



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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City of Dover Kingfisher Co. Oklahoma . . . 1892

Stock#: 66608jc
Map Maker:
Date: 1893
Place: Neosho County, Kansas
Color: Pen & Ink
Condition: VG
Size: 20.5 x 20 inches
Price: \$4,500.00



Description:

The First Map of Dover, Oklahoma Territory -- Primary Stopover on the Chisholm Trail -- Final Robbery By The Wild Bunch / Doolin Dalton Gang

Drawn only 2 years after the establishment of the Dover Post Office, the present map is almost certainly the oldest surviving map of this important town on the Chisolm Trail.

The town has been subdivided into 56 numbered blocks, each of which as been further divided into individual lots. Street names have been added on the original map (Oak, Pearl, Pine and Hickory), with more modern names added in pencil by an early owner. The depot of Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad, which first came to the area in 1889, has been added to the map. This would later become the site of final robbery of the Wild Bunch / Doolin Gang in 1895.

Drawn by N V. Cook in June 1892, County Surveyor of Kingfisher County, Oklahoma Territory. Interestingly, the present example was apparently recorded and notarized by B.C. Wells, Notary Public, in Neosho County, Kansas in May 1893.



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Historical Overview

In the late 19th century the Chisholm Trail was considered to be one of the wonders of the western world. Herds with as many as ten thousand cattle were driven from Texas over the trail to Kansas. Where the Chisholm Trail crossed the Cimarron River was the Red Fork Trader's Ranch. This Trading Post eventually became, the town of Dover Oklahoma after the "Land Rush" of 1889.

Vast herds of cattle moved along the Chisholm Trail from Texas to Kansas, (and then to Chicago and Eastern stockyards). In the late 1860s or early 1870s the Collins Cattle Company built a ranch northeast of where the Chisholm Trail crossed the Cimarron River, in what was then unorganized Indian Territory. The ranch was eventually was acquired by "a licensed Indian trader named John G. Chapin, a veteran of the northern army from Oquawka, Ill." Chapin established a trading post and post office, known variously as "Red Wing" and "Red Fork," after the nearby Cimarron River.

During the Land Run of April 1889, Chapin filed a claim for the quarter-section (160 acres) of land on which the Red Wing sat. With the arrival in October 1889 of the Kansas and Nebraska Railway (owned by the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific), its track was laid directly through Chapin's claim. On May 2, 1890 the Oklahoma Territory and Kingfisher County (where Dover was and is located) were established by act of Congress. One writer describes the area:

It was a rendezvous for cowboys and Indians and a camp ground for freighters and drovers on the trails. From the top of the sand hills west of the railroad at the southwest corner of town, Cheyenne Indians watched for trail herds coming up from the Lone Star country and begged "wohaw" [cattle?] from the cowboys. Experience had taught trail drivers that disappointed Indians had ways of stampeding their herds and that it was better to give them a beef or two than to run the risk of a midnight stampede. Bull Bear, Old Bull, Roman Nose, and even Black Kettle and Heap O' Birds, were by no means strangers at Red Fork. To the great open spaces also came certain other gentry who found the climate back in the states growing too hot for their comfort, and decided to emigrate. Some of these boys changed their ways and their names and became good citizens. Others of them turned to horse stealing, cattle rustling, train robbing and general outlawry. (Mitchell)

At the time of the founding of Dover, it had become an important stopover on the Chisholm Trail, and, in fact, known to be the furthest south Jessie Chisholm (who operated from Wichita, Kansas) is known to have travelled on his namesake trail. The trail marked by the wagon wheels and pack animals of Jesse Chisholm started at Wichita and took a southwest course through the towns of Wellington, Caldwell, Pond



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Greek, Enid, Buffalo Springs, Dover, Kingfisher, Concho, just east of Fort Rence, and on to the Wichita Valley, a distance of 220 miles. A stage road which paralleled the trail had important stops at Dover Station, King Fisher Station and Baker Station.

Dover, Oklahoma

Founded in 1892, the present map is almost certainly the original 1892 plan of Dover, commissioned by Chapin, or a very early copy thereof. A few street names were included on the original map (Oak, Pearl, Pine and Hickory), with more names added in pencil by an early owner (Some of these, such as Chesnut and Cherry, are still in use today.) The depot of the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad is included.

Dover was the site on April 3, 1895, where Wild Bunch / Doolin-Dalton held up a Rock Island train. The gang was unable to open the safe containing \$50,000 in army payroll, so they robbed the passengers instead. A posse surprised and scattered the gang around noon. Thus Dover has the distinction of being the place of the last robbery by the Wild Bunch as a gang. The town was also the site of a major bridge collapse on the Rock Island Railroad.

N V Cook

The plan was drawn in June 1892 by one N V. Cook, at the time the Surveyor of Kingfisher County. Oddly, the inscription at lower left certifies that it was recorded and notarized by B.C. Wells, Notary Public, in Neosho County, Kansas in May 1893... more than 200 miles distant. Apparently by then Cook had already left Oklahoma and moved to Neosho County, Kansas:

The friends of N. V. Cook, of Walnut Grove township, are urging his claims for surveyor on the Populist ticket, and from what we can learn of him, he would make a strong candidate. The Coming Events of Enid, Okla. has the following to say of him: "N. V. Cook, formerly an old and well known resident of Oklahoma, is being pushed by his friends of Neosho county, Kansas, for County Surveyor. Bro. Cook served one term as Surveyor in Kingfisher county with credit to himself and the satisfaction of the people. He was the Alliance candidate, and although Kingfisher county was and has been a strong Republican county, he received a handsome majority. He was renominated by acclamation for a second term but at the opening of the A. and C. country received the contract of surveying and platting Ioland, the county seat of Day county, and in consequence, declined the nomination.

(Erie [Kansas] Sentinel, Sept. 6, 1895, p. 4)



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Rarity

The plan is apparently a unique survival. Generally speaking, very few similar Oklahoma Territory town plans are known to survive, the vast majority of which are in institutional collections.

As the nexus of several fascinating historical events, the map is a marvelous artifact of the colorful early years of the Oklahoma Territory.

Detailed Condition:

Hand drawn map of drafting linen. Soiled and foxed. Minor fold splits in linen.