship for blacks. Most white Oklahomans were of southern origin and shared the racial attitudes of their kinsmen. Although a substantial number of Freedmen had lived among the Five Civilized Tribes after Emancipation and some blacks had succeeded in the early land runs, Indians and whites alike generally considered them to be inferior to themselves and sought to diminish their influence in the new state. Many frontier Oklahoma towns discouraged black settlers, both out of bigotry and to inhibit the growth of the Republican party in the new state (Morgan and Morgan, 1977: 138).

In this context it should not be surprising that, while the Oklahoma constitution was an exceptionally progressive document in many ways, its ideology did not extend to blacks. At the constitutional convention, presiding officer “Alfalfa Bill” Murray called for a constitution that protected the rights of Indians and whites equally, but not those of blacks. Interestingly, Murray, who was a tribal citizen by marriage, along with others seeking to protect their Indian or part-Indian children from any future discrimination based on color, insisted that the terms colored and colored race be reserved for persons of African descent while the term “white race shall include all other persons” (Morgan and Morgan, 1977: 85).

Racial segregation was a major issue in the selection of delegates and most of the seventy-five southern-born delegates had campaigned on a promise to write rigid “Jim Crow” restrictions into the new constitution. Although formal segregation was not included in the new state’s constitution—probably because delegates feared reprisals from then President Theodore Roosevelt and the reigning Republican Party—racism factored into every phase of the new constitution and the legal system it spawned. The first state legislature promptly enacted segregation codes for schools, public facilities, and transportation, based upon those of the Deep—and Democratic—South (Morgan and Morgan, 1977: 138). In fact, Oklahoma’s first state law promoted segregation by prohibiting “miscegenation,” thus criminalizing many hundreds of marriages between Indians and blacks in Oklahoma. Fearful that Oklahoma might become a Republican state during the progressive era, Democrats disenfranchised

blacks through stringent literacy tests. Known as the "grandfather clause" because it exempted direct descendants of all persons eligible to vote prior to January 1, 1866, it effectively kept blacks from the polls (Morgan and Morgan, 1977: 139). Still, many blacks continued to move to Oklahoma to escape greater oppression in the Deep South.

### **JIM CROW IN ENID**

There is little evidence on the state of race relations in Enid during this period. However, it seems clear from the emergence of new black schools and churches in the southeast quadrant of the city- and their absence elsewhere in the city- that Jim Crow laws affected the dispersal of black residents in Enid. By Oklahoma statehood in 1907, blacks were clearly relegated to the less desirable sections of the new town. Early twentieth century city directories (1907-1910) indicate that blacks tended to live in the southern part of the original townsite, particularly along railroad frontages or low-lying creek bottoms which had a tendency to flood in the spring and were virtual swamps in the summer (Sanborn maps, 1895; City directories, various). Most of Enid's black residents listed in the 1910 city directory were single men who held jobs as laborers, possibly for the industries that sprang up along the railroad tracks. It was common for five to ten unrelated individuals to be listed at the same address in what appeared to be marginal frame houses along or near the railroad tracks in South Enid. Others boarded or roomed at various black businesses, including several restaurants and billiard parlors, while a handful of black domestics resided at the homes of their employers (Appendices B and C).

Despite the rise of Jim Crow laws, Enid's black population increased and by statehood had established permanent religious, educational and social institutions. The 1907 city directory offered a clearer picture of Enid's black community life and leadership than any of the previous volumes. By that date, Enid's black citizenry had sustained two Baptist churches, the city's original Baptist Church at 508 E. Broadway and Grayson Baptist Church, at 420 S. Fourth Street, for nearly a decade. Reverend Richard Quarles, a resident of Crescent City, Oklahoma presided at Grayson Baptist Church, while Rev.

M.A. Eilanth, of 110 W. Park Avenue, was listed as the pastor of the First Baptist Church on East Broadway. Booker T. Washington School, the city's separate and only black school, had been in operation on the east side of Government Springs Park for nearly six years. In comparison, Enid's white schools included six elementary and two high schools that year. Among the numerous fraternal orders active in Enid in 1907, blacks were represented by a chapter of the Knights of Pythias, Eureka Lodge No. 14. Leaders were William Humphrey, L.E. Lott and George Ewing (City directory, 1907). This organization and its women's auxiliary established and maintained many of the recreational activities for Enid's black youth throughout the city's period of segregation.

### **BLACK COMMUNITIES IN ENID**

By 1910, Enid's city directory listed 249 black households with 356 named individuals within those households (See Appendix B). This figure accounts for spouses and working children identified by a small "c" for "colored" in the directory. Census figures for 1910 listed Enid's total population at 13,799 with 661 black residents. Compared with the city's white population in 1910, blacks comprised about 4.7 percent of the town's households. Although city directories are not always accurate and are more likely to have omitted black families than whites from their listings, they are useful in tracking trends and patterns.

Using the 1910 Enid city directory and the 1908 and 1911 Sanborn maps, black businesses, residences and work places were found throughout the city (See Appendix B and C). However, while black families were not segregated to a single area of town, virtually all of the blacks who resided in the northern half of the town in 1910 lived along the railroad tracks that cut through the eastern half of the original townsite and in flood-prone areas along the many branches Boggy Creek, a network of more or less occasional streams that coursed through the city. Furthermore, blacks were the only residents of particularly undesirable areas such as industrial areas near both the railroad tracks and creek beds. In some

cases, their addresses indicate that they may have slept in warehouses or factories, possibly in exchange for labor or to provide night and off-hour security for those businesses (City directory, 1910).

One of the city's largest concentrations of blacks in 1910 lay immediately west of the railroad tracks along South Second and South Grand streets, near their intersections with East Cherokee and East Oklahoma streets. While more individual blacks lived in this area in 1910, they resided in fewer dwellings than in the area surrounding Government Springs Park. The reason for this apparent inconsistency stems from the large number of single men who lived at rooming houses along East Cherokee and East Oklahoma avenues, and South Second and South Grand streets. It was not unusual in this area to find as many as ten unrelated individuals listed as sharing a single house.

Possibly catering to the large number of single men living near the railroad tracks and working in the nearby industrial zones, a section of South Second Street near East Oklahoma Avenue—commonly known as Two Street—developed into a notorious “Red Light” district inhabited by “prostitutes, pimps, gamblers and hustlers” during the 1910s and 1920s (Nash, Nolan interviews 1995; Umstead papers). Unsavory characters of both black and white races frequented the area but several legitimate black-owned businesses operated on South Second Street, including the Hill & Cook Restaurant owned by Alexander Hill and Hayward Cook at 207 S. Second, as well.

It should be noted that employment opportunities for blacks at that time were limited. Of 213 black workers listed in the 1910 city directory, 84 held jobs as laborers. Many worked in service areas, frequently finding employment in white theaters and hotels. Forty-four blacks worked as porters, while 14 listed their occupations as cooks, and 10 as waiters. City directories showed that the Loewen Theater was the city's largest employer of black workers in 1910, followed by the Billings Hotel (See Appendix B). According to the city directories, numerous black porters, waiters and domestic workers also resided at these hotels.

In contrast, there were few professional positions available to blacks in the city. In 1910, Enid city directories listed a single black lawyer, one black physician, one black principal, two black teachers



and three black ministers, all of whom lived in the 500-700 blocks of East Market, Park or Oklahoma avenues, in the Government Springs Park neighborhood.

By 1910, increased industrial development along the railroad tracks and periodic flooding in the low-lying areas west of the tracks, in south Enid, made the area more and more undesirable for residential use of any kind. In late 1910 or early 1911, a fire eradicated several blocks of small frame dwellings along South Third Street (City directory, 1910; Sanborn map, 1911). According to the 1910 city directory, these blocks were almost entirely inhabited by black workers who must have been left homeless by the fire (City directory, 1910; Sanborn maps, 1908 and 1911). Housing conditions for blacks continued to deteriorate in the commercial and industrial sections of town. Gradually, Enid's black families began to gravitate toward the more stable black neighborhood near Government Springs Park, to the east of the railroad tracks, and to the newly platted East Park Addition, immediately south of the park.

#### **GOVERNMENT SPRINGS PARK DEVELOPMENT**

Although large numbers of black residents continued to live near the juncture of South Second Street and the railroad tracks in 1910, the most distinctive residential area for Enid's black citizens was in the immediate vicinity of Government Springs Park (Figure 13), near Booker T. Washington School, the city's only black school. An African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church had been built at the southeast corner of East Park Avenue and South Seventh Street in 1909 and, with the exception of the Baptist Church that remained in its original location on East Broadway, all of the city's black institutions lay in the immediate vicinity of Government Springs Park, in the city's southeast quadrant. These black institutions probably helped draw more black residents to the area in the following decade, further strengthening its identification as a predominantly black section of town. The neighborhood lay east of the central business district and railroad tracks and south of Cherokee Avenue and the East Park residential neighborhood. Rough boundaries of the growing black community in that area spanned the 300-700 blocks of East Oklahoma to the 600-700 blocks of East South Park and East Market (now Owen K. Garriott Road) avenues.



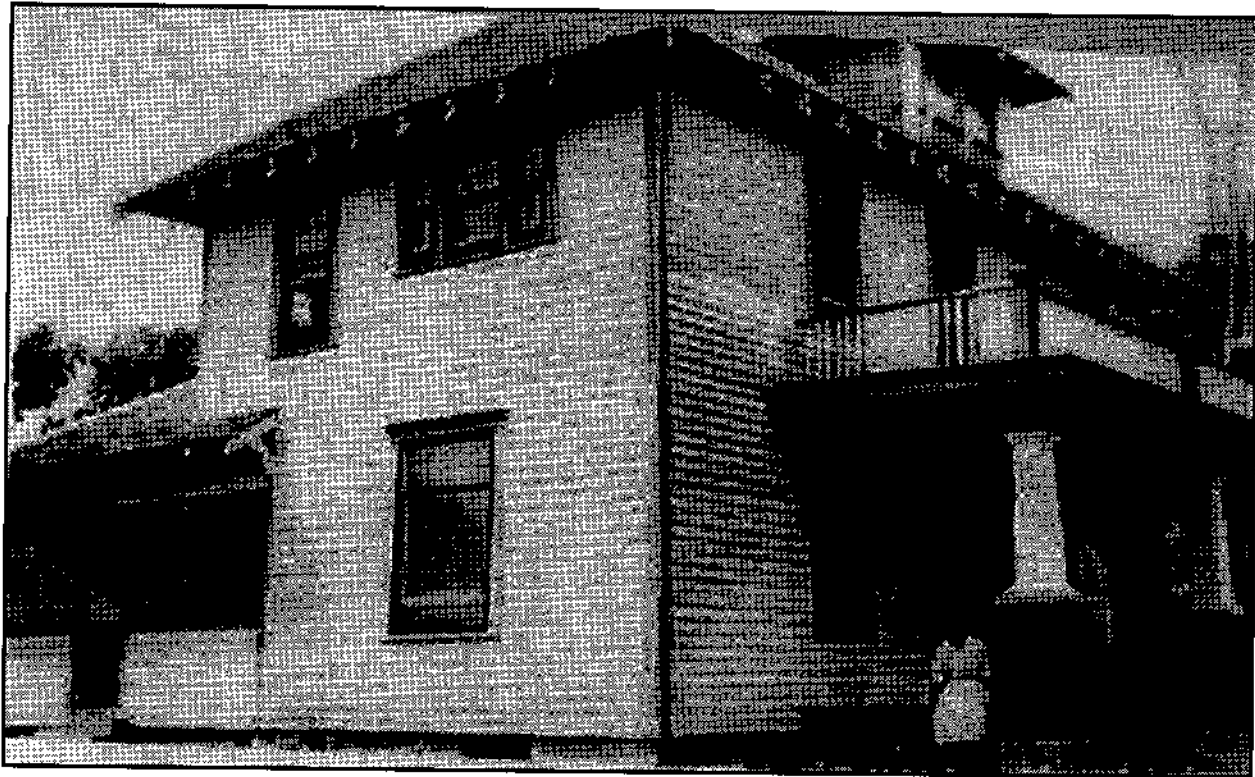
**Figure 13.** Government Springs Park ca. 1920 (Mary Umstead Collection)

Some of the town's most influential black families during the first decades of the 20th century, including the principal and teachers at Booker T. Washington School and several ministers, lived along those streets. Rev. Moses Ireland, pastor of the First Baptist Church, and his wife Emma, lived at the southeast corner of Market Avenue and Sixth Street, across the street from the school at the northeast corner of the intersection. Enid's only black doctor in 1910, Ollie Penny, and his wife Lucinda, lived at 509 E. Market Avenue. East South Park appears to have been the prestigious address at that time. Reverend William Humphrey, pastor of Grayson Baptist Church; Henry Backstrom, principal of Washington School; and teacher Osie L. Reed all lived at 707 E. South Park Avenue along with Rev. Louis J. Johnson, pastor of the new St. Stephen's AME Church. Enid's only black attorney, Devotion Banks and his wife Georgia, lived at 632 E. South Park (Appendix B).

By 1912, Rev. Humphrey moved to his own house at 820 E. Market Street. The AME church was also listed in the 1912 city directory for the first time. Principal Henry Backstrom led a staff of only two teachers, Leona Baxter and George Douglas, at Washington School. At the same time, there were seven white elementary schools and a high school with 13 teachers (City directory, 1912). In addi-

tion to churches and schools, Enid's black community benefitted from an active Knights of Pythias organization, Eureka Lodge No. 14. The group met twice monthly at the AME Church. Lodge leaders included Fred Hollon, Rev. L. J. Johnson, J.A. Duffey, George Ewing and Dr. O. H. Penny.

In contrast to the warehouses, shanties, cabins and tenements that housed blacks in other parts of the city, houses in the Government Springs Park area appear to have been typical single family frame dwellings on regular sized lots, as shown in the 1911 Sanborn maps. By the 1920s, the blocks surrounding Washington School were as closely associated with the city's black middle- and professional class families as the notorious "Two Street" was identified as its Red Light district. As time passed and Enid's black residents built new homes, most chose to live in the family-oriented neighborhood near the black churches and schools. Professional families like those of Mary and Louis Umstead built substantial 2-story frame houses in the popular styles of the 1920s (Figure 14) at 222 E. Park (then East South Park). And, as the black population increased in the 1910s and 1920s, they expanded southward into the newly platted East Park Addition.



**Figure 14.** Umstead House, ca. 1925 (Mary Umstead Collection)

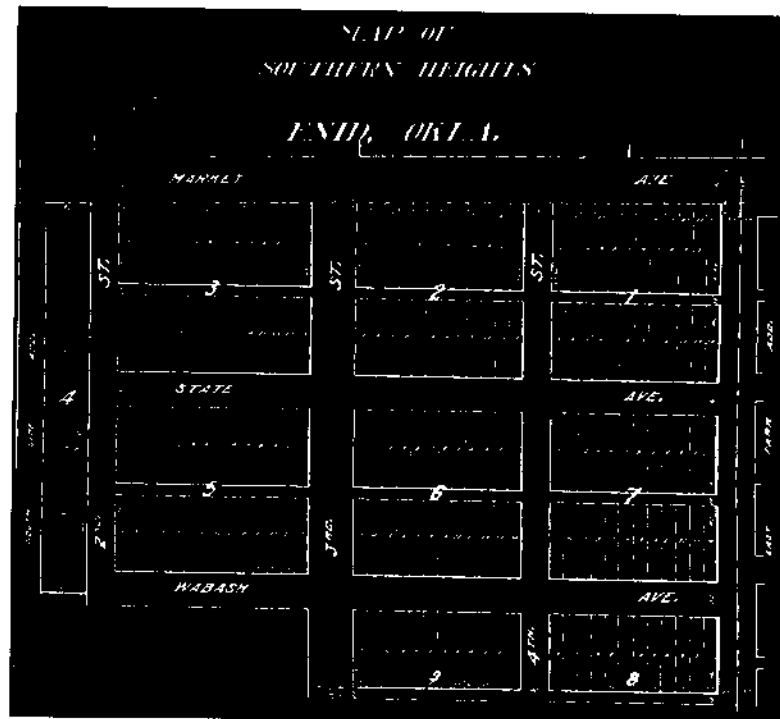
The platting of the East Park Addition in 1905 may have occurred in response to the existing black community that had grown up in the southeast quadrant of the city. The new addition to the south of Government Springs Park provided space for the neighborhood's expansion and further defined the black community in that region of town. It is not known exactly when black families began living in the East Park Addition. While the addition was platted in 1905, the 1910 city directory does not list any of the streets in the addition with the exception of Market (now Owen K. Garriott Road). Among the first known residents of the newly platted addition were James and Gertrude Cook, Rev. Moses and Mrs. Emma Ireland, Dr. Ollie and Mrs. Lucinda Penny, George and Mattie Washington, and James and Cora Daniels (City directory, 1910). Pastor Ireland's residency in East Park is noteworthy because his church, the original First Baptist on East Broadway was the only black institution that lay beyond the Government Springs Park area. By 1910, Ireland's move to Market Avenue may have presaged the church's eventual relocation to the East Park Addition in the 1920s. Oral accounts indicate that more black families had begun moving into the area by the mid-1910s. Mary Paxton Silvers whose house at 475 E. State Avenue survives to the present, moved to the site in 1918 (Cash Russell, 1997).

Like earlier black neighborhoods, East Park was isolated from other emerging additions on Enid's southern boundary by the railroad tracks, Boggy Creek, and a large tract of land that remained unplatted until 1910. In that year, white entrepreneur/land owners surveyed part of the vacant parcel to the east of the railroad tracks as Southern Heights Addition. Unlike its immediate neighbor East Park, Southern Heights was not originally developed for black settlement despite the fact that it was adjacent to the railroad tracks and located in a low-lying area along the creek bottom.

### **SOUTHERN HEIGHTS.**

Southern Heights (Figure 15) was one of many new subdivisions platted in Enid between 1902 and 1910 when investment and development prospects boomed. Frenzied development of Enid followed in the wake of Oklahoma statehood, the establishment of Oklahoma Christian College (now

Phillips University) and a streetcar line, all in 1907. In 1908 alone, 500 new houses were completed in the city of Enid. By 1910, when white land owners Bruce Sanders and George P. Rush platted the Southern Heights subdivision, construction had cooled somewhat but prospects for development remained optimistic. Wedged between the relatively isolated East Park Addition to the east and the railroad tracks to the



**Figure 15.** Southern Heights Addition, 1910

west, the tract filled in the gap between the East Park Addition, by then developing as a black neighborhood, and the southern extension of Enid as the town grew along the railroad tracks. Southern Heights consisted of nine blocks, each with 12 to 28 lots, lying between South Second Street on the west and South Fifth Street on the east, and between East Market Avenue (now Owen K. Garriott Road) on the north and East Wabash Avenue on the south.

Although platted as a residential addition, industrial development along the railroad tracks, including mills, grain elevators, lumber yards, and later oil and propane businesses characterized the western edge of Southern Heights, as it does today. Boggy Creek meandered through the addition, making the area prone to flooding and swamp-like conditions in the early years. This, coupled with railroad and industrial activity, made Southern Heights a less than desirable neighborhood in which to live. As a result, the addition developed slowly at first but by 1920, after oil discoveries prompted a growth spurt and building boom in Enid, Southern Heights began to fill with modest frame houses, primarily bungalows. The principal residential area developed around what is presently the 200-mid-400 blocks of East Market, East State and East Wabash avenues.

Southern Heights was not originally developed as a black residential district. The addition's earliest residents were predominantly white, working class families, many of whom appear, from their names, to have been German or Eastern European immigrants. There were also more Hispanic surnames identified in this addition than in any other historic neighborhoods in Enid for the period ranging from 1920 to 1950. The principle residential streets in the neighborhood included what is now the 200 to mid-400 blocks of East Market, East State and East Wabash.

Because Southern Heights was platted later than the more distant East Park Addition, some difficulty was experienced in joining the two additions in a logical manner according to standard address procedures. In both additions, houses fronted primarily on the east-west running streets but there was not a smooth transition at the juncture of the two additions. Streets in Southern Heights were an extension of Enid's Market, State and Wabash streets but East Park streets had entirely different names including Temple, Baker, Troost and Warwick. Also, the Southern Heights streets did not exactly match the East Park streets but rather ended at a T-intersection at South Enid Boulevard, which separated the two additions.

After several decades of switching street names and numbering systems, East Park's streets were renamed to better approximate those in Southern Heights. The city of Enid eventually extended the 400 block numbers to span two blocks. The eastern-most blocks of Southern Heights and the western-most blocks of East Park additions are both addressed with 400-block numbers, with the lower 400-block numbers in Southern Heights and the higher numbers in East Park. The additions and the 400-blocks were bisected by South Enid Boulevard, which runs north-south. Originally, the street also separated the predominantly white Southern Heights neighborhood from the predominantly black East Park Addition. The jog in the east-west running streets also provided a small but distinct physical boundary between the two neighborhoods. The Residential development in the area is characterized by a large number of modest Craftsman bungalows that were popular from the late 1910s into the 1930s.

## PROSPERITY AND THE 1920s

As hundreds of people flocked to Enid in search of greater employment opportunities in the wake of Oklahoma oil discoveries in the 1910s and 1920s, scores of new additions were platted. The building boom ensued and developers broadened their speculative horizons and began platting new subdivisions in heretofore outlying or less-desirable areas of the city. In 1920, property owner F.H. Krause and surveyor B.F. Lewis platted the Rock Island Heights Addition, a narrow ribbon of land that extended south and west of the Southern Heights Addition, with the Rock Island Railroad lying immediately to the west. Although the addition contained 18 blocks, most consisted of two to six lots. The bulk of the addition lay between Wabash Avenue on the north and Frantz Avenue on the south, and between South Second and South Third streets on the west and east, respectively (Figure 16). Platted primarily as a

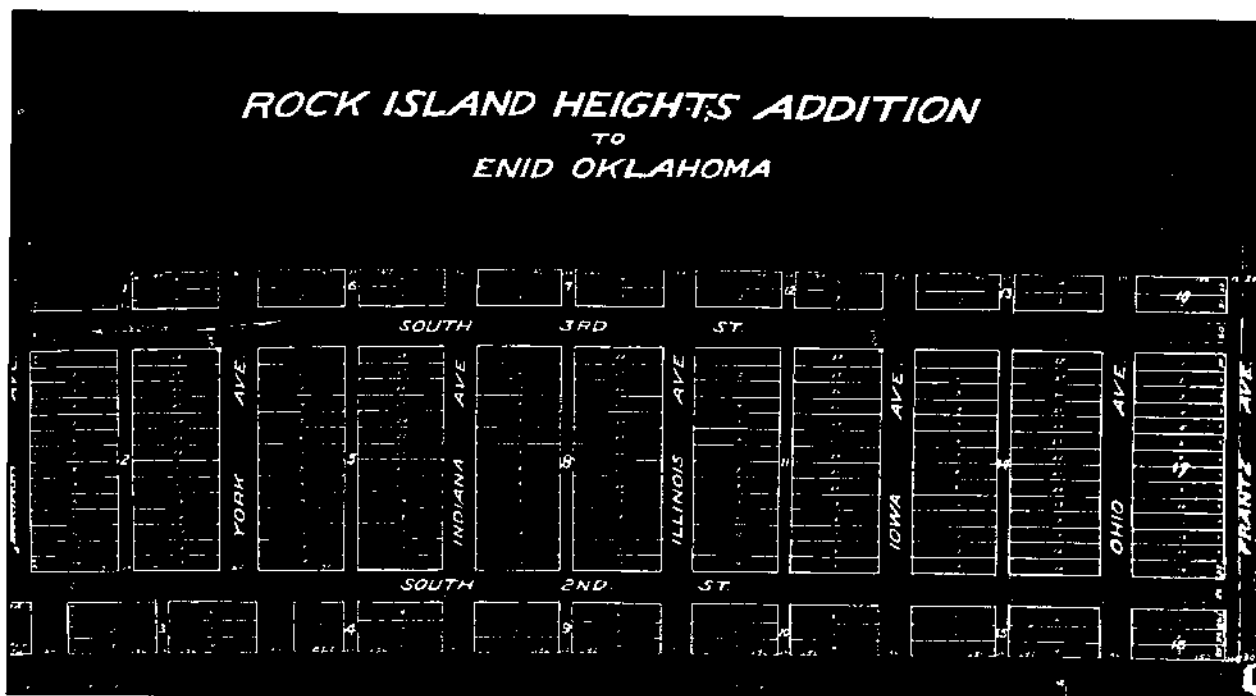


Figure 16. Rock Island Heights Addition, ca 1920.

residential district, the lots adjoining the Rock Island Railroad tended toward more commercial or industrial use.

The following year, John M. Rush and surveyor B.F. Lewis platted a second residential addition on the city's south side in 1921. Consisting of 12 blocks with between 10 and 24 lots apiece, Southern

Heights Second Addition (Figure 17), was a southerly continuation of Bruce Sanders and George P. Rush's earlier addition. Spanning both sides of East York Avenue on the north, and both sides of East Ohio Avenue on the south, the addition ranged from South Enid Boulevard on the east to within two lots of South Third Street on the west. The western-most lots of each block were contained within the Rock Island Heights Addition.

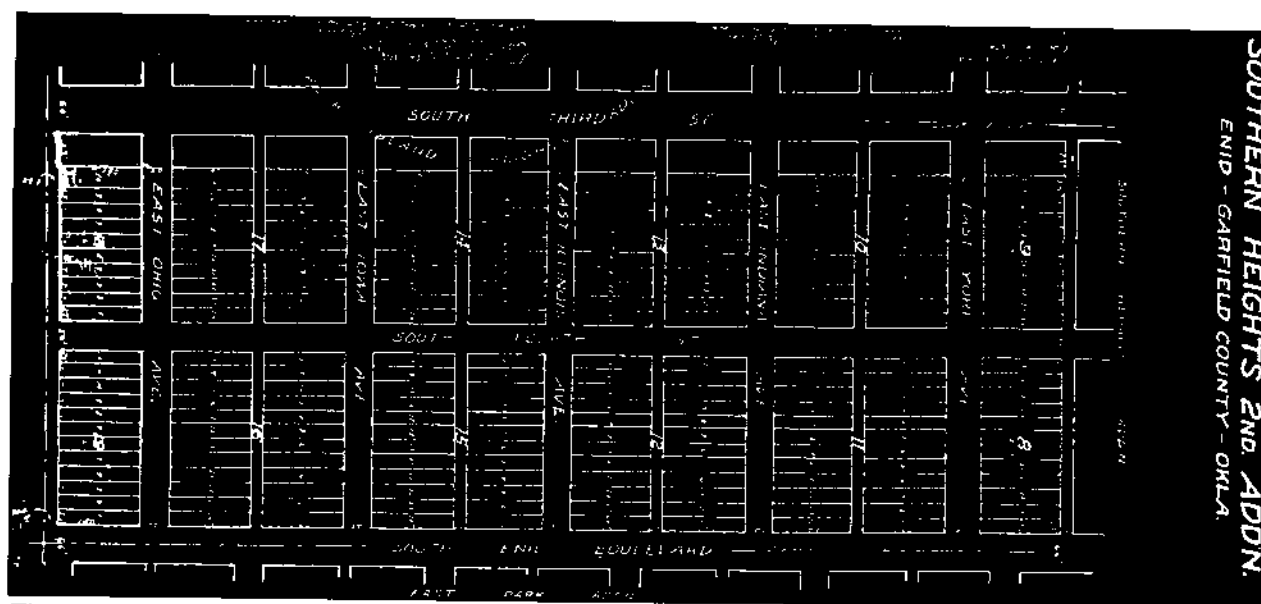


Figure 17. Southern Heights Second Addition, 1921.

After World War I, Enid's economic outlook was bright with new residential additions opening throughout the city. City directories that year identify only two black churches, the African Methodist Episcopal (AME), at the southeast corner of Seventh Street and East Park Avenue, and a Baptist Church at 420 S. Fourth, at the northwest corner of East Market. This was the predecessor of the present Grayson Missionary Baptist Church. Reverend William Humphrey had returned to the church in 1915 and organized the construction of a larger frame building on the site to accommodate the burgeoning congregation. Humphrey was still pastor when Grayson Chapel Baptist Church (AKA Second Baptist Church "Colored" and later Grayson Missionary Baptist Church) was erected in the late 1920s. No mention was made of the black Baptist Church on East Broadway. The Enid city directory noted that



the AME church had a membership of 60 and the pastor was Rev. L.J. Johnson who resided at 625 E. Oklahoma Avenue. Rev. W.L. Humphrey, who lived at 609 S. Eighth Street led the 100-member Baptist congregation at Grayson Chapel. Although the notation in the 1919 directory claimed that the Baptist church was organized in 1913, it had been listed in the 1912 directory.

Despite their apparent community gains and Enid's generally good economic outlook, the city's black residents lived in less-than-favorable circumstances compared with whites in 1920. Mary Harris Umstead (Figure 18) who moved to Enid to teach at Washington School about 1919, described living conditions for blacks at that time as "dismal". She stated that none of the homes had running water or plumbed bathtubs and that "Negro homes here were miserably shabby". She recalled that there was "one [black] lawyer, one doctor, one cafe , several 'Two Street' gamblers, prostitutes. And our city, so far as we were concerned, was a very unsavory place to live in" (Umstead correspondence, n.d.).



Figure 18. Mary Harris and Students, ca. 1915

By the end of the 1910s, a second black community had developed to the north of the original townsite along the railroad tracks. By 1918, the communities population was large enough to support a separate black school in the Douglas Addition, north of Chestnut Street, along North Johnson Street, in the northwest part of Enid. Douglas School offered grades one through eight but only operated for two years, from 1918 to 1920. Lalla Johnson was the teacher (Vertical files, Enid Public Library). The following year, a new Booker T. Washington High School opened at its present location in the 800 block of South Fifth Street and Douglas School students rode a small jitney school bus across town to the new school (Edson, 1988: A-3).

Washington School was also identified in the 1919 city directory at the northeast corner of Sixth Street and East Market Avenue. Principal Henry Backstrom headed a staff of four black educators: Bertha T. Bailey, Mrs. Leona Jones, Birdie Clark and A.H. Harrison. In contrast to the small black school staff, there were seven white elementary schools and a white high school with more than 30 teachers in 1919 (City directory, 1919).

When Miss Harris, who later married Louis Umstead, arrived in Enid, Washington School did not include a high school for black students and concerned parents worked hard to persuade the school board to sanction a senior high school program for their children. According to Mrs. Umstead, the "good school fathers" did not want to build a black high school for Enid; when they finally conceded, there was disagreement as to where the new school would be built. Some black educators, including Mrs. Umstead, wanted to build the new school in "the locust tree park, to south of Oklahoma Street, between 8th and 9th streets". Others prevailed and the school was located in what Mrs. Umstead called "the Black Belt", in East Park Addition, at that time only a "swampy weed patch" (Umstead correspondence, n.d.).

Washington School ultimately became the focal point of Enid's black community and its first high school graduation was cause for celebration. Notable Enid architect R.W. Shaw designed the 1921 building constructed by Bass and Frankenfeld (Figure 19)(Figure 20). In 1926, an addition was built to



Figure 19. Booker T Washington School, ca. 1922.

the rear of the original building. R.W. Shaw also designed the addition built by P.H. Frankenfeld (Figure 21). In 1951, contractor Perry C. Davis remodeled the building from plans drawn by the firm of Wheeler and Wheeler (Vertical files, Enid Public Library). Most of the remodeling consisted of modernization and safety features and the building retains its original 1921 appearance to a large degree.

The commencement program for 1922 commemorated the occasion as “the First ever [black high school graduation] in this City”. Guest speakers included E.H. Hall, principal of Washington High School in Hennessey, Oklahoma, and Rev. L.J. Johnson, pastor of the AME Church in Guthrie. The graduating class consisted of four students: Priscilla A Baker, Faye C. Barber, Lucile L. Ross and Lewis A. Edwards, class valedictorian. Principal Louis J. Umstead headed Washington High School’s teaching staff which included Leona B. Jones, Mary E. Harris and W.W. Graham, who headed the Manual Training and Science departments (Vertical files, Enid Public School). As educators, Louis Umstead (Figure 22) and his wife, Mary Harris Umstead, became leaders within the growing black community. They bought a large American Foursquare house (Figure 14) at 222 E. Park Avenue (razed) where they rented rooms to others. Most teachers at Washington School—and later at Carver—were graduates of Langston College, now Langston University, near Guthrie, Oklahoma.

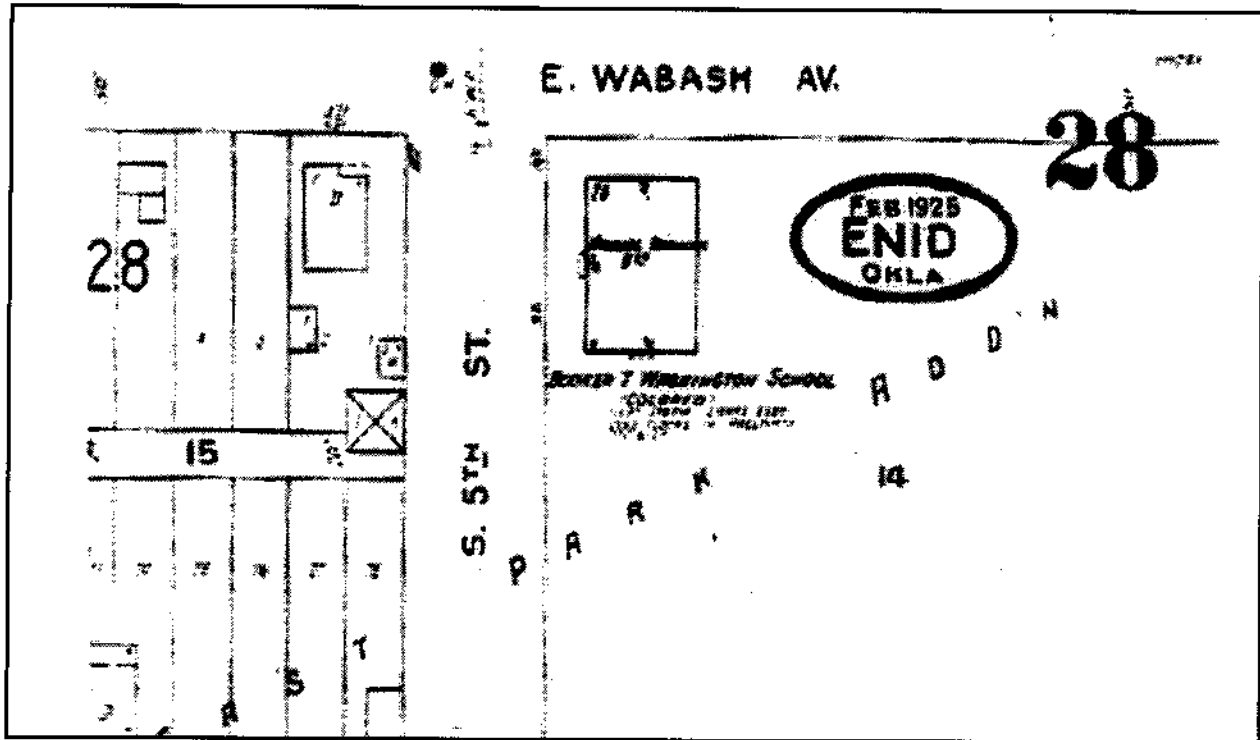


Figure 20. Booker T. Washington "Manual Training" School 1921-1926 (Sanborn Map, 1925)

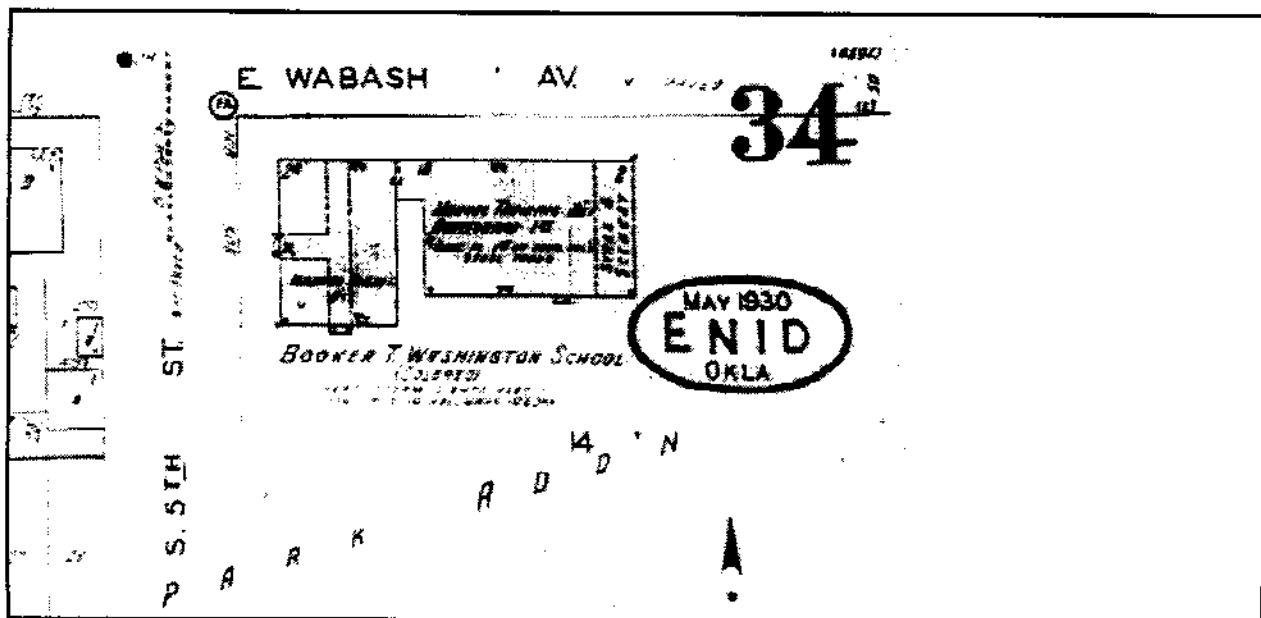


Figure 21. Booker T. Washington and Auditorium Addition, 1926 (Sanborn Map, 1930)