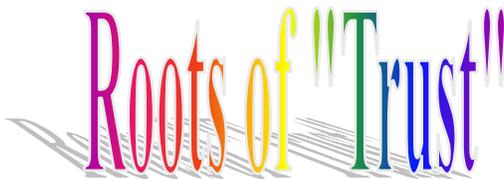


RECORDS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Do you remember this photograph and trivia question from the November RM Info Bulletin? The answer to the question is (dramatic drum roll): The “C” on Jim Thorpe’s jersey stands for Carlisle (Pennsylvania) Indian Industrial School.



Jim Thorpe, great American athlete.
(Sac and Fox) Trivia question: Why does he have the “C” on his football jersey?

Background.

During the 17th-19th centuries, as English and American settlers moved westward across the continent, they replaced Indian settlements, forcing the Indians to continually move even farther west. Rather than assimilating them into “white” society, colonial, Federal and State governments attempted to keep Indians separate from whites by setting aside parcels of land for the tribes to live upon. By the 1850s, the Federal Government removed most of the Indians to lands west of the Mississippi River. Reservations, which, in many cases were small parcels of land “reserved” out of original tribal land holdings, developed as an alternative to the extinction of the Indian people.

Nineteenth century America was an era of reform. During the first half of the century, reformers concentrated primarily on the abolition of slavery and when that was accomplished in 1865 through the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, they shifted their focus to “saving” the American Indian from extinction. Reformers believed they could do this by (1) educating Indian youth, (2) establishing Indians as farmers or herders, and (3) having them responsible for managing their own plot of land. When this was accomplished, reformers believed Indians would be treated like everyone else in the United States.

**New Smithsonian Museum set to open
September 21, 2004**

National Museum of the American Indian
<http://www.americanindian.si.edu/>

Education.

Pre-Civil War efforts at educating the American Indian usually consisted of religious groups establishing a single schoolhouse on or near a reservation. Teaching Indians Christianity was just as important, or even more important, than teaching them reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Reformers during the second half of the 19th century believed it was urgent to educate Indians as quickly as possible so they could be a part of “mainstream” America.

In 1879, a former military officer, Richard Henry Pratt, established an Indian industrial boarding school in abandoned military barracks at Carlisle, PA. The primary purpose of Pratt’s Indian school was to make the Indians self-supporting, and thus, Indian boys were trained in agriculture or the trades and girls were to learn the “domestic sciences.” The school was located far from the western Indian reservations so the children would not be culturally influenced by the Tribe. Pratt’s school became the model for other Indian off-reservation boarding schools established in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

So that Indian children could be continually immersed in “white” culture during summer break, Pratt introduced the “Outing System.” Under this program, neighboring families could



**Girls’ Shorthand Class, Haskell Institute,
Kansas**

(Photo courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration)



**Omaha Boys Dressed in Their Uniforms at
Carlisle Indian Industrial School, 1880.**

(Photo courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration)

hire Indian children to perform farm labor or house work for the duration of the summer.

Although Carlisle’s football team held its own with the college football powerhouses of the day, the educational level at Carlisle was mostly at the grammar school level.

By 1900 there were 25 off-reservation industrial schools with an enrollment of 7,500; 81 reservation boarding schools with 9,600 students; and 147 reservation day schools with an enrollment of 5,000 students.

Land Ownership.

Early attempts by Congress to pass a bill providing for Indian land ownership failed. However, in 1887 with the strong backing of eastern reformers and western settlers, the Dawes Act became law. The Dawes Act authorized a survey of reservation lands and to allot the land to individual Indians. Each head of household received 160 acres, and smaller parcels of land were allotted to single persons or minors. If anyone entitled to an allotment did not make a selection of land within 4 years after the President had directed the reservation be opened to allotment, then the law authorized the Secretary of the Interior to order a special agent to make a selection for the Indian.

Allothees
Roll No. 812.3

Certificate of Selection.

Selection No. 17011

Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes.
Muskogee Land Office. *June 30, 1902.*

CREEK NATION.

This certifies that Dizzie Bird has this day filed his selection of the following described land, viz:

SUB-DIVISION OF	SECTION	TOWN	RANGE
<i>N^{1/2} of N^{1/4} of</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>S^{1/2} of S^{1/4} of</i>	<i>12</i>		

of the Indian Base and Meridian in Creek Nation containing 60 acres more or less as the case may be according to the United States survey thereof.

This certificate is not transferable.

Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes. _____
Chairman.

Erskland Field No. 2994.

Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration, Ft. Worth, Texas

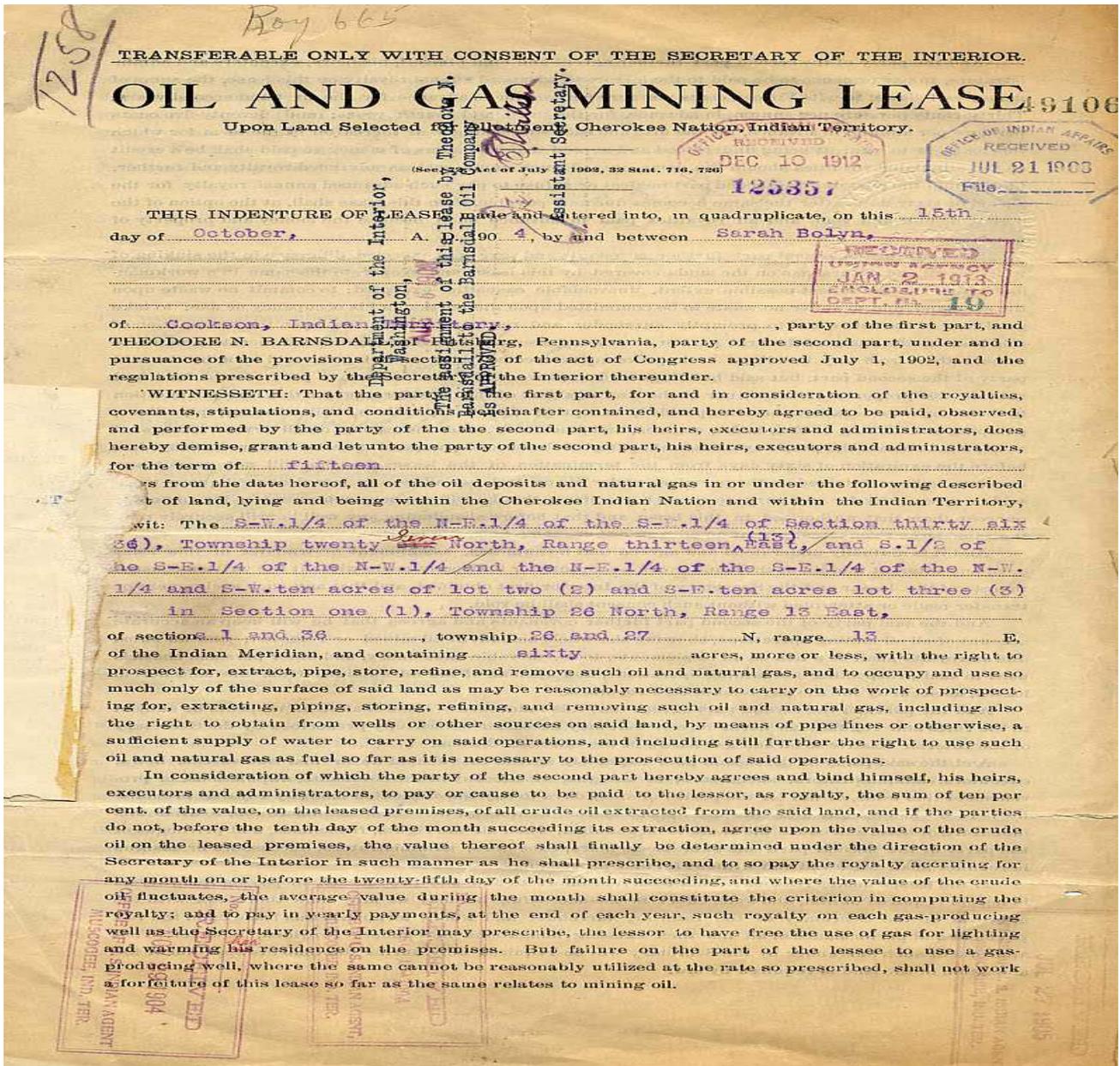
When the Secretary of the Interior approved allotments, he would issue a land patent to each Indian, which stated that the U. S. Government would hold the allotted lands in trust for 25 years for the Indian for his sole benefit or that of his heirs. Any transfer of the land during the 25-year trust period was considered to be null and void, and the president at his discretion could extend the trust period. Once the Indian received his allotment, he would become a citizen of the United States.

After the lands had been allotted on a reservation, or sooner if the president thought it was in the best interests of the tribe, the Secretary of the Interior could negotiate with the tribe for the purchase of the remaining unallotted or surplus lands. The money paid to the Indians for the surplus lands was to be held in the Treasury for the sole use of the tribes to whom the reservation belonged. The funds were to be used for the education and civilization of the Indians from that tribe.

The Dawes Act assumed the Indian population would either remain stable or would shrink since the allotment process allowed for no tribal lands to remain once allotment was completed. In 1881 Indians held 155,632,312 acres of land and by 1900 only 77,865,373 acres of tribal lands remained (of which 5,409,530 had been allotted).

Many became quickly dissatisfied with the Dawes Act when they realized that an allotment to an Indian did not automatically turn him into a farmer as envisioned by the reformers. One cannot change hundreds of years of culture overnight. Plus, women and children and the disabled were unable to work their allotment lands. Thus, the lands were actually of little benefit to the Indians.

In 1891 Congress passed a law making leasing of allotment lands possible. It allowed Indians who were unable to occupy and improve their allotments to lease their lands for certain periods



Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration, Ft. Worth, Texas

subject to the approval of the Secretary of the Interior. Leasing laws were liberalized in 1894, and the number of leases on allotted lands climbed dramatically.

The allotment of Indian reservation lands was accompanied by the disposal of “surplus” tribal lands to white settlers

The records illustrating this very brief history of Indian Trust were created in the normal course of U. S. Government business over 100 years ago.

They are now considered historically valuable documents and are being preserved by the National Archives as a part of this Nation’s history. At the time of their creation, Federal employees had no idea of the value of these records. Therefore:

TAKE CARE OF YOUR CURRENT RECORDS BECAUSE THEY MAY DOCUMENT AN IMPORTANT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MISSION.