

PATTON, DAN W.

INTERVIEW

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Chauncey O. Moore, Supervisor.
Indian Pioneer History

No. 2135

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March 15, 1937

Lawrence D. Hibbs,
Field Worker.

Interview: Dan W. Patton

BRIDGES

Mr. Dan W. Patton and his brother, J. Gus Patton, in about 1903, at which time they were in private practice, surveyed and staked out the first highway bridge upstream on the Arkansas river above Fort Smith. They did not have anything to do with building of the bridge but merely made the survey. Immediately after the survey, the bridge was constructed and was known as the Spaulding bridge. Mr. Patton could not remember whether it was a toll bridge or a free bridge. To his knowledge this bridge is still standing and being used.

While making this survey, Mr. Dan Patton on one or more occasions attended meetings at Fayetteville, at which meetings the citizens of Muskogee and adjoining territory made arrangements to bring the first railroad into Muskogee, which was the Park and Cherokee Central Railroad. The people had to lead themselves to raise \$50,000.00 which they did within an hour's time. Some individuals gave as much as \$5,000.00 and some as much as 10,000.00. This railroad ran from Fayetteville, Arkansas to Okmulgee, Oklahoma.

Some of the people that he could remember that contributed to this cause were as follows:

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|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| H. B. Spaulding | C. W. Turner | J. N. Patterson |
| W. L. Turner | W. L. Levers | |

And many other prominent citizens whose names he could not remember.

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TOWNSITES

Mr. Dan W. Patton tells of the early laying out of town sites in Indian Territory, of which his brother, J. Gus Patton, shares with him whatever honors there might be.

The people had gathered together in small towns some consisting of only a few people up to some cases of several hundred, so around the 1900's, the government sent surveying parties into Indian Territory to lay out these town sites and establish boundary lines so as to be able to make the allotments of the land that was to follow. These town sites were taken from the land that was to be allotted. This surveying party was under the supervision of J. Gus Patton and Dan W. Patton was a member of this same party.

They would move into a town and establish headquarters and then would set about to establish the boundary of this particular town site. They were also allowed to designate this land to be allotted, a tract of ground for a cemetery. If the town already had a cemetery, then the surveyor would establish on his records this cemetery.

Before these surveys were made, the people living on this property were merely squatters and had no legal title to the land. After the town site survey had been completed, the Town Site Commission would set up an appraisal and then they would hold a public auction, which would be under the direction of the Town Site Commission. This property would be sold to the highest bidder,

but the person living on, or having a business on, any property had the privilege of bidding it in at the appraised value, but in the event they did not appear at the sale, then the property was sold to the highest bidder, the government giving a patent to the purchaser, thus establishing a title to the land.

The money derived from the sale of these properties, whether improved or vacant lots, was turned over to the Indian Nation wherein the town was located.

Mr. Patton says that in every case here they went to a town to make a town site survey, they were received by the people with a hearty welcome and were assisted by them in every way possible.