

## THE FIRST INDIAN TERRITORY—OKLAHOMA BRANCH OF AMERICAN RED CROSS. THE FIRST OKLAHOMA STATE BOARD OF THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

By Fred S. Clinton, M.D., F. A. C. S.

The American National Red Cross was chartered by Act of Congress approved January 5, 1905, with Headquarters in Washington, D. C.

In 1905, Dr. Fred S. Clinton, of Tulsa Indian Territory, made application to the Executive Committee of the American National Red Cross at Washington, D. C. through their National Secretary, Mr. C. L. Magee for the establishment of a Branch of the American Red Cross in the Indian Territory.

With the cooperation of valuable friends in high places this Indian Territory Branch was completed early in 1906 under the authority of the National Organization. The *Red Cross Bulletin* for October, 1906 listed the Indian Territory Branch applying for membership. In the *Annual Report for 1906*, the Indian Territory Branch is listed in the "Roster of the Officers of the Various State and Territorial Branches" as follows, quote:

President	Dr. F. B. Fite	Muskogee	Indian Territory
Vice Presidents	Hon. D. H. Johnston	Milburn	Chief Chickasaw Nation
	Hon. John Brown	Sasakwa	Chief Seminole Nation
	Hon. W. C. Rogers	Skiatook	Chief Cherokee Nation
	Hon. Green McCurtain	Sans Bois	Chief Choctaw Nation
	General P. Porter	Muskogee	Chief Creek Nation
Secretary	Dr. Fred S. Clinton	Tulsa	Indian Territory
Treasurer	J. H. McBirney	Tulsa	Indian Territory

From 1905 on, the political ferment for statehood was quite active. So the newly organized Indian Territory Branch of the American Red Cross desired to avoid political activities or repercussions and took advantage of an act of Congress, approved January 5, 1905, authorizing an Officer of the Army stationed in a state or territory where a Red Cross Branch exists to be designated by the War Department to audit the accounts of the Branch upon the request of Red Cross Authority. The accounts were inspected, audited and found in order in Tulsa, Indian Territory, November 16th, 1906 by James Longstreet, 1st Lieutenant, 13th Cavalry, Recruiting Officer, Oklahoma.

Statehood seemed in the offing and changes in the political structure here and in the National Organization inspired cautious and conservative methods in developing this wonderful organization of trained voluntary service to suddenly distressed humanity, not otherwise provided for. When statehood arrived the jurisdiction and authority of the Indian Territory Branch of the American Red Cross was extended over the State of Oklahoma. On December 7, 1909 the American Red Cross promulgated the Revised By-laws

in *Circular No. 3*, issued by the Central Committee, January 1, 1910, titled "Instructions to the Officers of Red Cross Organizations". This outlined the expected reorganization to meet changing conditions. Much preparation and some education had paved the way.

The secretary of the Oklahoma Branch had full freedom of action at home and the complete confidence and magnificent support of the National Organization in the delicate task of shaping up to satisfactory completion a carefully chosen group of distinguished citizens for recommendation to be appointed by the Central Committee of the American Red Cross to membership of the first Oklahoma State Board of the American Red Cross, as follows:

President	Hon. Lee Cruce	Governor
Treasurer	Dennis T. Flynn	Oklahoma City
Secretary	Miss Kate Barnard	Oklahoma City
	M. S. Blassingame	Sallisaw
	William Busby	McAlester
	Seymour C. Heyman	Oklahoma City
	Charles Page	Tulsa
	H. B. Spaulding	Muskogee

"This was the first State Board in Oklahoma", according to Miss Robina Rae, Librarian, National Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

The Indian Territory Branch of the American Red Cross was the authorized representative of the National Organization in the Indian Territory and in the State of Oklahoma. Then came the first State Board which closed the peace time organization and brought in the first War Oklahoma State Board of Red Cross and the Tulsa Chapter. (Jurisdiction, counties of Tulsa, Creek, Pawnee, Osage, Rogers, Washington, Nowata.)

From

AMERICAN RED CROSS

*Directory of State Boards and Chapters*

March 15, 1916

Oklahoma

STATE BOARD

President	Gov. R. L. Williams	Oklahoma City
Treasurer	J. J. McGraw	Ponca City
Secretary	Miss Kate Barnard	Oklahoma City
	M. S. Blassingame	Sallisaw
	Anton H. Classen	Oklahoma City
	Dr. D. M. Hailey	McAlester
	Charles Page	Tulsa
	H. B. Spaulding	Muskogee

From  
*American Red Cross  
Directory of Chapters*  
September 1, 1916  
Oklahoma

**TULSA CHAPTER.** (Jurisdiction, counties of Tulsa, Creek, Pawnee, Osage, Rogers, Washington, Nowata.)

<b>CHAIRMAN</b>	Roger Kemp	Tulsa
<b>Vice-Chair.</b>	J. P. Flanagan	Tulsa
<b>Treasurer</b>	Earl Sinclair	Tulsa Exch. Natl. Bank
<b>Secretary</b>	C. E. Buchner	Tulsa, Y. M. C. A.

From  
Tulsa County in the World War (History, 1919)  
Tulsa County Chapter

In December, 1917, and March 1918, a complete reorganization took place with the following officers and Executive Committee; E. R. Kemp, chairman; Clint Moore, vice-chairman; E. W. Sinclair, treasurer; W. L. Connelly, secretary; Mrs. R. L. McMinn, assistant secretary; C. E. Buchner, A. L. Farmer, T. J. Hartman, S. Jankowsky, W. R. Guiberson, W. S. Chochran, D. W. Franchot, J. H. Evans, Mrs. John R. Wheeler, Mrs. J. B. Robinson, Mrs. W. N. Sill, Mrs. E. G. Dawes, Mrs. W. I. Williams, Mrs. N. J. Gubser, Mrs. Preston C. West, and E. A. Wilcox, Rev. J. G. Reynolds, Broken Arrow; V. A. Schieffelbusch, Sand Springs; Mrs. L. L. Wiles, Skiatook, and Mrs. Ord Neville, Jenks.

The above distinguished pioneers were endowed with vision, imagination, independence, intelligence, integrity, industry and willingness to give help to persons known to be in distress.

Comparatively few responsible people will volunteer to invest themselves, their time, talents, money and other resources in a new or old humanitarian enterprise in a new country to prevent or fight dirt, disease, distress, death or disaster in the manner of the Good Samaritan to prevent or mitigate the suffering and horrors inseparably associated with war, wrecks, storms, floods, fires, famine, earthquakes, riots, mine disasters, pestilence, cold, heat, and drouth at home and abroad.

The Christian character and practical democratic non-political principles practiced by the Red Cross is world wide and recognized among all intelligent people whether civilized or uncivilized.

Will James says: "The great use of a life is to spend it for something that outlasts it." Florence Nightingale (1820-1910) the Angel of the Crimean War, the Lady with the Lamp, Jean Henri Dunant (1828-1910) the Founder of the Red Cross and Clara Barton (1821-1912) the unsung heroine of the United States Civil War and the Founder of the American Red Cross have through their sacrifice and suffering in providing professional and social service

to meet human needs in catastrophe during peace or war and in establishing organized humanitarian methods of saving lives earned the shining crown of Immortality.

Thus ends the first planned brief recital of the beginning of the great American Red Cross development in this rapidly expanding history conscious state.

To a proud citizen of this country the Tulsa County Chapter should be mentioned as a model and standard for any similar unit to adopt as working pattern in any highly developed and intelligent community.

Let us hope the little acorn planted in the Indian Territory—Oklahoma area in early 1905 will continue to grow into a mighty oak with many useful branches which flower and fruit like the 1943 Red Cross.