

**TOWN  
OF  
BATHSHEBA  
1893**



**OKLAHOMA'S  
ALL  
FEMALE  
TOWN**

Rumors of a long-gone all-female town, located somewhere between Enid and Perry, has persisted for decades. According to legend, the town of Bathsheba (also called Bethsheba) was founded in the early 1890s by 33 women who didn't allow males of any sort (including animals). Almost immediately, a dozen women decided this lifestyle was not for them and abandoned the fledging village.

The colony was supposedly started by a woman named Nannita Daisey, who came to Oklahoma as a reporter for the Dallas Morning News to cover the 1889 Land Run, but decided to stake a claim herself. According to legend, she leapt from a moving train and marked her claim using her petticoat. Her escapades are memorialized in a 'Leaping into History' statue in Edmond.

Under the Homestead Act, Daisey claimed the Edmond homestead and a town lot in Chandler during the 1891 Sac and Fox land run. During the 1892 Cheyenne-Arapaho land run, she led eleven women nicknamed Daisey's Amazons by the NY Times to claim land. In the 1893 Cherokee Strip land run, Daisey and 33 women, known as Daisey Colonists, established a homestead "about a three-hour horse ride west of Stillwater".

In 1961, Oklahoma historian Robert Cunningham retold the story of an unnamed Kansas reporter who discovered the town in December 1893. While riding through Oklahoma, the reporter stumbled upon a prairie town, that was made up entirely of women.

The village had a mayor and a police chief. The police chief's primary function was to guard the community from possible male visitors. To keep from getting shot by her, the reporter took a strong pair of field glasses "to observe the activities of Bethsheba".

"As the woman raised her gun, I heard a loud shot, and a cloud of black smoke billowed out of the gun barrel. I felt no pain, and saw no blood darkening my white shirt. The woman dropped the gun as soon as she discharged it, and all the women raced toward their tents and disappeared."

The reporter went home and wrote his story but the managing editor was not satisfied. When he returned a week later to flesh out his story, he found only prairie. "I saw no tents or wagons." Bathsheba was gone. A farmer in a nearby soddy said the women told his wife that they left because they were lonely, afraid, and in disagreement. Bathsheba had lasted about twelve weeks.

Cunningham did not name the Kansas newspaper he quoted. "No known descendants of Bethsheba residents exist to shed light on the tale." A New York Times article in September 1893 mentions a woman named Daisey trying to set up an all-female community in Oklahoma. A February 1894 story in The Daily Oklahoman acknowledged Daisey's role in the undertaking.

In those days when land runs drew single women willing to stake land without a husband, and settlement came and went as often as the winds shifted, who would know whether Bethsheba was fact or fiction.