



# OkieLegacy



## Woodford 'Bywater' Oklahoma

I was reading my book ("*Ghost Towns of Oklahoma*" by John W. Morris) and spotted an interesting little town. The name of the town is Woodford (*a.k.a. Bywater*). It's located in Sec. 34, T2S, R1W, 11-1/2 miles north, 9 miles west of Ardmore.

According to this book that was written in 1975 and published in 1977, Woodford (*Bywater*) had a Post Office from February 4, 1884 thru November 22, 1974.

Some other info about Woodford... 1870 the Bywater brothers established their store and blacksmith shop on the south side of the Arbuckle Mountains. The site selected was near where the "*Whiskey Trail*" entered the mountains and a sulphur spring supplied large quantities of water.

It was first known as Bywater, but when a post office was established the settlement was officially named Woodford in honor of the first postmaster. They say this settlement area before statehood was somewhat isolated and primitive... Section lines had not been completely surveyed. The road to Ardmore cut across grazing lands or fields southeastward and the roads to northern towns followed various mountain valleys and passes. Stores, homes, and other buildings were usually logs covered with sheet iron or rough lumber. Most houses had one room, although a few were two log rooms with a covered breezeway between them. There was a school started at an early date.

By 1915 Woodford attained its period of greatest importance... The town had a population of approximately 200 with 5 stores, blacksmith shop, barber shop, and hotel. They also had a telephone exchange installed; a cotton gin and a livestock dealer for the agriculture importance of the area. There was also a asphalt mining company headquarters in the town.

By 1920s a consolidated school district was formed and a high school established.

By the 1930s, the depression and WWII were hard on a lot of communities, even Woodford. The school plant was destroyed. State Highway 53 passes along the south edge of what remains of the town. There is a dirt road that past the old store and beside the spring that leads to *Mountain Lake* in the Arbuckles. At some point in the mid-1970s the spring had been cleaned and a roof built over it and the sides of the pool were somewhat stabilized.

If anyone is ever down that way sometime, drive through those valley roads and get this Oakie some pictures of what is still there. This info I have is from J.W. Morris' book that was published in 1977. Does any of Woodford still stand today?

