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:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>President</th>
<th>Dr. F. B. Fite</th>
<th>Muskogee</th>
<th>Indian Territory</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vice Presidents</td>
<td>Hon. D. H. Johnston</td>
<td>Milburn</td>
<td>Chief Chickasaw Nation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hon. John Brown</td>
<td>Sasakwa</td>
<td>Chief Seminole Nation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hon. W. C. Rogers</td>
<td>Skiatook</td>
<td>Chief Cherokee Nation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hon. Green McCurtain</td>
<td>Sans Bois</td>
<td>Chief Choctaw Nation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>General P. Porter</td>
<td>Muskogee</td>
<td>Chief Creek Nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Dr. Fred S. Clinton</td>
<td>Tulsa</td>
<td>Indian Territory</td>
</tr>
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<td>J. H. McBirney</td>
<td>Tulsa</td>
<td>Indian Territory</td>
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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
- **Treasurer**: Dennis T. Flynn
- **Secretary**: Miss Kate Barnard
- **Governor**: Oklahoma City
- **Treasurer**: J. J. McGraw
- **Secretary**: Miss Kate Barnard
- **Governor**: Ponca City
- **Treasurer**: Oklahoma City
- **Secretary**: Oklahoma City
- **Governor**: Oklahoma City
- **Treasurer**: Sallisaw
- **Secretary**: Oklahoma City
- **Governor**: McAlester
- **Treasurer**: Oklahoma City
- **Secretary**: Oklahoma City
- **Governor**: Oklahoma City
- **Treasurer**: Tulsa
- **Secretary**: Tulsa
- **Governor**: 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
- **Treasurer**: J. J. McGraw
- **Secretary**: Miss Kate Barnard
- **Governor**: Oklahoma City
- **Treasurer**: Oklahoma City
- **Secretary**: Oklahoma City
- **Governor**: Sallisaw
- **Treasurer**: Oklahoma City
- **Secretary**: McAlester
- **Governor**: Oklahoma City
- **Treasurer**: Tulsa
- **Secretary**: Muskogee
From
American Red Cross
Directory of Chapters
September 1, 1916
Oklahoma

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

CHAIRMAN Roger Kemp
Vice-Chair. J. P. Flanagan
Treasurer Earl Sinclair
Secretary C. E. Buchner

Tulsa, Y. M. C. A.

From
Tulsa County in the World War (Hiistory, 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.

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS
THE DIARY OF SUE McBETH
A Missionary to the Choctaws, 1860-1861
Edited by Anna Lewis

This Diary was made available by Miss Mary Crawford of Lapawai, Idaho. Miss Crawford is a niece of Miss McBeth and at the death of her aunt, took over her work with the Nez Perce in Idaho. Miss McBeth collected historical materials and kept a diary with the idea of writing a history of the Choctaw missions and missionaries. She came to the Choctaw Nation as a missionary in the spring of 1860. She was sent to the Goodwater mission and here she worked almost a year and a half until the Civil War forced her to leave the Indian territory. She never, however, lost her interest in the Choctaws. Students of Oklahoma history will be interested in the following selections from the diary which she kept at Goodwater:

"Good-Water" April 16, 1860 (Beginning of the Journal)
A few minutes ago I came down the long yard which separates my log cabin from the mission house, passing on my way the work room where Miss G. is teaching our Indian girls to sew and glancing in, saw their dusky faces around her at their work. Standing on my rude porch, looking down into the deep forest that skirts my home, I ask myself, "Is this a reality or am I dreaming still? Dreaming as when in the long ago I sat upon rocks left bare upon the sands of the Ohio at low water. Rocks covered with hieroglyphics traces by Indians when their tribes possessed the land felt such sorrow for the vanished race and thought that if God spared me to be a woman I would go to the handful that remained and tell them of Jesus and show them the ways to a home from which they could never be driven out. But the sweet melodious voices of the Indian girls, singing "Happy Land," after they have folded

1 See Anna Lewis (editor). "Letters Regarding Choctaw Missions and Missionaries," Chronicles of Oklahoma (Oklahoma City), vol. 19, 275ff.