

OSBORNE, JOHN R.

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Interview with John R. Osborne, oldest
surviving grandson of Captain Black Beaver,
Famous Delaware Chief and Government scout.
Maysville, Oklahoma.

By Chester A. Lamb -- Indian-Pioneer History
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I do not know what year my grandfather, Black Beaver, left Belleville, Illinois, but believe when he left there he came down into this Indian country. He fought in several wars. He served in the Mexican War and was at the head of a band of Delaware and Shawnee Indians. He was made a captain in this war in 1861, he also acted as a guide for a man by the name, I believe, of Colonel Emory. He guided him from this country to Kansas. My grandpa did not wish to guide him on this trip as he was afraid that during his absence his home and property would be destroyed, and that is exactly what happened. Everything that he owned was destroyed, all of his papers and everything.

He might have been in more wars, I don't know, as I was

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just a small child when he was living. I believe that on one scouting expedition he was with a man by the name of Marcy.

Right here where the city of Anadarko now stands was considered his allotment. He had lots of cattle which he grazed on this land. Right about where Broadway Street is now, he had a ditch dug clear through down to where the park is. I asked him what he had dug the ditch for and he replied "I'm going to catch hogs in it."

I used to go all around the country with him. He would set me on behind him on his horse and we would go everywhere. It seemed that when he would go any place he would always take me with him. He was very fond of me, and was always making a fuss over me. Just the way that I do with my grandchildren today. Grandpa had lots of friends, and he was always straight with everybody.

Grandpa I believe had four or five wives, during his life time. But at the time of his life when I was old enough to remember, I do not believe that he had a wife; they had probably passed away.

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I remember the day that he died as if it were yesterday. My step-father was just north of Anadarko helping to put a roof on the new church that they were building, when one of the men from down by grandpa's house came running up and told us grandpa had died. When my step-father heard this news he nearly fell off the roof of the church. They said the last words grandpa said was, "I'm going to die" and he passed away without a struggle, dying of heart failure.

On the day of the funeral there were many hundreds of Indians attended, also quite a few white people. I can remember very plainly when he was carried out of the house, to about a quarter of a mile south of his home. The pallbearers carried his casket all the way. His coffin was made of walnut and covered with black cloth with large brass thumb tacks holding the black cloth in place. As nearly as I can remember his funeral sermon was preached by a missionary, I do not remember his name.

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Grandpa's was the first grave in this Cemetery. Later my sister was buried by his side. We came down here a few years ago, and put a fence around his grave. There used to be other graves there, but they have been moved or cultivated over. It started out as a family burial ground.

I do not remember much else, as all these things happened so long ago, and I was only about nine or ten years old at that time.