

BLACK WALL STREET

THE PROMISED
LAND OF DEEP
GREENWOOD



FOUNDERS OF BLACK WALL STREET

O. W. Gurley, one of the founders of Black Wall Street, in front row, lower left.

Gurley bought 40 acres and sold to “blacks only” in the area near Tulsa, Oklahoma.

John B. Stradford, son of escaped slave, Julius Caesar Stradford, also bought land and sold it to blacks.

Discovery of oil in Oklahoma attracted both blacks and whites to the Tulsa area.

Blacks embraced the concept of Oklahoma as the promised land.



JOHN B. STRADFORD

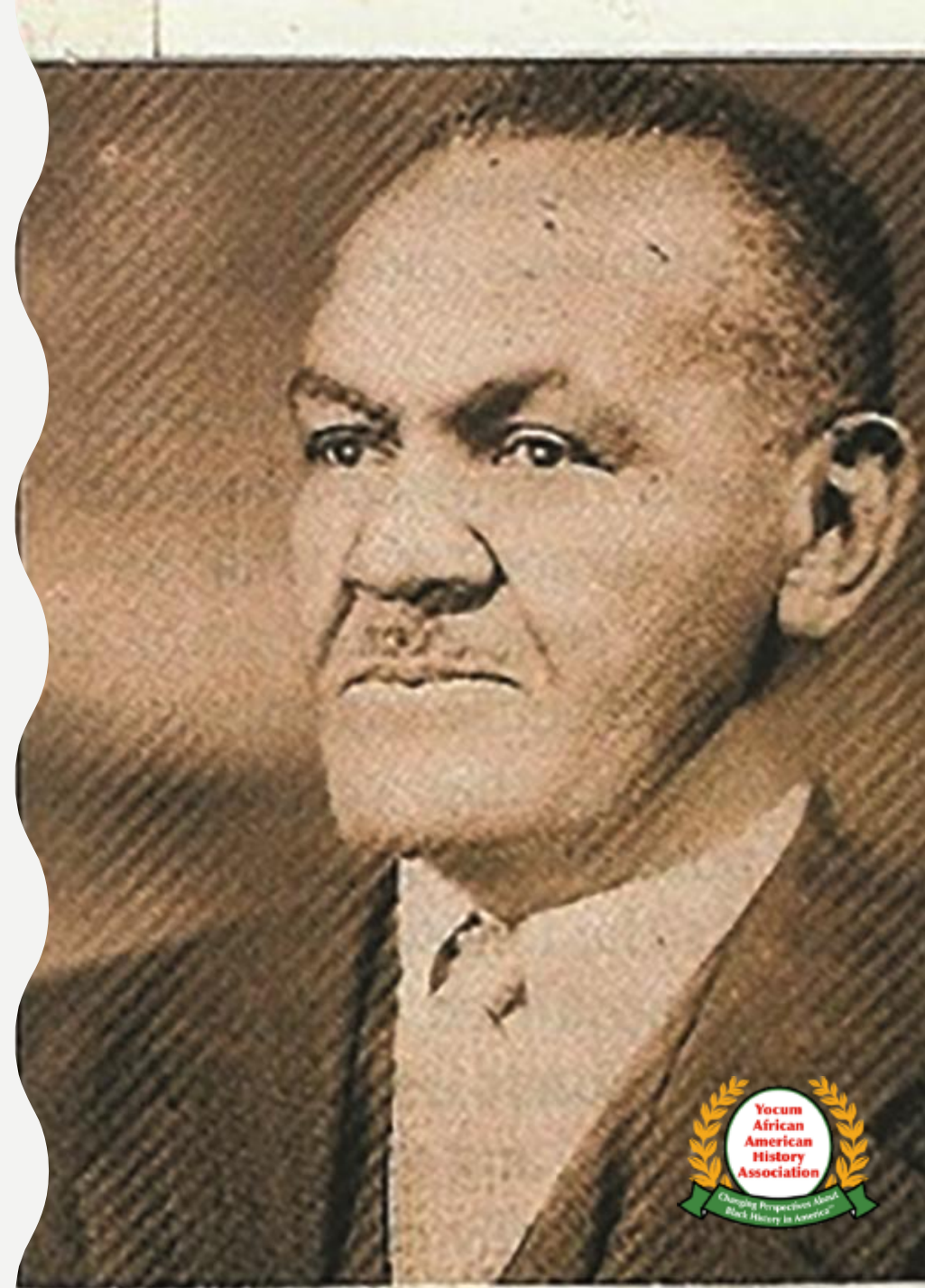
Stradford was the son of an escaped slave.

He was one of wealthiest men in Black Wall Street.

He was the owner of the most elegant black hotel in the country.

His 54-room luxury hotel rivaled white hotels in Tulsa.

His hotel had elegant chandeliers in the lobby, a banquet room, a pool hall, a dining room, and a salon.



BLACK WALL STREET, ONE OF THE WEALTHIEST BLACK COMMUNITIES IN AMERICA

- Black Wall Street located in Deep Greenwood, Oklahoma, was also known as “Little Africa.”
- Residents were successful entrepreneurs, laborers, doctors, lawyers, and citizens that comprised the heart of Tulsa’s black business community.
- Blacks would become represented in all professional occupations.
- Soon restaurants, furriers, jewelry stores, hotels, churches, three black newspapers were part of Black Wall Street.
- Other businesses like barbershops, grocery stores, funeral parlors, dance halls, dental and medical offices, schools, libraries, a hospital, insurance companies, loan companies, garages, contractors, tailors, printers, photographers, airline charter service, and nightclubs were established in Black Wall Street.





THE PROMISED LAND

John, and Loula Williams came to the “promised land” and found a place of promise.

John was from Mississippi and Loula from Tennessee.

He was one of first Tulsans to own a car (1911 Luxury Touring Norwalk automobile).

He owned a garage, a confectionary, office space, and the Williams Dreamland Theater.



BUSINESSES IN DEEP GREENWOOD

J.W. MATTHEWS BARBER SHOP



BOOTBLACK PARLOR



DICK ROWLAND

The Tulsa Tribune front page story of the incident that sparked the race riot.

Rowland was an ordinary bootblack accused of criminally assaulting a young white woman.

He had no high standing in the community.

The Tulsa Tribune was a paper that fanned the flames of racial unrest throughout the riot.



MARCH TO THE COURTHOUSE

Men marched to the courthouse to protect Dick Rowland from being lynched.

Rowland was moved to another location for his protection.

The photo shows some blacks have guns and are wearing military uniforms.

A struggle between blacks and whites occurred and shots rang out.

Twelve men were killed, ten whites and two blacks.

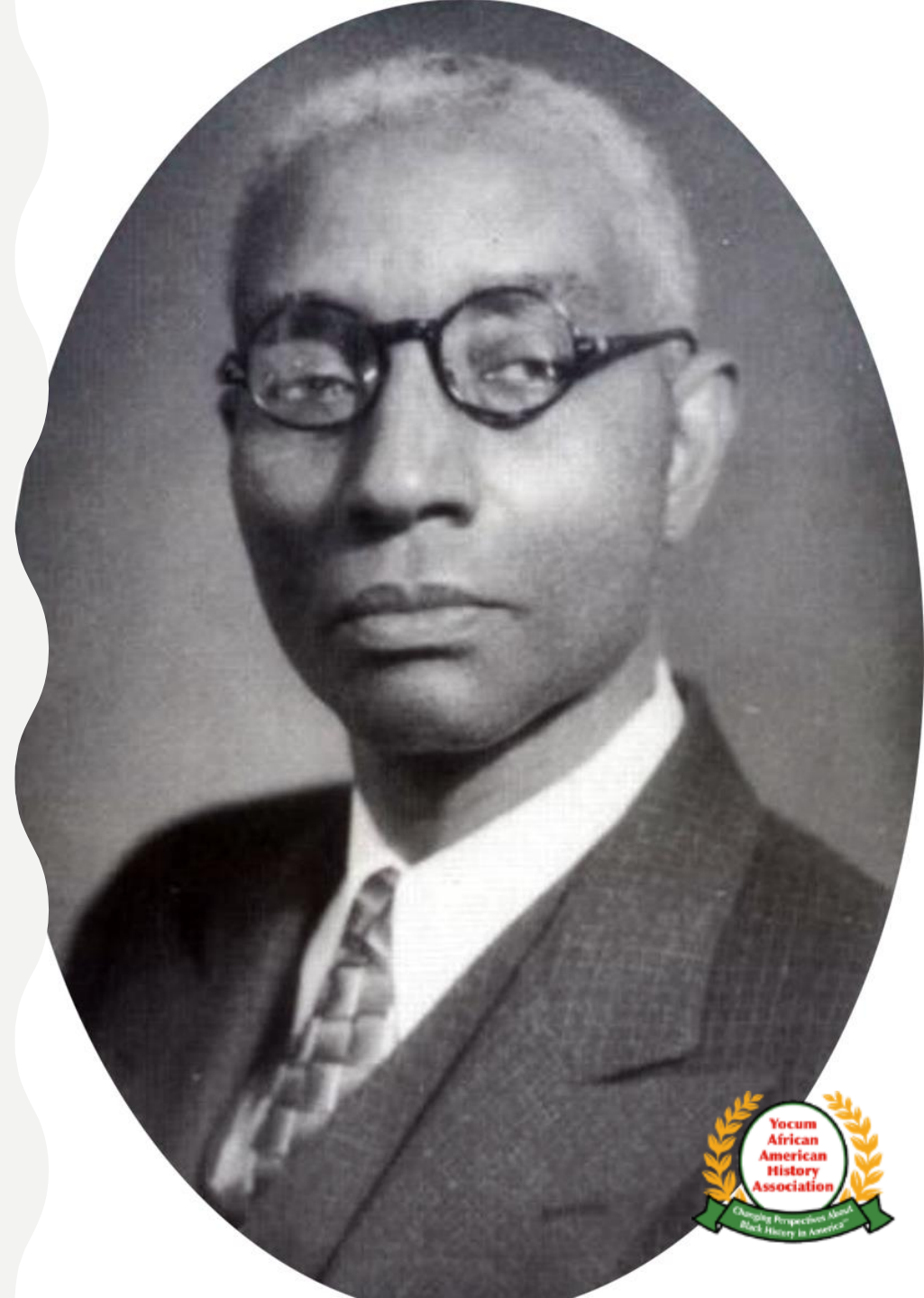


BUCK COLBERT FRANKLIN

Buck Colbert Franklin was a lawyer in Deep Greenwood who defended survivors of the Greenwood massacre in 1921.

His eyewitness account of the fires in Greenwood:

"I could see planes circling in mid-air. They grew in number and hummed, darted and dipped low. I could hear something like hail falling upon the top of my office building. Down East Archer, I saw the Midway Hotel on fire, burning from its top, and then another and another and another began to burn from their top...lurid flames roared and belched and licked their forked tongues into the air. Smoke ascended the sky in thick, black volumes and amid it all, the planes – now a dozen or more in number – still hummed and darted here and there with the agility of natural birds of the air."



BLACK WALL STREET BURNS

Thirty-five city blocks were leveled.

At least 300 people were killed.

191 black businesses destroyed.

Twenty-one churches destroyed.

A hospital, a post office, a library, and schools were also destroyed.

Over 1,256 homes destroyed in Black Wall Street.

Greenwood was uninhabitable after the massacre leaving 10,000 blacks homeless.





WILLIAMS DREAMLAND THEATRE

- The Greenwood business district was a burned-out shell. John and Loula Williams' businesses were destroyed.
- The repair garage, a confectionery, a rooming house and the Williams Dreamland Theatre were all gone.



STRADFORD HOTEL

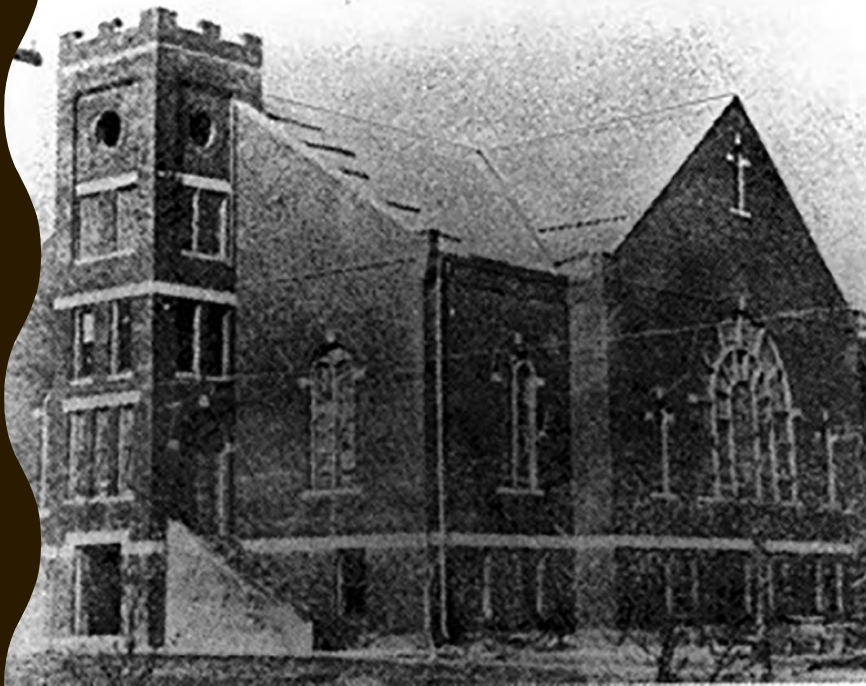
- John B. Stradford's 54-room elegant hotel in ruins after the riot in Deep Greenwood.
- It was built at a cost of \$50,000.
- It opened on June 1, 1918.
- John B. Stradford was indicted for inciting the riot and fled Deep Greenwood.





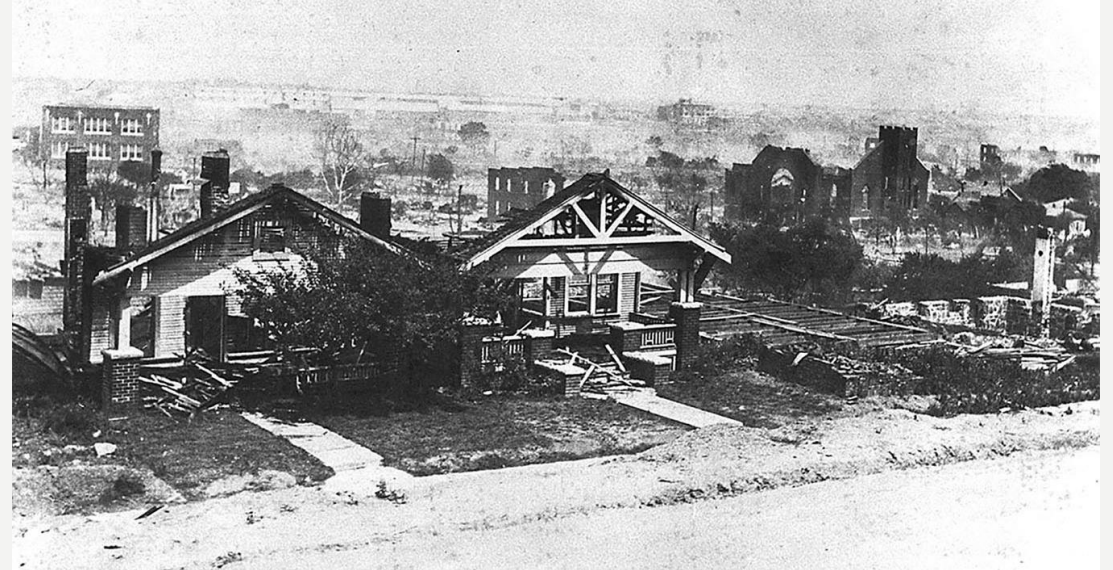
MT. ZION BAPTIST CHURCH

- Mt Zion Baptist Church was only 40 days old when it was destroyed in the riot.
- The cost to build and furnish the church was \$135,000.



DESTRUCTION

- Residential destruction, but in the background on the left, stands the Booker T. Washington High School, undamaged.
- In the photo on the right, is the destroyed Mt. Zion Baptist Church.
- The other photo is a city block destroyed in the business district.





HOMES DESTROYED

Survivors search the ruins of their homes.

The only item identifiable is the metal bed frame in the middle of the picture.



HOMELESS

Whites looted homes and burned them, leaving thousands homeless.





BLACK PRISONERS

The Tulsa Tribune:

...a motley procession of negroes winded its way down Main Street to the baseball park with hands held high above their heads, their hats in one hand, a token of their submission to the white man's authority...They will return, not to their homes, but to heaps of ashes, the angry reprisal inflicted on him, the inferior race.



June 2, 1921

BLACK LAW FIRM

P.A. Chappelle, I. H. Spears, and B.C. Franklin set up their law office in a tent five days after the riot.

These three black lawyers helped defend survivors of the Greenwood massacre.

Buck C. Franklin was the father of the future civil rights advocate and historian, John Hope Franklin.





KKK AND THE TULSA RACE RIOT

KKK used postcards to raise money after the riot.

KKK said, "the riot was the best thing that ever happened to Tulsa."

The KKK created an auxiliary Klan, "Kamella" for women and a junior Klan for boys 12 to 18 years of age.



THE TULSA TRIBUNE

SATURDAY JUNE 4, 1921

The *Tulsa Tribune* sensational reporting fanned the flames of racial unrest. The inflammatory reporting of the possible lynching of Dick Rowland was the genesis of the Black Wall Street massacre.

This racist article wrongly placed the blame for the riot on black people alone.

The moment that law is destroyed, liberty is lost and men, left free to enter upon the domains of each other, destroy each other's rights, and invade the field of each other's liberty.—Timothy Titcomb.

IT MUST NOT BE AGAIN

SUCH a district as the old "Niggertown" must never be allowed in Tulsa again. It was a cesspool of iniquity and corruption. It was the cesspool which had been pointed out specifically to the Tulsa police and to Police Commissioner Adkison, and they could see nothing in it. Yet anybody could go down there and buy all the booze they wanted. Anybody could go into the most unspeakable dance halls and base joints of prostitution. All this had been called to the attention of our police department and all the police department could do under the Mayor of this city was to whitewash itself. The Mayor of Tulsa is a perfectly nice, honest man, we do not doubt, but he is guileless. He could have found out himself any time in one night what just one preacher found out.

In this old "Niggertown" were a lot of bad niggers and a bad nigger is about the lowest thing that walks on two feet. Give a bad nigger his booze and his dope and a gun and he thinks he can shoot up the world. And all these four things were to be found in "Niggertown"—booze, dope, bad niggers and guns.

The *Tulsa Tribune* makes no apology to the Police Commissioner or to the Mayor of this city for having plead with them to clean up the cesspools in this city.

Commissioner Adkison has said that he knew of the growing agitation down in "Niggertown" some time ago and that he and the Chief of Police went down and told the negroes that if anything started they would be responsible.

That is first class conversation but rather weak action.

Well, the bad niggers started it. The public would now like to know: why wasn't it prevented? Why were these niggers not made to feel the force of the law and made to respect the law? Why were not the violators of the law in "Niggertown" arrested? Why were they allowed to go on in many ways defying the law? Why? Mr. Adkison, why?

The columns of *The Tribune* are open to Mr. Adkison for any explanation he may wish to make.

These bad niggers must now be held, and, when the dope selling and booze selling and gun collecting STOP. The police commissioner, who has not the willingsness to find out what a nigger can find



ASSOCIATED NEGRO PRESS

ANP, was located in Chicago and served 150 U.S. Negro newspapers.

It was established on March 2, 1919 and closed in 1964.

The ANP reported the real reasons for the massacre in Deep Greenwood.

The ANP correctly identified the deaths of prominent leaders and the destruction in the wealthy community of Deep Greenwood.



JOHN HOPE FRANKLIN RECONCILIATION PARK

(MEMORIALIZES THE TULSA RACE RIOT AND THE AFRICAN AMERICAN ROLE IN OKLAHOMA HISTORY)

OPENED IN DECEMBER 2009

A BLACK MAN GIVES THE SIGN OF SURRENDER



HUMILIATION STATUE AT RECONCILIATION PARK



SUMMARY

- When Oklahoma was granted statehood, state laws strengthened segregation requiring separate facilities for blacks.
- The discovery of oil brought whites and blacks to the Tulsa, Oklahoma area.
- O. W. Gurley and John B. Stradford bought land and sold it to “blacks only.”
- This black community became known as Black Wall Street in Deep Greenwood, Oklahoma.
- The Race Riot of 1921 was started by a false accusation of a physical assault by a black man, Dick Rowland, against a white woman, Sarah Page.
- The 35-block black business district and upscale residential area was destroyed.
- Jealousy and racial ideologies were at the roots of this massacre in Deep Greenwood.

