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BREEDING, S. F.

INTERVIEW

SAND SPRINGS HOME.

#6968

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BREEDING, B. F. - SAND SPRINGS HOME.

Interview with B. F. Breeding--for 28 years
superintendent of The Home--Sand Springs.

Field Worker, Effie S. Jackson,

July 29, 1937.

61368

ORIGIN OF SAND SPRINGS HOME

I came from Lawrence, Kansas, to Tulsa, July 7, 1908. I was in the Salvation Army service, and subject to call any place in Kansas, Missouri, or Oklahoma. I was sent to Tulsa as Captain. I lived in a three room box house at the northwest corner of Main and Fourth, where the Palace Building is today. I had my garden patch and did not consider that I was living "down town."

One day, about a year after I came here I dropped into Charlie Page's office as I often did. His office was in the old Security Building at the northwest corner of Third and Main. As usual it was full of Indians who had come to "Uncle Charlie" with their problems. He looked up as I came in and said, "Well, Cap, I am glad to see you. I am going to buy a farm to do good with." I said, "Let me have charge of it." He said, "All right." That was the only contract we ever had and I have been here for 28 years carrying out his wish on this farm he wished to do good with.

It was happy planning with Page -- he had the vision and the means to work toward it. I felt the greatest good that could be done at that time was to start a colony

for widows where they could live, each in her own small home, and take care of their children; have a garden and a cow. Page agreed with me but had the bigger plan of a real home for orphan boys and girls.

Page had already spotted the land for this first farm - it is the 160 acres adjoining this Home on the south. It is ideal for the purpose - 100 acres in the valley and 60 acres on the hill. Plenty of stone on the hill for building purposes and plenty of timber in the valley. Then there were innumerable springs ^{one,} in particular, larger than the rest. It lies today at the foot of the hill just north of the Sand Springs Green House and the Katy tracks. There was a legend about it. The Indians believed there was gold there. The sun shining on some sand particles gave the appearance of gold bubbles. Sam Adams, who owned the land, had built a cedar house or shelter over this spring - it was still there when Page bought the land.

Acquisition of land was slow in those days--especially when an heir-ship was involved. Each allotment sale had to be approved by the Secretary of the Interior. It was not until 1911 that restrictions were removed so that Page could buy the 160 acres he had bargained for. Page

had given Sam Adams \$1000 deposit money. Five days before the deal could be completed I packed up my belongings and my wife and I came up here and put up a tent-- ready to go ahead with our plans the moment Page could complete the purchase. Well, on the day that Sam could sell along came a man named Huddleston. He said, "Sam, you've spent that \$1000 Page gave you to hold this land for him, I'll give you \$3000 for the land." Adams told Page of the offer and Page gave him \$3000 and we had our first farm.

The second tent put up was for a widow and her three children. Then we built our little frame house. So we kept building small three room cottages for widows and their children - letting them live in tents until homes were completed. Eventually 35 neat attractive homes were constructed, averaging three children to the house.

The next quarter section Page bought was this one where the Home is. He had to wait some time to get this. It was "dead land," being Tom Adams' allotment. He was deceased and Sam Adams was his heir. As I have said the accumulation of land was slow. Some was freedmen land, some belonged to minors, but eventually 10,000 acres were

blocked off by Page and bought. The Home still owns the 10,000 acres in these adjoining sections. It also owns 10,000 acres scattered in Oklahoma, Texas, and Missouri. For example we have a 200 acre orchard at Kansas, Oklahoma, near Siloam Springs. We have our meadows, poultry farms, swine department, dairies, and creameries around here. You know the big dairy on the Sand Springs road, that is our Jersey Dairy. Two miles west of Sand Springs on the Shell Creek Road, we have just completed our large up-to-date Holstein Dairy - patterned after the famous Hershey Dairy.

No Indian was ever made unhappy by trading with Charlie Page. They called him "Uncle Charlie" - I called him "William Penn." His vision of timber land and its uses came true as you can see in this building. Let me take you through. This long attractive room we call our living room - those small rooms opening along the side are individual music rooms, each with one or two pianos, where the children practice. Now, passing through the reception hall you see the large dining room. (It was lunch time and seated at the 25 flower bedecked tables were 200 happy, healthy children--no uniforms). We raise

everything in abundance. We have the best milk, cream, butter, fruit, meat, etc. (And so we passed through five floors; library, dormitories, individual rooms for older girls, domestic art rooms, group living rooms. Sixty girls and the younger boys live in the Home. The older boys have their four story dormitory and recreation building a half a block away - but eat at the Home.)

One point of special interest is the manual art work done by the boys. This is under the instruction of Nathan E. Galloway. Mr. Breeding says, everything you see here had its beginning in broken hearts, broken hopes, broken pocket books. The paintings on the walls, examples of handicraft, anything that was saleable that would aid a wondering artist or mechanic, Charlie Page bought. You see that large piece of hand carving in the corner - its story laid the foundation of one of our most successful departments.

A young farmer boy, named Nathan E. Galloway, grew up near Springfield, Missouri. Always he whittled and carved with his knife. He might be fishing, but would drop the line and find himself fashioning a bird or a fish from a handy piece of wood. When he grew older he

worked for a Springfield wagon factory but always in his spare moments he carved figures that he said "just grew in the wood" waiting for him to release them. So he accumulated a room of these strange carvings, snakes entwining tree trunks etc. A friend realizing his genius had arranged to display at the San Francisco World's Fair in 1915. His exhibit was complete and stored in a small wooden building. Then it was all destroyed by fire but one piece.

That is the piece you see there. (A tree trunk about two feet in diameter--9 or 10 feet high--with a deeply carved figure of a huge snake, its body coiled around the trunk--its bright head and beady eyes topping the trunk. Its scaly body almost like polished ebony).

So Nathan brought this remnant of his hopes to Tulsa and put it on display hoping to sell it. Page saw it and not only bought it but engaged Galloway to take charge of the boys' manual training department. So under the guidance of Nathan Galloway, who is still with us, we have our own saw mill, mill works, and machine shops. We take our native lumber, oak and walnut, here on our own ground and make the finished articles. Much of the

furniture you see here and in the Boys' Dormitory is their handiwork. All the well built polished tables and chairs of walnut in the dining room and library are the work of our boys under the guidance of Nathan E. Galloway.

Note--I had gone to interview this kindly, old, white-haired man, B. F. Breeding about the dead (the abandoned Creek Cemetery at the foot of the hill) - but came away with an interview about the living--200 boys and girls--age 3 to 21 made happy and hopeful by the fulfillment of the dreams of two men.