

INDEX CARDS

Houston, Sam
Texas Trail
Immigration--Cherokee Nation
Journey to Oklahoma
Land tenure--Cherokee
Outlaws--Cherokee Nation
Outlaws--Arkansas border
Law enforcement--Federal

PHIPPS, JOE

PHIPPS, Informant.
y, Oklahoma.

I was born in Georgia in the year of 1860. My father was a white and my mother was Cherokee. In 1865 my father, with my mother and the children, including myself, left Georgia in a wagon drawn by an ox in a wagon train of about thirty wagons bound for the Cherokee Nation. I do not remember much about the trip as I was only five years old at that time. The wagon train was more than five months on the road before they reached their destination. My father, Jim Phipps did not come any further than Ft. Smith with the wagon train. He took up a claim close to the Arkansas River about three miles from Ft. Smith. He cleared up land of timber and canebrake and improved the claim where we farmed for ten years. The family was sickly in that locality and in 1875 we left there and came on up to the Territory and located at the old Sulphur Springs, now on what is known as the Rio Grand ranch five miles northwest of Ft. Gibson. We lived at the Sulphur Springs place until 1880, when we moved to a claim for which we traded a pony, situated where the town of Okay now stands. Ft. Smith as I remember it in those days was only a small village of frame and log houses with the government post buildings and this country was a refuge for outlaws and renegades from every state in the union and the country was plenty tough, always seemed to be worse on the Arkansas border. Though there were many criminals in this country at that time, all of them were not in the rank and file of the people as there several employed in the service of the United States government as deputy U. S. Marshals. One of the most dastardly crimes ever committed against the early settlers was the "whiskey search" deal a certain bunch of U. S. deputy marshals practiced on immigrants coming into the Territory in the early days. The way the trick was worked, one or two of the appointed deputies would approach an immigrant who would have a good looking

fit, wagon, team etc, and tell him that under the law they would have to ²⁹⁴ search his wagon to assure the government that the immigrant was not bringing whiskey into the territory. The unsuspecting immigrant anxious to comply with the laws of his new country willingly submitted to a search of his wagon, and while the search was being made they would slip a bottle of whiskey into the wagon, and after their feigned search the innocent victim was allowed to proceed on his way only to be stopped a little further down the road by confederate officers that had planted the whiskey in his wagon and they also stopped him and demanded a search in the name of the law. The search was made and of course the whiskey would be found in the wagon and then and there the immigrant would be arrested on the charge of introducing whiskey into the Indian country. Then if the immigrant had the money and could hand them \$150 or \$200 on the spot as a "penalty bond" he was allowed to proceed, but if not his wagon and team would be taken and he placed in jail on a charge of introducing liquor into the Indian country.

(Unfinished)