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Foreigners-- Gravians
Pioneer Life--Oklahoma Territory
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INTERVIEW WITH MR. JOHN ZOMOTONY
PAWNEE, OKLA
FIELD WORKER GOLDIE TURNER.
April 21, 1937

Mr. Zmotony was born in Moravia, Europe, in 1865. He came to America in 1877 and to Oklahoma in 1893.

I made the run to Perry in 1893 but didn't like it and only stayed a short time, then I went down to the Cherokee Nation and got a claim. My father and brothers had located about ten miles east of Pawnee and kept wanting me to come. They said the land was good there for farming. Finally in 1895 I got a letter from my brother, saying my father was sick and wanting me to come. I couldn't come for about a week and when I got here my father was buried.

While I was here I bought a farm close to my father's and built a house on it. I first built a one room sod house and put split shingle roof on it; then I went back to get my family. I had four children and the one room house was not big enough so I built another room to it. I split the shingles for it myself but I couldn't keep it from leaking. The next year I began quarrying out rocks and built me a two story stone building.

I wanted to raise wheat but I didn't have any luck. I planted it three times and the third time it came up good and

was about knee high when the chinch bugs ate it up. I then listed the ground and planted corn and kafir but chinch bugs ate them up, too.

We didn't buy much at Pawnee but went on to Perry or Ponca City. There were no roads to Pawnee. We just started out across the country. When we got to Pawnee there was a good road to Perry.

The first school house in our neighborhood, which was district 29 , was a sod house. Then a year or two later three or four of us men took our hogs to Perry and got lumber to build a frame building which I helped to build. The building is still used, although another room has been added to it.