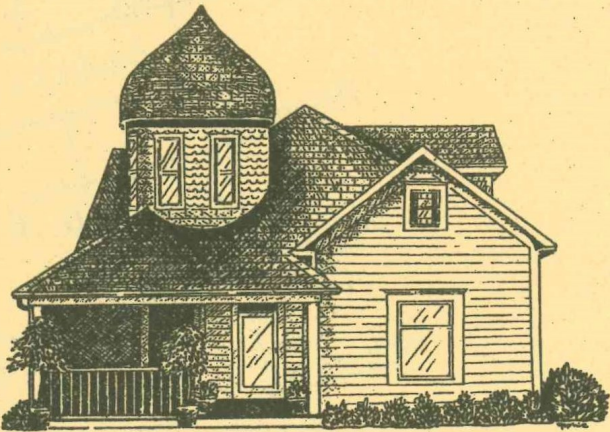


Tahlequah Original Townsite Historic District

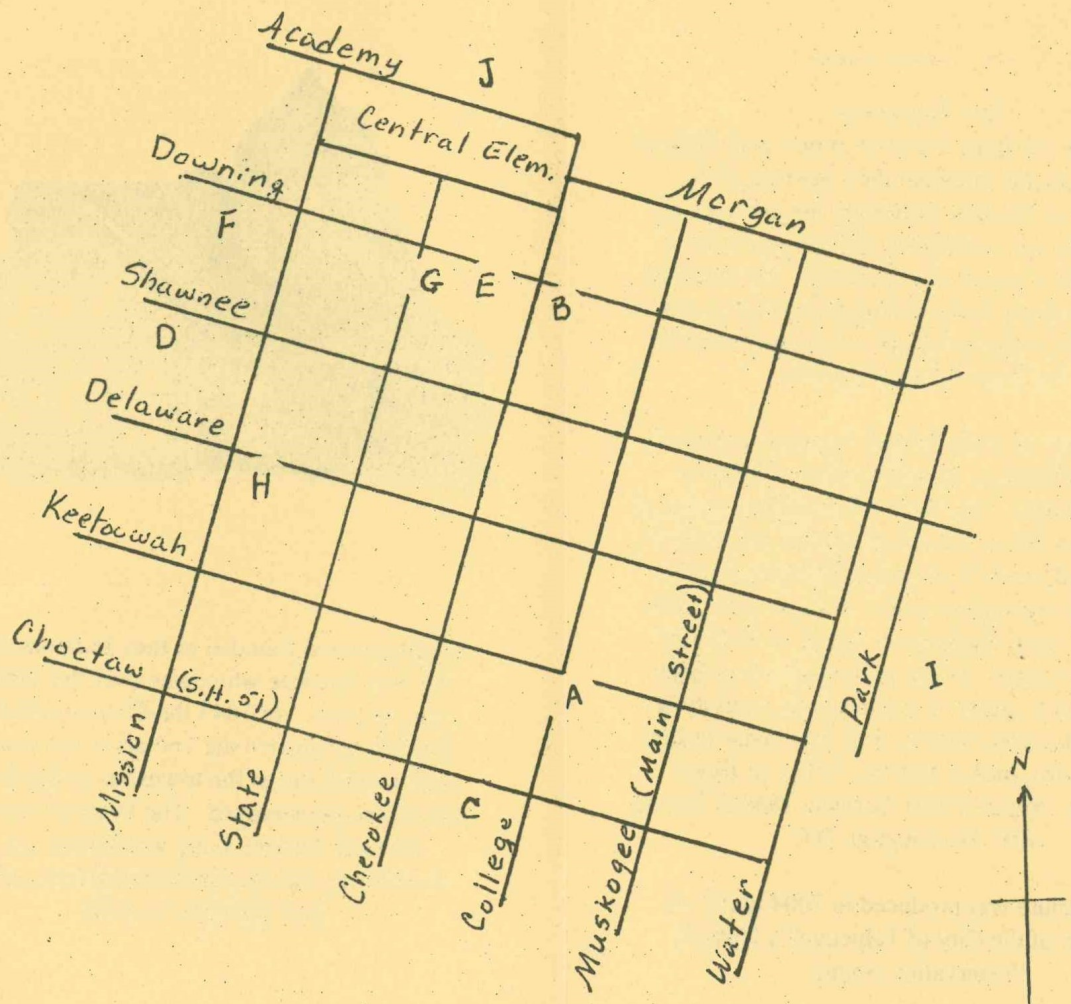


Tahlequah was founded as their national capital by the Cherokee who came over the Trail of Tears in 1839. In 1843 the Cherokee National Council designated the 160 acres surrounding their capital site as the township of Tahlequah and ordered it surveyed. The Original Townsite Historic District, lying west of the city's downtown, was the residential section of that first 160 acre townsite.

The Original Townsite Historic District lies directly west of the downtown and surrounds the Cherokee County Courthouse Complex on two sides. The area, covering approximately fifty blocks, includes a range of houses built during the later part of the nineteenth century through the post World War II years. The area includes excellent examples of the styles architecture of the era, including the Queen Anne Revival, Craftsman, Italianate and other revival styles.

Italianate
The Italianate Style was popular from the 1840's to the mid 1880's. It featured a low-pitched roof with widely overhanging eaves, often having decorative brackets beneath. Windows were often tall and narrow and commonly arched or curved above. Windows in the style frequently had elaborated hoods, usually of inverted U shape. For an example of the style see the following:

A. 127 West Keetowah
(The Johnson Thompson Home)



Queen Anne

The Queen Anne style was the dominant style of domestic building during the period from about 1885 to 1905, and it continued to be used through the first decade of the 20th century. The Queen Anne style is characterized by its steeply pitched roof with a hipped roof forming the center and cross gable to the front and sides. The gable ends are usually distinguished with patterned wood shingles, decorative verge boards, and spindle work. Wrap-around porches with turned posts and spindle work are also indicative of the style. This style can be seen in the following homes:

B. 225 West Downing
(Jones-Powell-Antoine Home)

C. 300 South College
(Dr. J.M. Thompson Home)

Folk Victorian

The Folk Victorian style, popular from 1870 through the early decades of the twentieth century, was widely used in the construction of housing in Tahlequah. This style is characterized by the use of detailing typical of the Queen Anne style and includes porches with spindle work detailing, flat jigsaw cut trim, symmetrical facades, and cornice-line brackets. The gable front and wing design of this style was very popular in Tahlequah. Folk Victorian houses can be distinguished from Queen Anne style residences by this lack of exterior features such as towers, elaborate wrap-around porches, and bay windows. For an example in the Original Townsite District see the following:

D. 605 West Shawnee

Craftsman

The Craftsman style was a reaction against the ornate decoration of the Victorian Era. Appearing around 1905, the style was popular for middle class bungalows through the 1920's. The style emphasized horizontality, low-pitched roofs, exposed structural members, the use of native and natural materials, open-floor plans, and simple lines. The Craftsman style bespoke honesty in materials and construction. Examples can be seen in the following:

E. 311 West Downing
F. 523 West Downing

English Cottages

In the post World War I era a revival of Tudor style architecture gained popularity. Several smaller homes built in Tahlequah during that era evoke elements of the Tudor style. These homes, which might best be referred to as English Cottages, often featured steeply-pitched roofs with multiple gables; massive, front-facing chimneys; arched doorways and windows; and narrow, multi-paned windows. See the following examples:

G. 327 West Downing
H. 425 West Delaware

Gable-Front

Folk houses were built to provide basic shelter with little regard for changing fashion. A common form of such folk styles was the front-gabled house. One such home built in the form of a gabled-ell is the following:

I. The Ivy-Duncan-Dannenburg Home located in the Sequoyah City Park (This home lies outside the Original Townsite Historic District. It can be found in the Bluff/Park Historic District.)

The Bacone House

The Bacone House is both historically and architecturally noteworthy. Built in 1867, the building housed the Indian University at Tahlequah. The university was moved to Muskogee in 1885 and became today's Bacone University. With its severe lines and parapet end walls the building hearkens back to the Federal style, which dominated much American architecture in the first part of the 19th century. See the Bacone House at the following address:

J. 320 West Morgan

This Brochure

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This brochure was produced in 2004 under the direction of the City of Tahlequah's Historic Preservation Board.