

Tillman County Chronicles

Tillman County Historical Society Column

by Joe Wynn

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Downtown Tipton, circa 1916

1916 Article describes Early Tipton History

As noted in last week's column, the town of Tipton began in 1909, which makes 2009 Tipton's centennial year.

In honor of Tipton's 100th year, it's an appropriate time to look at an article about Tipton that was printed in the **Frederick Leader's** county industrial edition in 1916 – when Tipton was just seven years old.

The article was titled ***A Thriving Tillman County Town.***

"The establishment of the town of Tipton was a repetition of the oft-repeated experience of the towns following the rail-

road. When the Wichita Falls and Northwestern railroad began to extend its line northwest from Frederick, it laid out the town of Tipton, just south of the base line, and surrounded by a large body of the finest farming land in the state of Oklahoma. The lots were offered for sale and sold readily, for it did not take a very farsighted man to realize that in this garden spot there surely would grow a town of substantial importance.

"That spirit of enterprise which has

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characterized the building of the southwest was quickly manifested in the development of Tipton. The town was laid out in 1909, and in less than ten months there had been built a big brick school building at a cost of \$10,500, while brick store buildings quickly followed. It was patent from the very first that Tipton was to be no shack town, but would at once take its place among the western Oklahoma towns as a place of commercial value and activity.

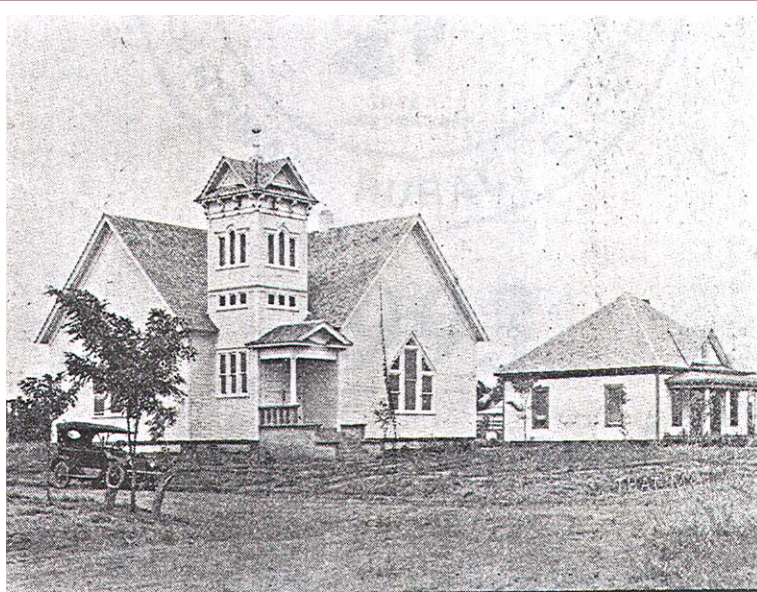
With other institutions came the Farmers' State bank, a solid financial concern with deposits of \$100,000 at this time, numerous



Tipton School, circa 1916

"The population of Tipton is somewhere in the neighborhood of 600. It is in the heart of sandy farming lands which raise all kinds

of crops. It is proverbial that there are certain sections of Tillman county which grow certain crops well, but that the Tipton country grows all crops well. The sandy soil here does not suffer from excessive rains and on the other hand it stores moisture so well that droughts rarely affect it seriously. In consequence the owners of these farms grow bounteous crops of all the cereals, alfalfa, cotton and feed, and are the abiding places of sleek, well fed herds of cattle, hogs and horses. Tipton affords a splendid market for the farmers, and its business houses enjoy a thriving trade as a conse-



Tipton Baptist Church, circa 1916

churches and residences, and today, with the town but seven years old, it will compare favorably with places five times as old in older states."

quence. There is a mighty spirit of town pride which operates to the constant upbuilding of the place, an indication which

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The Frederick Leader's Tipton-area correspondents, 1916

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points to a much larger town in the future.

"The Tipton school has a corps of six teachers, including principal, who teach 250 pupils. Professor Z.M. Spahr, of the National Normal University of Indianapolis, Indiana, has been elected as principal for next year.

"The school district has an assessed valuation of \$392,652, while the town's valuation is \$180,000.

"Tipton is an important shipping point, as statistics given in an article on the subject of this edition (Leader industrial edition) will show, and the railroad has recognized this fact by erecting in the town a substantial brick depot.

"The town is incorporated, with J.M. Baker as president of the board and J.R. Smith and C.B. Tinsley the other members, and A.R. Carlile as town clerk.

"W.A. Cook is president of the school board, and the other members are J.H. Wiseman and W.W. Childers, with the last named as clerk.

"There are two gins and a wheat elevator, and numerous buyers of cotton, grain, alfalfa and poultry to take care of the farm-

ers' interests and to keep up the town's reputation for being a good market.

"Being in a sandy spot, Tipton is never bothered with mud, the streets being passable in all kinds of weather.

"The Methodist (South), Baptist, Christian and Presbyterian churches have buildings there. The Methodists have services three Sundays in the month, with Rev. W.E. Humphreys as pastor. Services are held in the Baptist church two Sundays each month, and Rev. S.H. Maples is the pastor. Services are held each second Sunday at the Christian church. The pastor is Elder R.F. Whitaker. No services are being held at present at the Presbyterian church.

"Tipton and the Tipton country constitute a particularly inviting spot in western Oklahoma, famous for all things that go to make life pleasant. Trees grow well in the section and Tipton claims to have more trees than any town in Tillman county. Good water is found at a comparatively shallow depth."

Joe Wynn is a member of the Tillman County Historical Society Board of Directors.

