

INDIAN PIONEER HISTORY PROJECT
WORLD PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

367

PIERCE, LOUIS.

INTERVIEW.

5869.

Interviewer's name Joe Southern.

Date of interview (day) May 24, 1937.

The land was owned by (name) Louis Pierce, Boggy Bend.

Address Atoka, Oklahoma, Route #4.

The land is (check or initial) Choctaw.

History of the land or story Life, roads, crossings,
mail routes, fire arms, meats and bread, settlements, locations,
hunting grounds, clothing.

What is the land or other use of it? (check or initial) 3

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Joe Southern,
Field Worker,
May 24, 1937.

An Interview With Louis Pierce,
Route #4, Atoka, Oklahoma.

Mr. Pierce was born September 3, 1861, at Nelson near Antlers. Father was a Choctaw Indian; mother was mixed, a freedman. I received forty acres as an allotment. During the Civil War my parents farmed. Some had cattle, hogs and ponies as livestock, used ox teams for transportation had spinning wheel and loom and pair of carding cards to card cotton with in making thread for cloth for clothing. Would pick seed from cotton by hand to get it ready for carding. Had small fruit orchards. Would gather tame and wild fruits and dry for winter. There was a gristmill at Rose Hill on Robert Jones' slave farm, located seven miles east of what is now Hugo. Citizens for forty miles around would patronize it, most often using ox teams for transportation. Medicine was gathered from fields and forests of different kinds for use. Button Snake root, May Apple, Mullein, beach tree leaves, polk root, jimson weed, and barks of several kinds for dyes and medicines. Tom Fuller blocks were made from beachgum tree, cut in three and one-half

PIERCE, LOUIS.

INTERVIEW.

5869.

-2-

foot lengths; one end hollowed out to hold one-half bushel of corn. Mallet or churn mall was made of bois d' arc wood.

Salt for meat and family use was gotten from old Lake Giles and Thomson, from salt works near Boggy Depot. Hunting and fishing grounds were along Boggy River west and north, in mountains along McGee and Potapo Creeks.

Atoka Lake in Atoka County, location Ee, SE, SE, Section 13, Township 4 South, Range 13 East, was camp grounds for hunters, fishermen, and treppers. There is a good spring on hillside on west side of Lake. Game, deer, wild turkey, squirrels. I have bow and arrows fifty-five years old used in killing fish and squirrels, when I was a boy I used it. It is made of bois d' arc wood strung with buckskin string. Arrows made of wild native cane with tin spikes on one end and feathers on the other so they will float in water.

Mail route was from Doaksville, Goodland, Wheelock, Nelson, Mayhew, Boggy Depot, and Atoka. It was first carried horseback, then buggy and team, then hack and team, until Statehood. All roads leading to old Mayhew

PIERCE, LOUIS.

INTERVIEW.

5869.

-3-

or court grounds was notch-marked. Fire arms were flint lock muzzle-loading rifles and shot guns. Each rifle had bullet mould for running bullet to the bore of gun.

Trading point was at Fort Smith, Arkansas, Doaksville, and Paris, Texas, up till railroads built through Indian Territory and then Hugo and Antlers. In the fall of each year three to five families would gather and go into camp in forest and kill game and hogs for meat and bring it home and prepare and cure it for family use for a year. Hogs, cattle, and other livestock ran loose on the range. Each man had his own brand as an ear mark. Road from Nelson to District Choctaw Indian Court Grounds crossed Muddy Boggy River in Section 28, Township 4 South, Range 14 East. This was a notched-road from court ground to Henry John settlement in Pushmataha County, west of Kosoma, fifteen miles north crossing on Muddy Boggy River just below mouth of McGee Creek in Section 24, Township 3 South, Range 13 East, then northeast to Round Prairie. Settlement in sections 13-14-22-23-24 then up Clear Boggy Creek to Section 1, Township 2 South, Range 14 East, out of Atoka County. This was a notch-marked road also. All

PIERCE, LOUIS.

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-4-

used by Choctaw Indians. It was a custom for the Indians to wear wild turkey feathers or tips of deer or panther tails pinned or sewed to their hat bands. The Indians in early days would settle or build their home near where there was a good live spring of water. Their churches and camp grounds, the same way. In the year 1910 I moved to Atoka County, worked five years for a cattle and land company on Potape Creek east of Atoka then moved to Boggy Bend west of Stringtown, three miles. Live there at the present. I am farming there at the present now.