

HOLDER, FRANK

INTERVIEW

#8267

226

HOLDER, FRANK, INTERVIEW.

8267

Interviewer, Thad Smith, Jr.,
8-19-37.

Interview with Frank Holder,
Chickasha, 512-Missouri Avenue.

Born April 17, 1882, Missouri.

Parents Martin C. Holder Missouri.
Maggie Walker, Ohio.

I came to the Osage Nation with my parents, in 1886.
I was four years old.

~~My father worked for a man named Beeson, who had a
ranch on Bird Creek.~~

The grass, then, was as tall as a horse's back and
in the winter the grass was young, tender and green. This
grass was underneath the old grass, which was about three
to four inches high.

The next year we moved to a place near Dole's Store
in the Chickasaw Nation where my father rented a farm.

My folks were very poor and they had a hard time
getting along. My father was dark complexioned, and he made
friends with the Indians very readily as he really liked them
and looked like an Indian himself.

HOLDER, FRANK. INTERVIEW.

8267

After we had lived near Dole's Store about a year the Indians commenced bringing presents to my father.

One fall there were thirty-five wagon loads of Indians camped at our dugout and every Indian gave us a present of some kind. They gave us coats, blankets, moccasins, gloves and nearly everything we needed. My father had given them the best beef steer he had and I suppose they were showing their appreciation by giving us gifts. One of the Indians whom my father liked best was named Clemens.

My father raised corn, mostly, and made from forty to sixty bushels to the acre. All he did to the corn after planting it was to harrow it once. He had it shelled by a steam power sheller and freighted it to Fort Smith, Arkansas, by ox team and sold it for ten cents per bushel.

About 1892, my father started to work making some pit silos for Frank Murray, on the bank of the Washita River. The silos were about twenty-five feet wide, three hundred feet long and about twelve or fifteen feet deep. My father worked for a year and a half and made three silos. These silos were filled with green corn raised on the land near by

HOLDER, FRANK. INTERVIEW.

and fed to cattle in a beef pen close by.

The beef pen extended down into the river so that the cattle could get water without having to have it pumped for them. The silos were dug on the second bank of the river and water had never been known to get that high but it did the next year or so after they were put there and it flooded a bottom land farm. The water stood on the land and my father was hired to cut a ditch and drain the water to the river. He dug a ditch about six feet wide and a quarter of a mile long and where the ditch ran into the river he fenced it with several layers of net wire to catch the fish.

~~We caught more fish than we could dispose of.~~

We hauled several wagon loads of fish to Ardmore and to Pauls Valley. There were several tons of fish left lying where the water had stood.

School was taught in Frank Murray's home and I studied Ray's Arithmetic and McCuffey's Reader.

Mr. Murray was a white man but he married an Indian woman and he paid the school teacher out of his own pocket.

There were lots of deer and prairie chickens in the Chickasaw country. My father made a big, slatted coop and

HOLDER, FRANK. INTERVIEW.

balanced a door on a rod on top of the coop. He baited the trap by putting corn on the balancing door and sometimes he would catch more chickens than he would want and would turn the extra chickens out to feed until he took a notion for more prairie chickens.

My father traded two yoke of oxen for a race mare to make the Old Oklahoma run from the Canadian River, north. He ran his horse about eight or ten miles and rode upon a man plowing sod with a yoke of oxen. He did not get any land.

Some time in the '90s my father moved fifteen miles ~~southeast of Ardmore and put in a store, a gin, and a black-~~smith shop. He farmed on the side. The place was named Holder after my father.

In later years, an old Indian woman saved my arm and maybe my life. I had blood poison in my hand and a very prominent doctor said that I had waited too long to come to him and that he would have to amputate my arm. I refused to let him and went back home very sick and discouraged. When I got home this Indian woman was there and asked if I would try her remedy. I consented, and she burned some oak wood,

HOLDER, FRANKL INTERVIEW.

boiled the ashes and got the lye out of them, then dropped some small sacks filled with bran into the lye water. After they became soaked with the mixture, she put one on my hand where it hurt. When it got cool she put on another one and about the third or fourth sack of bran soaked in the lye water which she put on my hand, the swollen place broke open and she lifted out a big core and in just a few days I was perfectly well.