

ODOM, EVA LENA COPLAND.

INTERVIEW

#8978

LEGEND & STORY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma
ODUM, EVA LENA COPELAND INTERVIEW 8978

Field worker's name Robert H. Bowman

This report made on (date) October 18 1937

1. This legend was secured from (name) Eva Lena Copeland, Odom

Address Washington, Oklahoma. Route #1

This person is (male or female) White, Negro, Indian,

If Indian, give tribe _____

2. Origin and history of legend or story Development of Chickasaw Nation

3. Write out the legend or story as completely as possible. Use blank sheets and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached _____

Robert H. Boatmen
Investigator
October 18, 1937

Interview with
Eva Lena Copeland Odom,
Washington, Oklahoma.

I came to the Indian Territory in 1893. I was born in Texas, September 14, 1879, and came from there to the Territory with my parents. We settled near old Stonewall on Boggy Creek in the Chickasaw Nation.

There were very few people here then compared with the population today. The towns were all small and from twenty-five to fifty miles apart. Old Stonewall had two stores. Dr. Truax, a Canadian and also an intermarried citizen, owned one of the stores and Mr. Cockran owned the other.

Governor Byrd lived there at Stonewall; he was Governor of the Chickasaw Indians; there were a good many Indians located up and down Boggy Creek.

Fish were plentiful and the Indians spent most of their time fishing and hunting.

The country was full of turkey and deer. The

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Chickasaw Indians were a very friendly people.

There were few schools and few churches here and lots of dances. The younger set would often ride horseback from five to fifteen miles to some neighbor's house for a dance; the only transportation then was on horseback or by horse and buggy. The boys all wore high-topped boots and long shanked spurs.

The Territory was a great grazing country and looked as though it held a very promising future. Several people became engaged in the cattle business or in stock raising. Others turned to farming and to the development of agriculture.

Land could be leased for almost nothing; there were no section lines and if a man wanted to put in a farm all he had to do was to build a house, clear out the land and plant his crops. The land was very productive; corn would grow from fifty to seventy-five and a hundred bushel

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per acre and cotton would make from one to a bale and a half to the acre.

There were no railroads here then and farm products were hauled to Wynnewood to market, a distance of some forty miles, and were sold very cheap. Corn sold at from 12 to 15 cents per bushel, cotton sold for from 4 to 5 and 6 cents per pound.

Wynnewood was then the principal trading point of the Chickasaw Nation.

Time passed and people kept coming into the Territory seeking their fortunes and land was leased, houses built and land was broken out in preparation for planting crops and towns began to spring up all over the country.

The construction of roads began in about 1900 and bridges were built. Railroads were then being built through the Territory.

A railroad from Atoka was built by way of Lehigh and Ada on to Oklahoma City. This was a

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branch line of the M. K&T. Railroad, known as the "Katy."

The 'Frisco from Kansas City came; then the Oklahoma Central, called the O. C.; this railroad was built from Lehigh by the way of Ada, Purcell, Blanchard and on to Chickasha and now is known as the Santa Fe and has been discontinued from Lehigh to Purcell.

I was married to Mr. M. B. Odom, November 17, 1895, and I have continued to live in the Chickasaw Nation. I now live some four miles west of Washington, in McClain County. I have seen the full development of the Chickasaw Nation.