

Savanna Oklahoma

Established in 1876

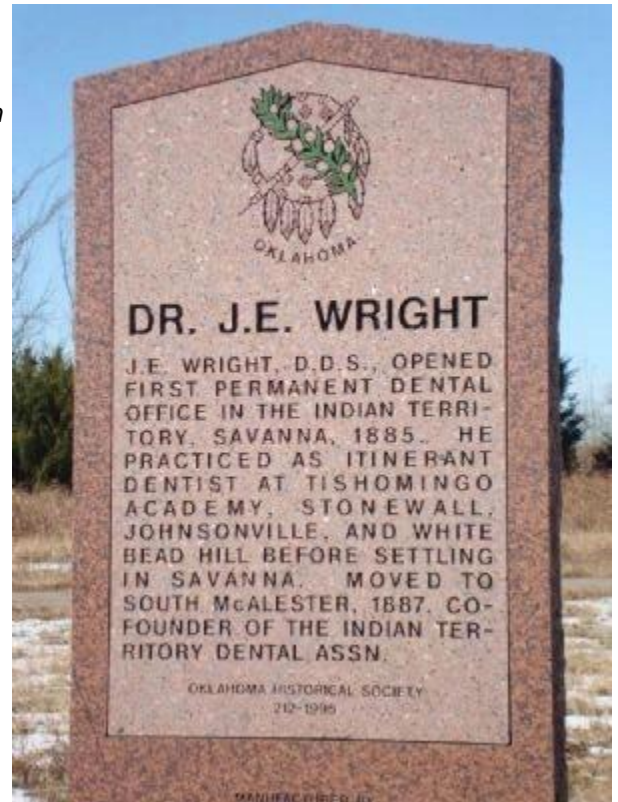
Located in Pittsburg County approximately nine miles south of McAlester on U.S. Highway 69, adjacent to and east of the U.S. Army Ammunition Plant (opened in 1943 as the U.S. Naval Ammunition Depot), Savanna can trace its origin to a dispersed rural settlement in the Choctaw Nation of the 1860s. A post office was established in the town on May 5, 1876, and in the 1880s, after coal mining developed, it became one of the larger towns in Indian Territory. An early point on the Missouri, Kansas, and Texas Railway between Denison, Texas, and Parsons, Kansas. Savanna supported a school, churches, a good hotel, stores, a doctor, a loading platform at the railroad, a bank, a cotton gin, and a jail. The mining corporations provided many of these businesses.

At first farming and ranching served as the major economic base of the Savanna area, but soon after the discovery of coal in the 1870s, mining became the major industry. Mining companies built rows of two- and three-room houses for their workers. The town mushroomed until an explosion in mines Number One and Number. The initial explosion killed six workers, but another dozen miners attempting to recover the bodies were also killed by afterdamp, a deadly gas composed primarily of carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide that followed a blast gone awry. Exposure to afterdamp caused miners to lose consciousness in seconds and could cause death in minutes. After the disaster the mine's owners ceased operations at Savanna and hauled the miner's homes to Lehigh. The Savanna Coal Mining and Trading Company closed the mines and moved their company houses to Lehigh. Savanna lost much of its population and floundered until 1907 statehood, after which it again became a prosperous but small community.

In 1896–97 Savanna residents constructed a wood-frame schoolhouse, which later burned, and in 1908 replaced it with a two-story, concrete-block building. In 1911 the town had approximately 450 residents and two general stores, two drugstores, a doctor, a barbershop, and two coal companies. In 1915 the Savanna News reported to the town but did not last the decade. Regenerated by the construction of the ammunition plant, by 1960 Savanna's population stood at 620, rising to 948 in 1970. Savanna has a fully equipped and accredited prekindergarten-through-twelfth-grade school system, with an enrollment of 513 in 2000. The town's 2000 population numbered 730. In 2010 it had dropped to 686.

Dr. J. E. Wright

"J.E. Wright, D.D.S., opened first permanent dental office in the Indian Territory, Savanna, 1885. He practiced as itinerant dentist at Tishomingo Academy, Stonewall, Johnsonville, and White Bead Hill before settling in Savanna. Moved to South McAlester, 1887. Co-founder of the Indian Territory Dental Assn."





McAlester Army Ammunition Plant

History

We are proud of our more than 60 years of service to the warfighters and the important contribution our employees make to the nation's defense.

MCAAP was originally commissioned as the McAlester Naval Ammunition Depot on May 20, 1943 and begun its first production in September 1943. The facility was transferred to the Army under the Single Manager for Conventional Ammunition Act on October 1, 1977.

MCAAP is a government-owned/government-operated (GOGO) facility and is the Defense Department's premier bomb and warhead loading facility. It is one of 14 industrial facilities in the Joint Munitions Command, and is vital to ammunition stockpile management and delivery to the joint warfighter for training and combat operations.