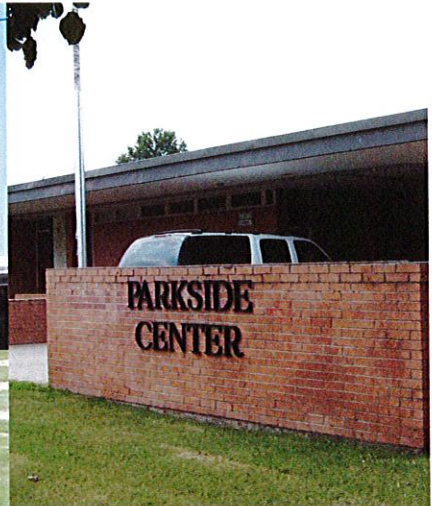
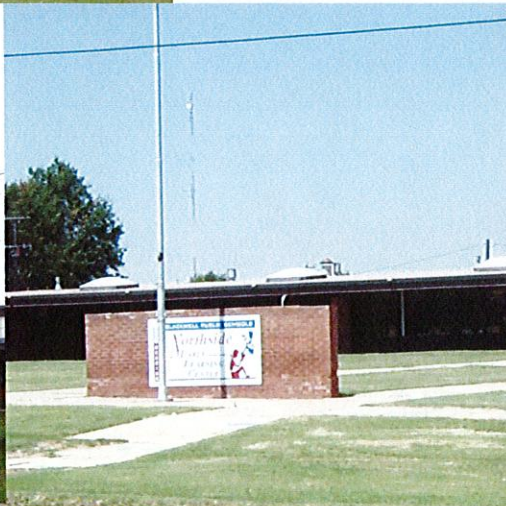


THE HISTORY

OF THE

BLACKWELL SCHOOL SYSTEM

Compiled by Myrna Dawn Tannehill-Oldham



THE HISTORY OF THE BLACKWELL SCHOOL SYSTEM

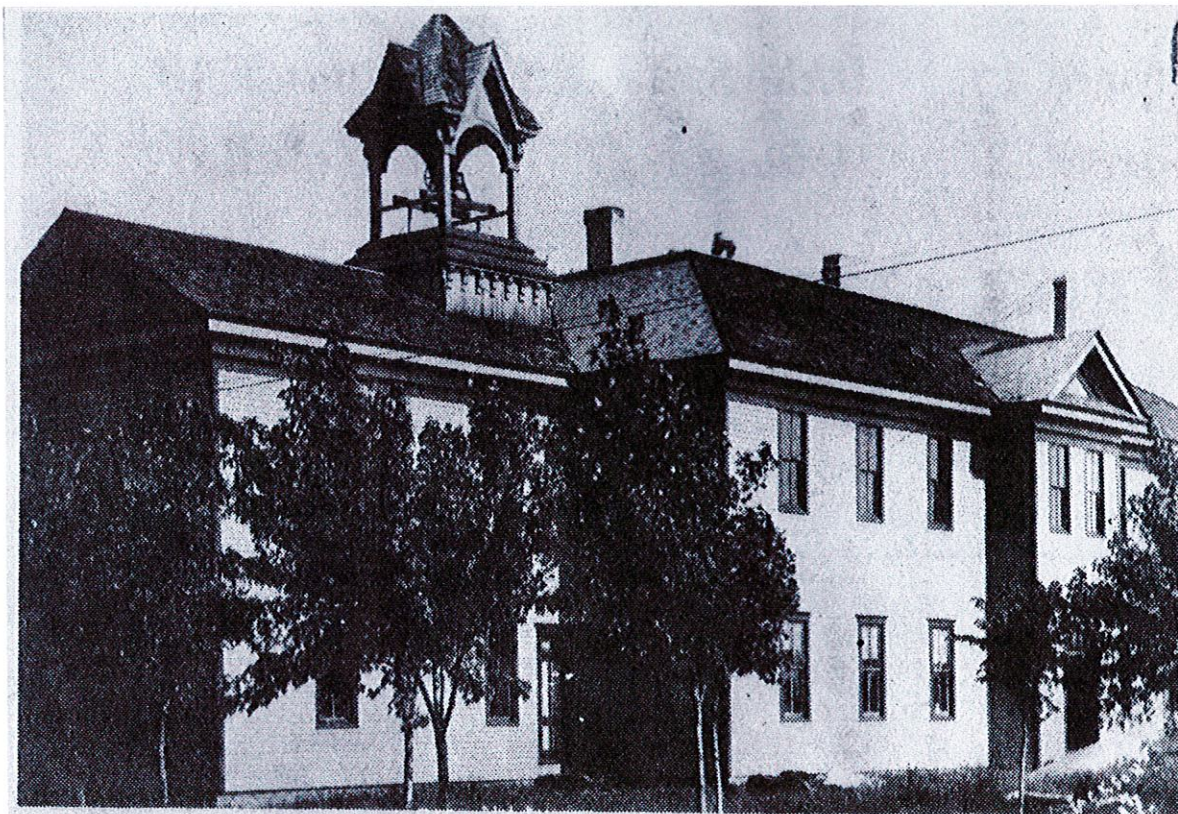
1893 - 2009

The first school taught in Blackwell – a three-months subscription school – was taught by Miss Lottie Jerome in a little 14-by-20-foot frame building that stood in the middle of the two hundred block on the east side of South Main. It began in December 1893 and was continued during January and February following.

In 1894, the county was divided into school districts three miles square and the numbering of three districts began at the northwest corner of the county. It was found that Blackwell was located in the north central part of district numbered 45 and this became the official number of the school district.

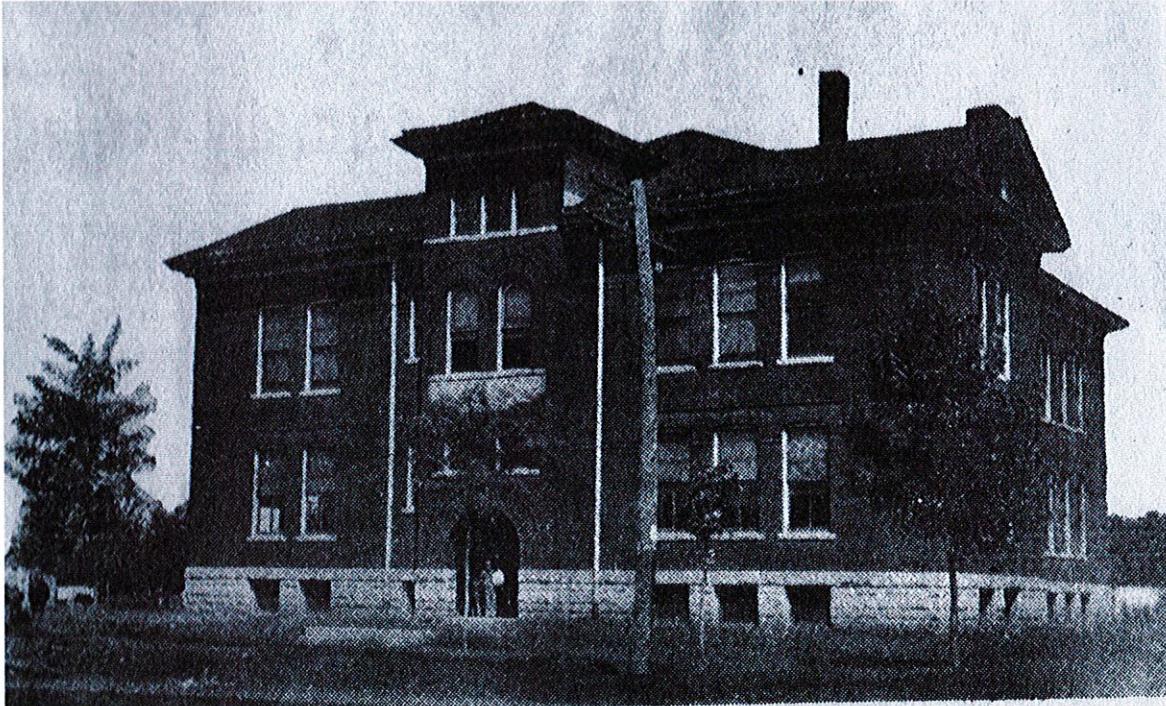
Early in 1895 the school district was formally organized with Dr. Padon as director, J.J. Carson treasurer and F.T. Berkey clerk. The town site company donated the east half of what is now the 300 block South Main. Bonds were voted, which after long negotiation, were bought by John Nuveen of Chicago, and a four room frame building was erected. This building was afterwards enlarged by an addition of four more rooms and finally by adding two more rooms.

In 1896 the high school department was added and the first classes were held in a corner of one of the upper rooms of this building, classes being separated by muslin partitions. In 1898 the first class was graduated from the high school and consisted of one person, Miss Nellie Beatty.



This old school, one of the first in Blackwell, was located on the east half of the lot that the Homeland building graces today. The school was built in 1895 and destroyed in 1912 to make way for a new school.

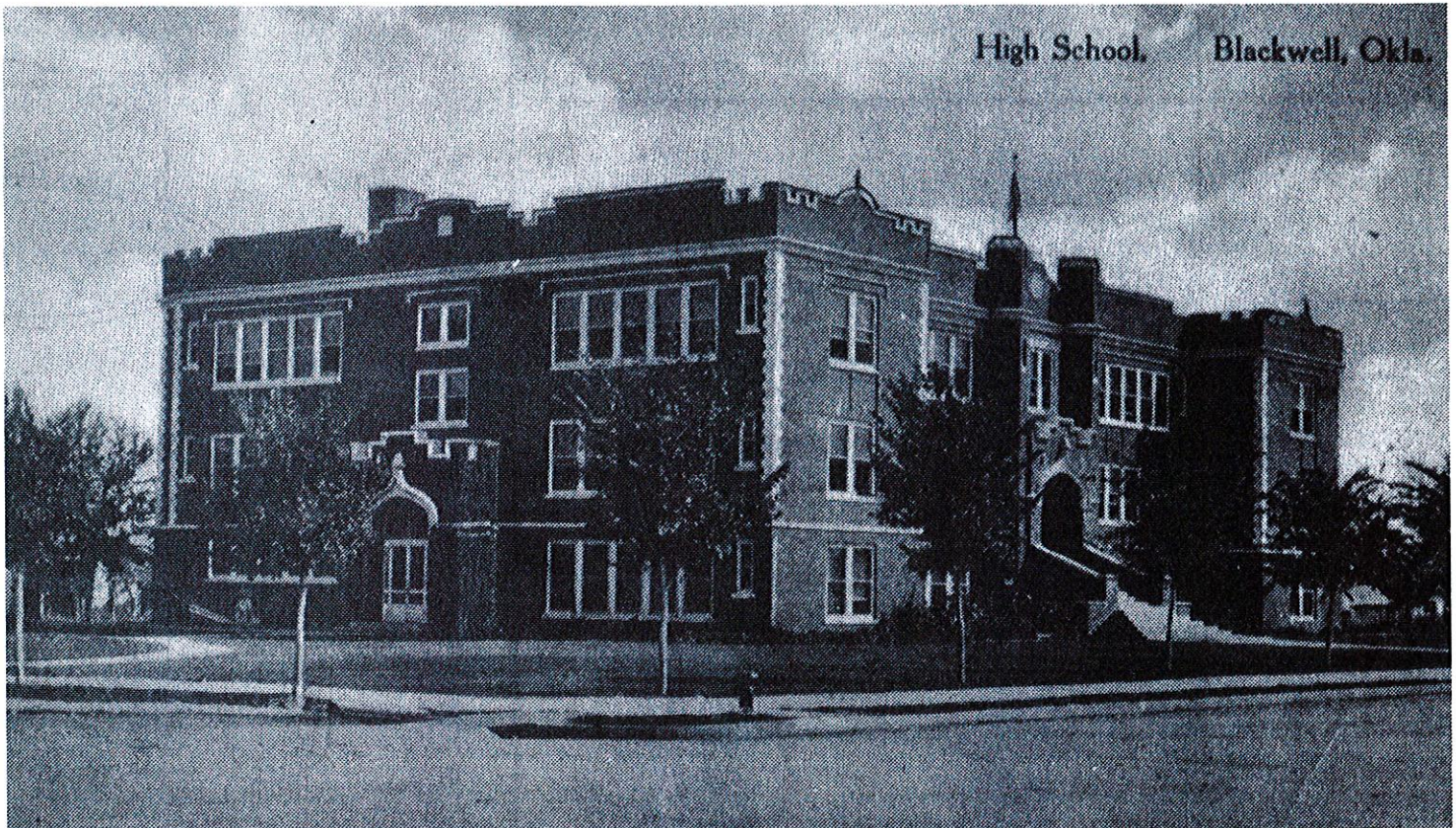
**CENTRAL SCHOOL
300 BLOCK WEST BLACKWELL AVENUE
1901**



In 1901, this school housed grades 8-9-10-11-12 upstairs, and grades 1-2-3-4 downstairs. At the same time grades 5-7 were being taught in a building on the lot where the Homeland building is today. After the school closed, the building was used for Camp Fire offices, Red Cross work and school administration functions. The building was destroyed in the 1950s.

Prior to 1908 the school had no definite course of study to follow on rules for promotion from one grade to another, no requirements for graduation, no correlation between the work of different teachers, in fact, each teacher was a law unto herself. No records were kept and not a report was made. In May of 1908 A.J. Lovett was elected superintendent under the direction of the board of education and, in conjunction with Dr. A.C. Parsons of the faculty of the University of Oklahoma, the work of organizing the schools into a definite system was begun. Courses of study and plans of organization of the best school systems of the state were studied. Records were introduced and kept in both grades and high school. The different grades were articulated with each other in such a way that no gaps were left between them and no overlappings were permitted. A definite course of study was adopted, teaching through the high school. The work for each teacher was outlined for each month of the year. By 1911 the work had been completed and the school was placed in the fully accredited list of the State University of Oklahoma. In the spring of 1912, the school was admitted to the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. This placed it among the first list of schools in the state to be so honored.

**BLACKWELL HIGH SCHOOL
1912 – 1936
LOVETT JUNIOR HIGH
1936 - 1962**

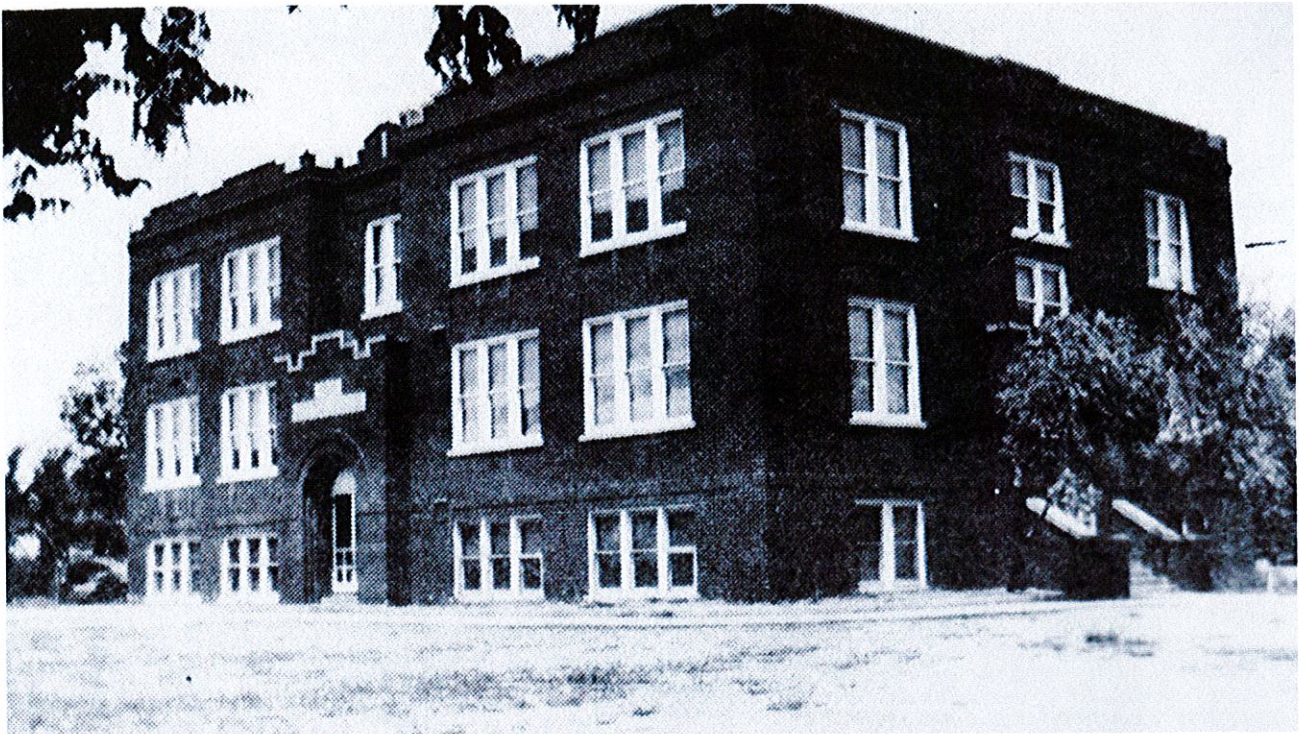


In 1911 bonds were voted for new school buildings and on July 4 ground was broken for the new high school building. This building was completed and opened in September 1912 in the 300 Block of South Main. This building served as Blackwell High School from September 1912 until January 1936. It was then Lovett Junior High until 1962.

With the opening of the school year of 1912, the department of Domestic Science was added to the high school and in 1916 a Manual Training Department was established, which under the able teachers who were in charge of it, became one of the outstanding departments of the entire system. A Normal Training Department was also established and to the graduates of that course belongs the honor of having issued to them the first Normal Training Teachers Certificate to be put out by the state.

In 1911 and again in 1912 the school took first place in the track and field meet at Stillwater. In 1914 our basketball team was declared the winner in the state and in 1927 BHS put out an all victorious football team. In 1916 the debate team won first place in the meet at Norman.

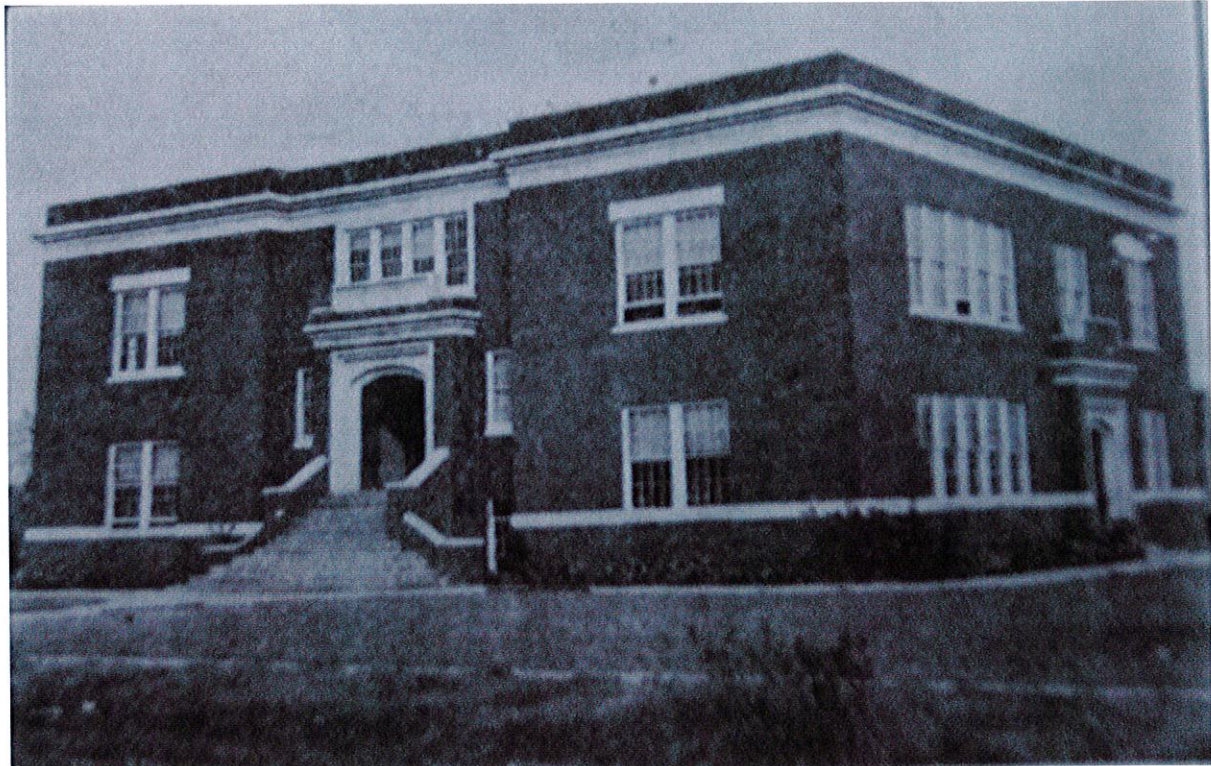
**LINCOLN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
800 BLOCK WEST BLACKWELL AVENUE
1911 - 1957**



In 1911 six rooms of Lincoln School were completed and school opened in September.
In 1917 four more rooms were added.

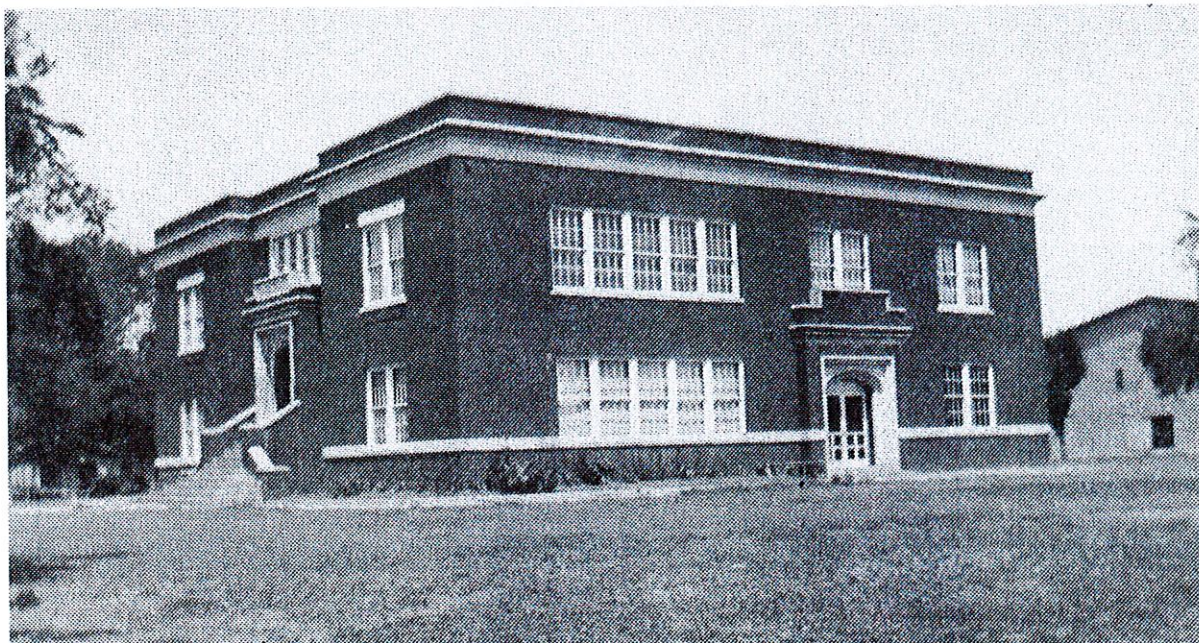
In 1918, because of the rapid growth of the city in the vicinity of the smelter, it was found necessary to construct a three-room frame building for the accommodation of pupils living in that vicinity. The rapidly increasing number of pupils made it necessary in 1920 to construct a number of one-room bungalows. Two were built on the Lincoln grounds and four on the high school grounds. The grade schools became so crowded that the board of education thought best to also construct a frame building on the high school grounds facing A Street, in which was gathered all the sixth grade pupils of the city.

**RIVERSIDE SCHOOL
300 SOUTH D
1917 – 1955**



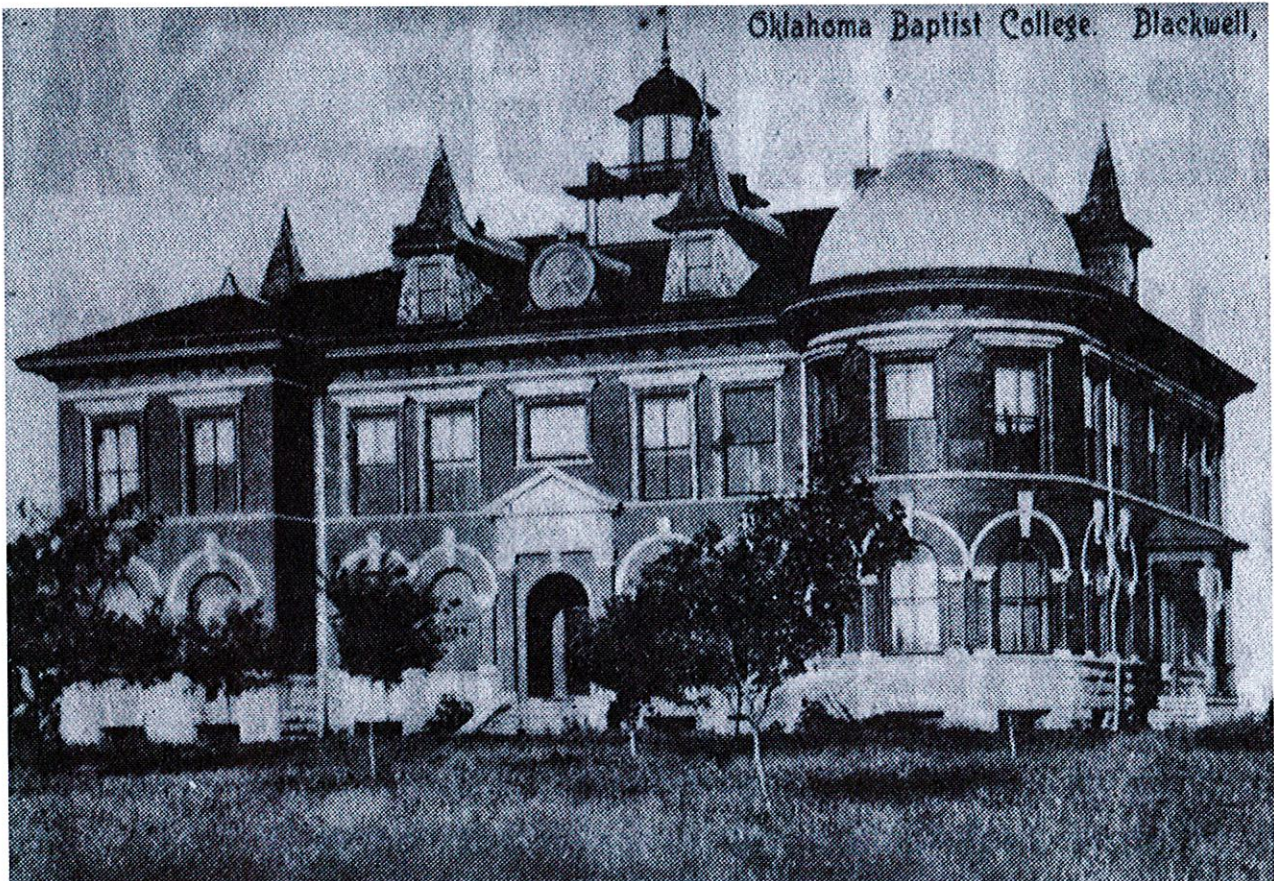
The city grew so rapidly that in 1917 bonds were voted and Riverside and Park buildings were erected.

**PARK SCHOOL
300 BLOCK EAST MCKINLEY
1917-1955**



Park and Riverside Schools were damaged beyond repair by the 1955 tornado.

**OKLAHOMA BAPTIST COLLEGE
700 BLOCK WEST COLLEGE
1901 – 1913
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
1924 – 1936
WASHINGTON SCHOOL
1936 - 1949**

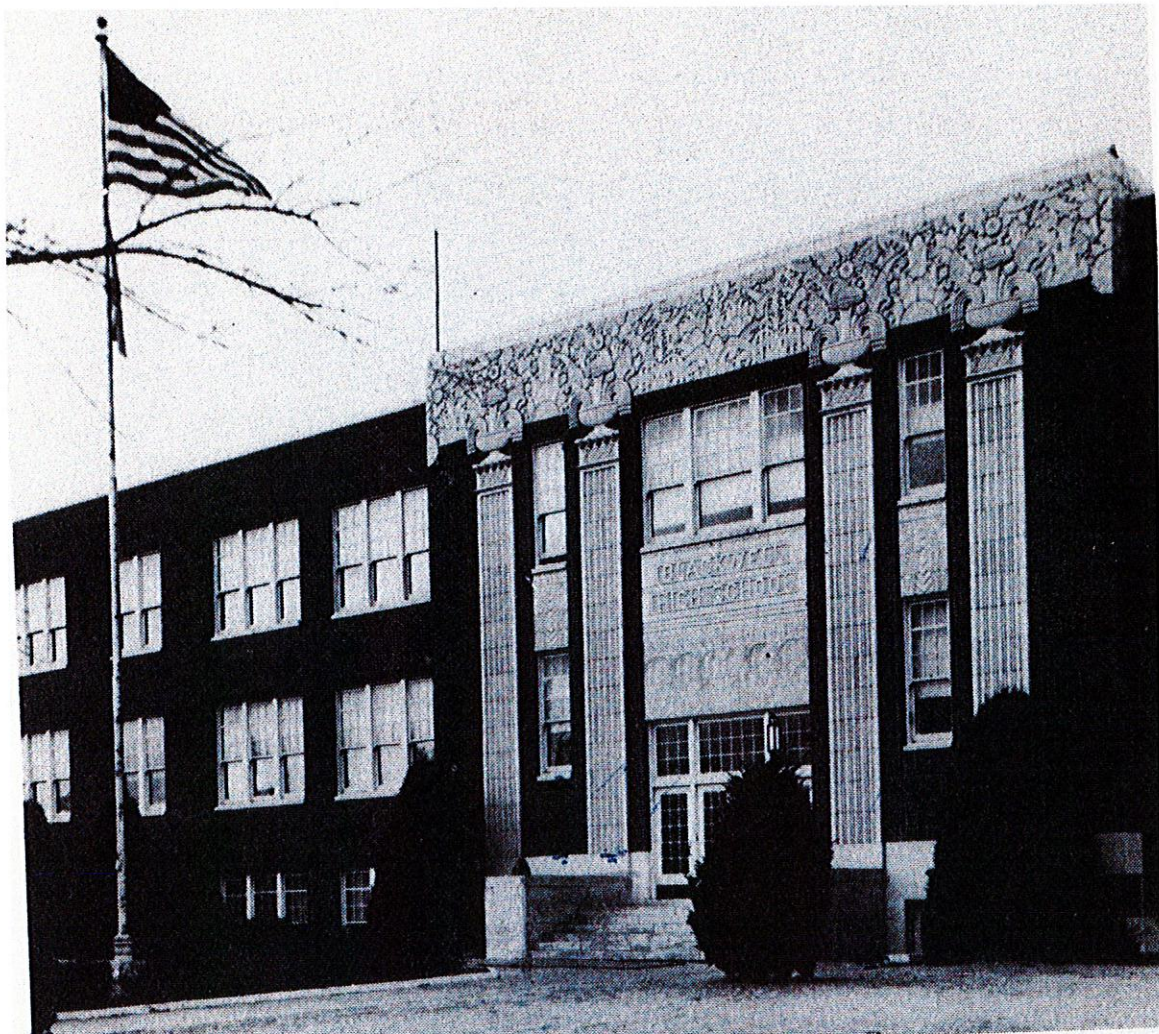


The Oklahoma Baptist College was founded in 1899 by the Oklahoma Baptist Convention. The cornerstone for this building was laid on October 13, 1900, and the building opened formally September 4, 1901. The brochure put out by the college said it offered superior advantages in the College of Arts and in the Conservatory of Fine Arts. The college lasted until August 12, 1913 at which time, due to finances, was disbanded here and moved to Shawnee. About 1915, It was purchased and operated as the Southwestern Osteopathic Sanitarium. In 1924, it became the Junior High School. In 1936, it became Washington Grade School and it was demolished about 1950 after the new Washington School was constructed.

By 1924 still more school room was needed and bonds were voted and the Baptist College building was purchased, overhauled and fitted for public school use. A junior high was organized, consisting of the seventh, eighth and ninth grades. When school opened in the fall more than 700 pupils were enrolled and it was found necessary to construct two bungalows on the south side of that ground.

The climax in the number of children to be accommodated in the school was reached in 1927 when more than 3,200 pupils were enrolled. Because of the falling of the price of crude oil, much of the development work in the vicinity of Blackwell was suspended and more than 300 families connected with that work sought homes elsewhere. This caused the school enrollment to fall off and by 1930 it had gone down to about 2,700. In that year, as a matter of economy, the board of education decided to abandon the South A building and place the sixth grade pupils in various ward schools. This was done and the teaching force reduced by eight, which produced a saving of more than \$1,000 per month.

To house a greater number of students and growing curriculum, a new building was built in 1935 in the nine hundred block of South First Street to house Blackwell High School. At this time the Lovett Junior High School program was moved from the old Baptist College building on West College to the building in the three hundred block of South Main.



Class work began in the new Blackwell High School building in January of 1936. It was the Junior High from 1962 until 1978 when it became the Blackwell Middle School.

In 1937, the land was purchased at the southeast edge of town for the Wheeler-Huston Athletic Field which was eventually to become the campus for the present high school. A football field with a wooden stadium was soon built. The north stadium was constructed of concrete in 1949 and served as the physical education facility. The south concrete stadium was built in 1957 to replace the original wooden structure which was destroyed by the tornado of 1955.

In 1950, the community of Blackwell embarked on a fifteen year program of improving school buildings and classrooms in the city. This project included four new grade schools, a new high school, central office, and refurbishing the old high school on South First as a junior high building. In 1954, a large gymnasium was built on South Second.

HUSTON CENTER



Huston Center was built after the 1949 tornado destroyed the South Main School located where the High School parking lot is today. Classes began at Huston School in January 1950. The school is located at 304 Vinnedge. K-4 and kindergarten students will attend this school beginning the 2009-2010 school year.

WASHINGTON CENTER



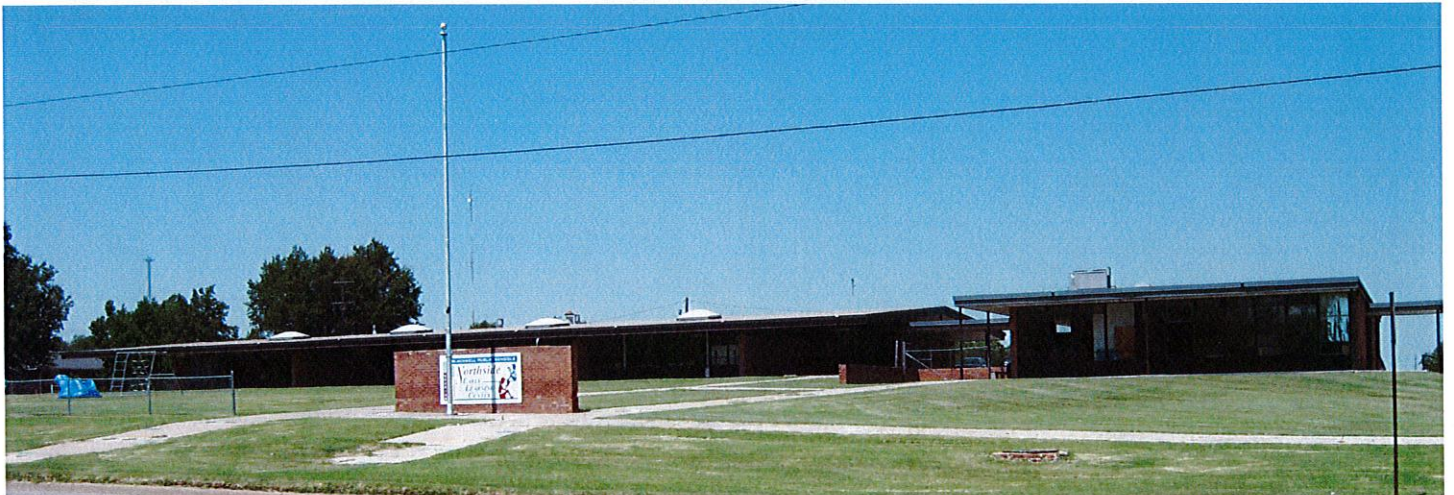
Classes were first held at Washington Center in January of 1950. It is located at 723 West College. School was held for the last time at this location during the 2008-2009 school year.

PARKSIDE CENTER



After the tornado destroyed Riverside School and Park School in 1955, the schools were combined and Parkside Center was built on the Riverside School property. School opened at this school at the beginning of the 1956-1957 school year. It is located at 502 East College. This is now the home of the Head Start Program.

NORTHSIDE



Northside was the last of the new grade schools to be built at 720 West Doolin. Classes began at Northside in March of 1957. 2008-2009 was the last year of school at this location.

In 1962, the present high school and practice gym were built. The architect was Bill Caudill, and the modern innovative design brought recognition from around the world. The circular sunken library with glass walls is the center of the building. Next to it is a spacious study area which doubles as an eating area at noon. The three wings of classrooms branch out from the central library/study area. On the inside wall of each classroom, large glass windows allow a view of a botanical garden and the hallway, while small low windows on the outside wall allow a glimpse of Mother Nature. Another feature is the "Little Theatre" which is downstairs. It allows large group lectures and doubles as a tornado shelter.

BLACKWELL HIGH SCHOOL



Blackwell High School is now located at 303 East Coolidge.

BLACKWELL HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM



Adjacent to the new school, the 999 seat auditorium was built in 1968, and the Industrial Arts/Vocational Agriculture Complex was added in 1969. In 1974, a girls' physical education facility was added on the south end of the practice gym.

On November 20, 1984, Blackwell passed a bond issue which furnished enough capital to purchase the Ranch Motel property. The Blackwell High School campus adjoins this property on three sides, and the purchase, made on June 24, 1985, gives the campus an additional 58,691 square feet or approximately 1.348 acres to use. A new field house was built on the property in February 2000.

BLACKWELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



In December 2006, bonds were voted allowing a new elementary school to be built that will eventually house all elementary grades. Ground was broken in December 2007. The new school opened its doors for the 2009-2010 school year and is located at 2105 West Fergusson.