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## "Veni, Vidi, Vici"

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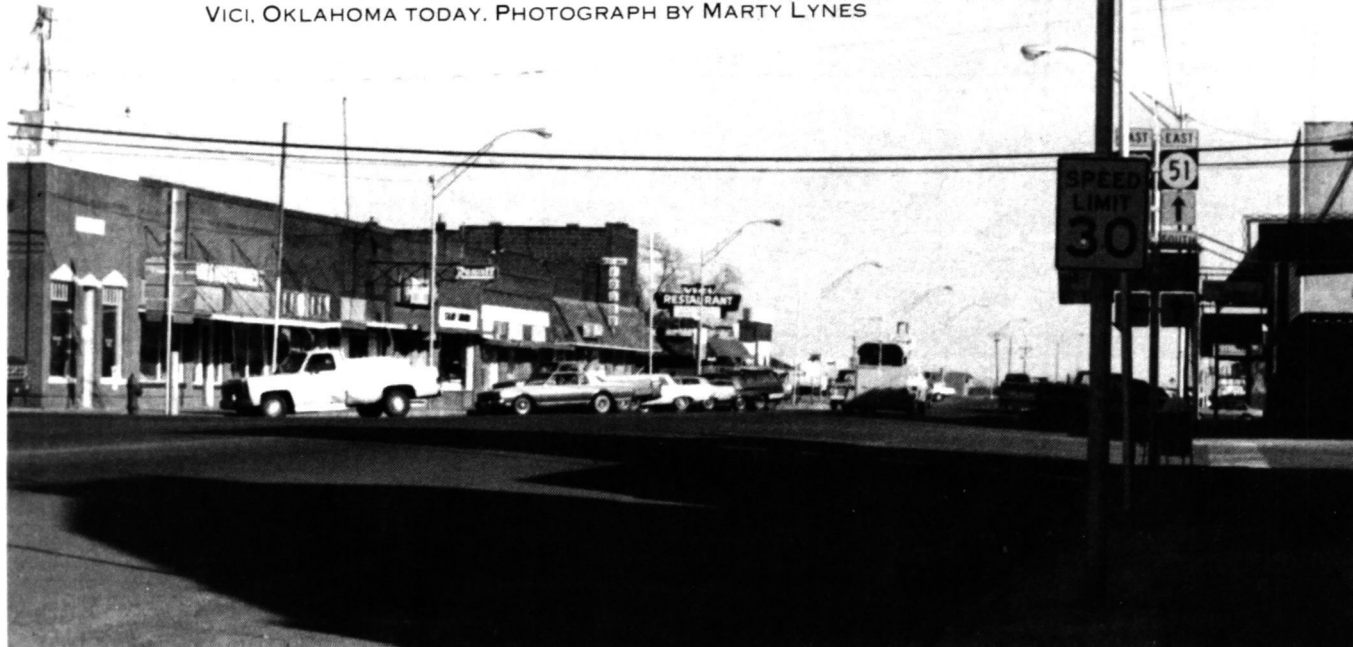


a SOSU student's view of his hometown

# "VENI, VIDI, VICI"

BY MARTY LYNES

VICI, OKLAHOMA TODAY. PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTY LYNES



STANDING AT A HEIGHT OF 2208 FEET ABOVE SEA LEVEL IS THE SMALL RURAL TOWN VICI. VICI IS LOCATED ON ONE OF THE HIGHEST POINTS BETWEEN THE NORTH AND SOUTH CANADIAN RIVERS. THE TOWN WAS BEGUN ON FEBRUARY 1, 1899, WITH ALBERT VINCENT RECEIVING A CERTIFICATE ESTABLISHING A POST OFFICE 2½ MILES EAST OF THE PRESENT TOWNSITE.

VICI RECEIVED ITS NAME FROM THE WORDS OF JULIUS CAESAR--"VENI, VIDI, VICI"--"I CAME, I SAW, I CONQUERED." THERE BEING NO LATIN SCHOLAR PRESENT, THE *Vici* WAS PRONOUNCED *Vī-si* (LIKE THE KID ON THE SHOE BOX OF THE GENERAL STORE) AND NOT *Wicky* (AS PRONOUNCED IN LATIN.)

THE NEW TOWN VICI WAS BEGINNING TO PROSPER WHEN ON MAY 10, 1908, IT FELL TO DESTRUCTION BY A TORNADO. FORTUNATELY, NO LIVES WERE LOST, BUT ONLY BECAUSE THE TOWNSPEOPLE HUDDLED INTO A LOCAL CAVE. THE TOWN WAS QUICKLY RECONSTRUCTED BY LOCAL BUSINESSMEN WHO IMMEDIATELY REBUILT THEIR ESTABLISHMENTS.

BETWEEN 1911 AND 1912, VICI'S STATUS CHANGED WITH THE SURVEYING OF THE WICHITA FALLS AND NORTHWESTERN RAILROAD, WHICH

LATER BECAME THE KATY. THE TRACK WAS LAID A HALF MILE NORTH OF THE "OLD VICI" TOWNSITE. THE TOWNSPEOPLE WERE EXCITED ABOUT THE IDEA OF A RAILROAD AND A PROSPERING NEW COMMUNITY. SINCE THE RAILROAD WAS QUITE A DISTANCE FROM THE ORIGINAL SITE, THE TOWN WAS RELOCATED TO "NEW VICI." RELOCATION WAS ACCOMPLISHED BY PUTTING AXLES WITH WOODEN WHEELS UNDER THE BUILDINGS AND PULLING THEM WITH TEAMS HOOKED TO A BLOCK AND TACKLE. ALTHOUGH IT WAS A DIFFICULT TASK, THE DETERMINATION OF THESE WESTERN OKLAHOMA SETTLERS HELPED THEM TO RE-ESTABLISH THEIR TOWN.

THE FIRST BUILDING TO BE CONSTRUCTED IN "NEW VICI" WAS THE TOWNSITE LAND OFFICE BUILDING ERECTED BY MR. KELL AND MR. KENT, OWNERS OF THE VICI TOWNSITE.

VICI HAS ALWAYS RELIED ON FARMING FOR ITS LIVELIHOOD. EVEN WITH THE FARMING INDUSTRY DECLINING, VICI STILL MANAGES TO PROSPER JUST AS IT DID SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO AT THE TIME OF ITS RELOCATION. NOW 802 STRONG, THE TOWN STILL RELIES ON THE SAME TRADITION AND DETERMINATION TO SURVIVE. 