

On the west side of Flint Creek, and about half a mile north of State Highway No. 33, at one time there existed the village of Flint. It is not known when the village started or what the original name was. But in 1889 there was a post office here that was called Hildebrand. From 1895 to 1898 the name of the post office was known as Beckwith, and named for Richard Beck, who was the postmaster. Then in 1900 the post office became known as Flint. It is believed that Still Jackson put in one of the first stores there about 1880. Later a man by name of Graham put in a store. A blacksmith shop operated here for many years. Mr. Beck says that the mill used to run day and night as people from as far away as Pryor, Jay, and Watts, as well as points in Arkansas, came to have corn and wheat ground.

Mr. Beck tells about the gritter, which the Indians used long ago to make a dish called 'grit bread' from nearly mature corn. The implement was a piece of sheet metal punched full of nail holes and mounted on a wood frame. As the ears of corn were rubbed against the perforated metal the grains of corn were pulverized and removed from the cob. This material was then mixed with a little dry corn meal, and sometimes beans, water and salt and baked. This was a main dish when the corn was in season. He tells that one time an Indian brought in some corn to be ground which he felt had matured too much for the gritter. It was still pretty moist but they ground it for him anyway, and he took it home. After about a week the Indian returned to have some more ground. The first batch had turned to a good whisky mash ~~the~~ the Indians were having a ball.

Mr. Beck gave a tour of the historic old mill and showed the burrs and all the grinding apparatus. The present mill is about 80 years old, the inside is well preserved and in good condition. On the south side of the building, the sawmill section, which has been converted from water power to tractor power. Mr. Beck no longer does any sawing except for himself. Mr. Beck explained the operation of the old water powered mill. The present burr weighs about a ton. He says it can be taken out and sharpened which takes about three weeks, and this sharpening job he does himself. The original mill had a overshot wheel, but the more modern mill used a turbine system.

Mr. Beck says that about every thirty or forty years a flood would hit and he remembers when water was five feet deep on the first floor of the mill. After the flood all the grinding equipment would have to be taken apart and cleaned, which was a two weeks job. He said that in the old days his father would not saw anything but pine logs. To-day there are no pine in the country. Once in a while he would saw a good oak log for some man to make a wagon tongue or axle.

In the early days of the settlement at Flint Creek, the Becks, Hildebrands, Kestersons, Crows, Vanns, Garretts, and Blackwoods made up most of the population. Somewhere in this area were a large group belonging to the Zeke Proctor family. Many stories have been written recounting the fights, snootings, and killings between the Becks and the Proctors. Some of these events took place on the Beck place at Flint, while other fights happened at Christie and Proctor towns, and places inbetween.

About six miles east of Flint Community is the Johnson Cemetery. It is here that a large number of both the Beck and Proctor families are buried, whether for not it be ironical, they are together now in peace. The history of Ezekiel Proctor was long, rough, good and otherwise, depending how one observed it. However, those who knew him erected a large marble monument to his memory on which is inscribed:

EZEKIEL PROCTOR born July 4, 1831 died Feb. 28, 1907

"As a husband, devoted; as a father,
affectionate; as a friend, kind and true"