



7-15-1982

Oklahoma Towns Honor Animals

Opal Hartsell Brown Garrity

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview>

Recommended Citation

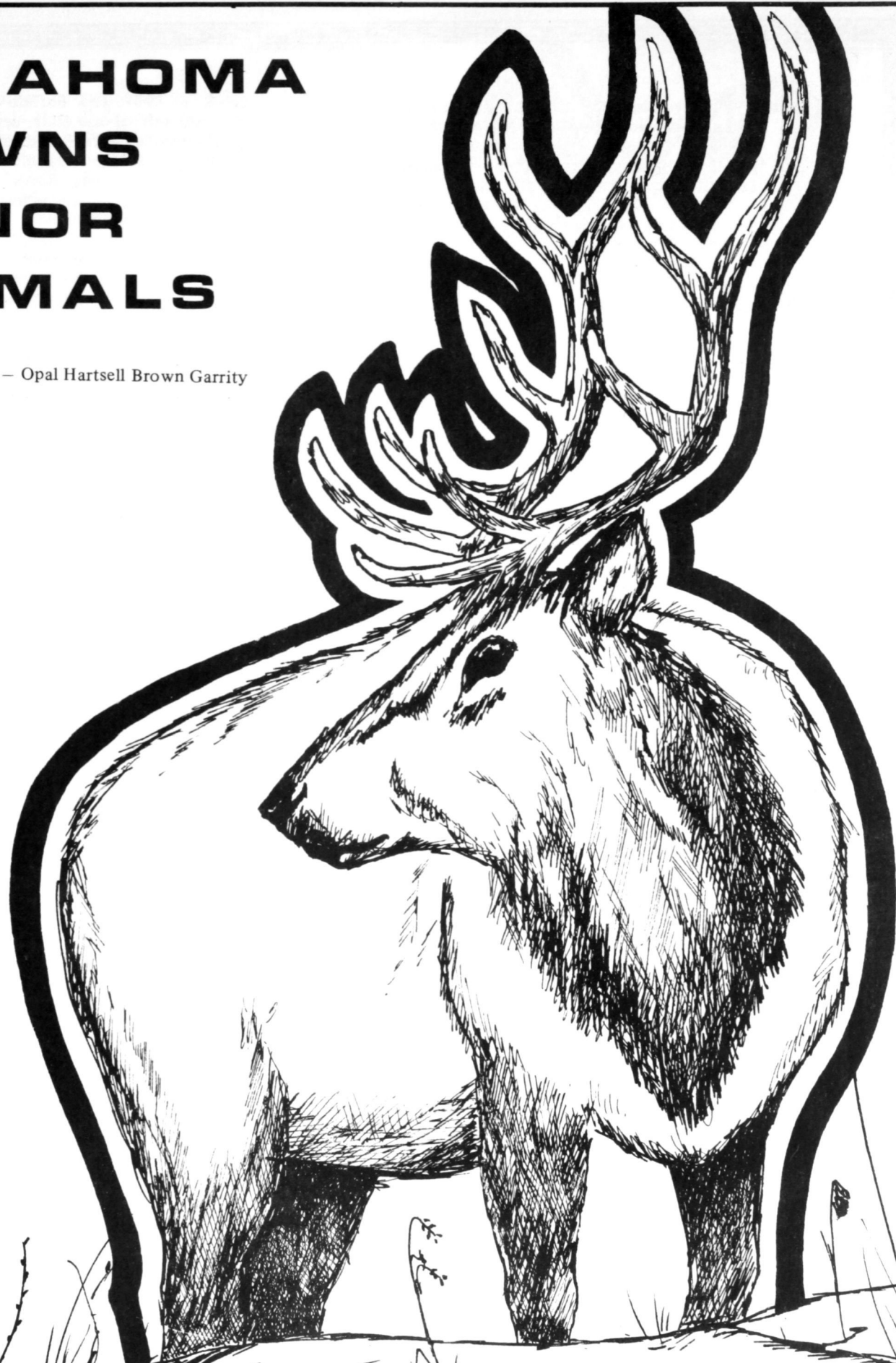
Brown Garrity, Opal Hartsell (1982) "Oklahoma Towns Honor Animals," *Westview*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 4 , Article 15.
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol1/iss4/15>

This Nonfiction is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at SWOSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Westview by an authorized administrator of SWOSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu.



OKLAHOMA TOWNS HONOR ANIMALS

— Opal Hartsell Brown Garrity



33

Ever wonder why the nuclear plant east of Tulsa is called "Black Fox"? Sixty or more towns in Oklahoma honor animals by wearing their names in at least five languages. Listen to the euphony:

Wolf, Wauhillau, and Wildcat; Angora, Antelope, and Antlers.

When this country was opened officially to people last century, animals were so numerous and important to life, settlers tagged creeks, towns, and geographical sites for them.

Wolf on Highway 99 two miles south of Bowlegs became large enough to have a post office from 1903 to 1907. It is now a ghost town. Still in existence is the village of Nashoba, Choctaw for "wolf." Eleven miles east of Tuskahoma, it was established in 1886.

Wauhillau, meaning eagle, comes from the Cherokee word awa'hili. One of the earliest established towns, 1879, it was located in western Adair County ten miles northwest of Stilwell and lasted until about 1935.

Wildcat, eleven miles southeast of Okmulgee, was in wildcat country. It was granted a post office in 1897. In 1902, the name was changed to Grayson in honor of George W. Grayson, a Creek tribal leader, and was discontinued in 1929.

Angora, six miles west of Leedey in Roger Mills County, was so named for a herd of Angora goats owned by a local resident. Another ghost town, its post office lasted from 1902 until 1914.

There have been two Antelopes. The first, which lasted less than a year - March 13 - December 2, 1891 - was six miles northeast of Guthrie in Logan County. It was named for Antelope Creek. The second town, named for Antelope Hills, was in Roger Mills County in the western part of the state. Its post office lasted from 1893 until 1908.

Antlers, still in existence, is located in Southeast Oklahoma. Its name is believed to have derived from the antlers of a deer used to mark a spring and campground nearby. A Record Town for the Indian Territory and later county seat of Pushmataha County, it was established in 1887.

Eagle and buffalo were the most frequently honored animals. Besides Waunillau, there were Eagle County in Apukshunnubbee District of the Choctaw Nation; Eagle in Craig County, 1890 - 1906; Eagle Chief in Southwest Alfalfa County, 1894 - 1895; Eagle City in Western Blaine County, 1909.

Also, Eagle Point, later Lequire, in Southern Haskell County, established in 1901, and Eagletown in Southeast McCurtain County. Still in existence, Eagletown was established in 1834 by the Choctaws and named for the many eagles which nested in nearby swamps.

For the buffalo were the ghost town of Buffalo in Texas County, 1888 - 1902; Buffalo in Harper County named for Buffalo

Creek in 1907, and Buffalo Station on the opposite side of the state, seven miles south of Haileyville. Established in 1867, it was an important stage stop after the Civil War.

Then there were Bison, Skiatook, and Yanush. Bison, fifteen miles south of Enid, was named for Buffalo Springs nearby. Skiatook, meaning "buffalo," is thirteen miles north of Tulsa. It was named for a prominent Osage who, doubtless, was named for the animal. Yanush, a Choctaw word for buffalo, was in Latimer County, six miles north of Tuskahoma. It lasted from 1911 to 1925.

Beaver, still an abundant species, was a popular name. The town was named for Beaver River in 1883 and is the county seat of Beaver County in the Panhandle. Beavers Bend State Park, six miles north of Broken Bow, was named for an intermarried Choctaw. Beaversville in McClain County was old Camp Arbuckle.

When Ft. Arbuckle was established eight miles west of present Davis in 1851, the old camp was given to Black Beaver, A Delaware scout, and his people. Beaver was named for the animal. The camp is no longer in existence. Kinta, meaning beaver, was established in Southern Haskell County in 1902.

The elk was recognized in Elk, Elk City, and Elkton. Elk in Northern Carter County was established in 1890. Its name was changed to Pooleville in 1907. Elk City, since 1907, was previously Busch. It is in Northern Beckham County. Elkton, now a ghost site, existed in Alfalfa County from 1899 to 1909.

Deer Creek, named for a nearby stream in 1899, is twelve miles east of Medford. Chilocco is from the Creek words tei lako, meaning big deer. Its post office was established in present Kay County in 1889.

Others pertaining to deer include Buck, Buckhead, and Buckhorn. Fawn, eight miles southeast of Checotah, existed from 1898 to 1916.

In addition to Inola (black Fox) there were two others. Fox, eight miles north of Healdton in Carter County, was established in 1894 and remains intact. Chula, a Choctaw word for fox, was in McCurtain County from 1902 to 1904.

There have been Bear, Black Bear, and Bear's Glen; Tiger, Panther, and Civit; Coon, Sawakla, Opossum, and Otter. Yes, there were bears in this country - thousands of them.

Bear, three miles east and across the Canadian River from Calvin, lasted from 1911 until 1924. Black Bear, a community six miles northeast of Perry, got its name from a creek. Bear's Glen, a valley near the Arkansas River, was a campsite of Washington Irving when he toured Indian Country in 1832. It is now beneath the waters of Keystone Dam.

The Tigers came from the Indians by that

name, while Panther came directly from the animal. Located in Haskell County, the cats exist there to this day. Established in 1890, Panther is present-day McCurtain.

Civit came from the French civette and refers to a species of the cat. It was four miles northeast of Pauls Valley, 1903 - 1925.

Coon was named for a nearby creek in Northwestern Nowata County. Established in 1895, it became Wann in 1899. Sawokla means raccoon town. Established in 1902, it became Haskell in 1904.

Opossum, so called for a nearby creek in Western LeFlore County, was ten miles west of Shady Point. It lived from June 1881 to February 1882. Also named for a nearby creek was Otter, nine miles west of Kingfisher. It lived from 1892 to 1899.

Domestic animals came in for recognition: Mustang, Horse Creek, Cow Creek. . . And so did fowls, so abundant at times they blackened the skies: Owl, Kiamichi, Swan, Plover, Red Bird, Sasakwa, Lark, and Duckpond.

Owl was first Byrd, 1892, but is now Centrahoma, nine miles northwest of Coalgate. Kiamichi, a French word for Horned screamer, a species of bird, was six miles east of Tuskahoma. It had a post office from 1887 to 1962.

Plover, a shore bird, was seven miles west of Comanche from 1902 until 1904. Another town honoring the same bird was Pluver, in Southwestern Jefferson County. It existed from 1912 to 1914.

Red Bird, five miles southeast of Coweta, was founded in 1902, while Sasakwa, Creek for goose, was established in 1880. It is on the border of Hughes and Seminole counties.

Lark, nine miles south of Kingston, existed from 1889 to 1934. Duckpond was ten miles south of Beaver in the Panhandle. It lasted from 1906 to 1908.

Perhaps the place with the most unusual reason for its name was Frogville. Located nine miles southwest of Ft. Towson, it was said to have harbored so many large frogs they "ate young ducks." It lived from 1897 to 1933. ■



C. KAUFER