

*Museum copy*

A SHORT HISTORY OF WASHINGTON PI

It was in 1905 that Jake Dillard, a black constable and businessman, opened the first school for Black children in a small Baptist church building located near Archer and Kenosha Streets. (This, of course was a part of Indian Territory.)

In 1908, a year after statehood, the Board of Education ~~realizing~~ the need for more adequate facilities, built a two room frame building on Hartford Street between Cameron and Easton Streets. (Where the present City Street Department warehouse is located.)

Rev. G. L. Prince and Mrs Lula Sims were the first two black teachers to staff this building.

By 1910 the population of Black Tulsa had increased to point that it was necessary to build an eight room two story brick building. It housed grades 1 to eight. Mr. J. W. Hughes was named principal of Dunbar School. The faculty members were J. W. Hughes, Lula Sims, Marie Martin, G. D. McCree, Jane Johnson, Mrs Farmer and Mrs. R. T. Bridgewater.

At the end of the school year in 1912, eight students had completed the elementary grades and were in need of high school work. In that year, Mr. Hughes and Mr. McCree comprised the "faculty" that taught these eight. That same year, the late Ellis W. Woods was offered the job as principal, but because of contract trouble as a teacher in Creek County could not accept until early 1913.

In mid-term 1913, a four-room frame structure was erected on a site located at Eliza Place and Gaston Street. Mr Woods along with Mrs. Lila Sims and Mrs. Myrtle McKeever moved into the building with fourteen students. The building was named Booker T. Washington after the great Tuskegee Institute founder.

The winter of 1919 saw the completion of a two story brick building containing 16 rooms. This gave the community a big sense of pride and developed a school spirit that has lasted through the years. As enrollment increased additional rooms were added until the school rambled across every available piece of ground. The faculty had grown to 15 by this time.

During the days, from 1930 until post World War II times, there was dire need for a new school. One attempt was made to finance a new building out of a County levy. This effort was defeated by voters from County towns who had few if any Black citizens and by apathy on the part of Tulsa voters.

For several years Washington operated in cramped, inadequate quarters. Finally a second effort at the polls gave the board of education power to proceed with the new building.

Mr. Woods, through whose untiring efforts made the new building a possibility, died the year before completion of his dream. Efforts were made to name the new facility after E. W. Woods, this failed through a ruling of the Board of Education that was never understood. Washington lives on though it faces a crisis at the present time.