

We were forced to operate within certain "color lines", which were the lines established by the black community. My dreams were about buying land that would only be sold to blacks. And that's what I did. Greenwood was a part of my dream. Eventually, I built a hotel, a grocery store, homes, and other real estate to help establish our community, a place where we could prosper.

I was born in 1868 in Alabama. My family and I moved to Oklahoma territory and we participated in the great land rush of 1889. I left behind a political appointment to President Grover Cleveland's administration to follow other pursuits. There was so much territory to conquer in Oklahoma and so much we could do to establish a place of our own!

Ottawa "O.W." Gurley



The Gurley Building

The Story of Survival 1921 and Beyond



O.W. Gurley

Think about it...

- How does the story capture the events of the 1921 Race Riot and the story of Greenwood?
- What is most important about this story?
- Did I survive the events of May 31 - June 1, 1921?
- What makes me a survivor? A Pioneer?