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LEGEND & STORY FORM  
 WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION  
 Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

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Field worker's name Alson J. Chase.

This report made on (date) June 14, 1937

1. This legend was secured from (name) Joseph A. Innis.

Address Woodward Oklahoma

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

If Indian, give tribe \_\_\_\_\_

2. Origin and history of legend or story "assacre of Edgar N.

Deming, Daniel Short, Robert Pool, and Charles Davis by the Cheyenne

Indians March 19th, 1873, on the Cimarron River in the northwest part

of Woodward County.

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

This story was written by Charles B. Willard in 1910. The original story is the property of Joseph A. Innis. Edgar L. Dering was buried in the cemetery at Arkansas City, and Daniel Short, Robert Pool and Charles Davis were buried on the Cimarron River where they were killed. I am enclosing the inscription on the head stone in the Arkansas City Cemetery. Charles B. Willard was the only survivor of the surveying party.

FIELD WORKER ALSON J. CHASE  
Indian-Pioneer History Project S-149  
June 14, 1937.

Erected to the memory of deceased comrades of  
the United States Surveying Corps.

Frank Martin died at Deer creek, Indian Territory,  
August 10, 1872.

Robert Martin, killed near Cottonwood Grove,  
Indian Territory, about March 1, 1873.

Edgar A. Deming, Daniel Short, Robert Fool, and  
Charley Davis. The three boys were buried on the Cimarron  
River in this County, and their graves are lost. They were  
killed by Cheyenne Indians on Cimarron River, Indian Ter-  
ritory, March 19, 1873.

Glad to give any information that I can about these  
men. This monument has lots of visitors. D.A.R.'s are great-  
ly interested.

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Sincerely yours,

T.F. Nichols, 315 North 7th, Street, Arkansas City,  
Kansas.

FIELD WORKER ALSON J. CHASE,  
Indian-Pioneer History Project S-149  
June 14, 1937.

INTERVIEW WITH JOSEPH A. INNIS  
Woodward, Oklahoma.

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I came to Kansas from my home in Monroeville, Ohio, and for a year or two. I carried dispatches from Dodge City, Kansas, to Fort Elliott, Texas, and Fort Sumner, New Mexico. In the spring of 1872, I joined the surveying gang of Darling and Barrett, south of Arkansas City, Kansas. There's where they commenced their survey, at the west line of the Osage and Kaw Reservations.

On the second day of March, 1873, Ed Haight and his party started to cross the Cimarron River. He understood the Spanish language and could talk with the Indians and a bunch of them met him in the middle of the river and told him that if he did not go back they would kill somebody. This was at the southwest corner of section thirty-six, Township twenty-eight north, Range twenty west. Haight took them at their word and went back to Arkansas City, Kansas, with his party. They made light of him for being a coward after

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he got back there. Colonel Deming said, "I hope my boy won't be a coward like you are," to which Haight answered, "That's all right, Colonel; just you wait a while."

On the 19th day of March, 1873, we were working in Township twenty-eight, (we were then at work on the interior line), and at the corner a mile north of the township corner. Mr. Edgar K. Deming said that one of the corner men could go to camp if he wanted to, as he would not use him any more that day. Robert Pool was afraid to go and Mr. Deming asked me if I was afraid to go to camp and I told him "no" and so he said I could go back to camp and kill some turkeys that we saw on the river that morning and have them a good, hot supper when they came in. I went to camp, took a gun and went down on the sand bar, killed two turkeys, took them to camp, dressed them, and waited for the boys to come in. Hugh Richards and his party were also working in Township twenty-eight, and they came into camp that

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night, but the party I was with did not come in. We sat up quite late and as they didn't come in, we went up on a hill and built a bonfire, so that they could see it in the night. They still did not get in and the next morning Hugh Richards wanted to know if I would go with a couple of the boys down there and see if we could find them. We went right back to the corner where I left them and went on down the river to the corner, and, when we got within about twenty steps of the corner, there laid Charles Davis on his face at the foot of a cottonwood tree, dead. We looked a little further on and we could see the shirts of the other men blowing in the wind. Among the four killed there was a Charles Davis boy and a Daniel Short boy, and their brothers were with me in the searching party. Frank Davis was walking right ahead with me when we came around the sand hill and he saw his brother lying there and fell right down on him. We saw the shirts blowing in the wind on the others and Short ran right over there. Just about that time I looked across the river and saw about

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thirty-five Indians, sitting on their horses on the high bluff there. When they saw us, they all started riding west as hard as they could go. As soon as I saw the Indians, I said, "Boys, look there, we've got to get out of here, and quick too." and we ran right up that sand creek that runs into the river there. I ran up the creek two or three hundred yards and thought I would run up one of those gulches and see if I couldn't hide behind some of those rocks, but before I got across, I concluded the Indians would hunt us out anyway, so I got down on my belly and crawled right over that divide until I got into a hollow on the other side and then shot down the river bottom and from there into camp.

Now these boys of ours who were killed did not make any fight. They had no chance to make a fight; they had no arms and could not understand what the Indians said. The Indians had gathered right around them and it looked as though Edgar H. Deming had put the compass on his arm and the boys had all started

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to walk away, for Mr. Deming was shot in the back and the shot had gone through and crashed the arm that was holding the compass. Robert Pool was shot in the hollow of the back and Daniel Short was shot in the forehead, with the gun so close that the powder burned him. Charles Davis had been shot in the back, but not killed, and he had started to run for a tree and the Indians then shot ten or twelve arrows into his back, and when he got to the tree, he just fell against it, he was so far gone. Then they shot him in the head with a needle gun. I carried that ball for twenty years or more.

I got back into camp in an hour or so, but the other boys ran up the creek, they said, and got into a wolf's den. They saw a hole in the bank, among the rocks and crawled in there. They said it was just full of wolves in there but they didn't bother them at all. That night the wolves left the den and they followed them out. We had a bonfire up on the hill, so that if they were not dead, they would come into

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camp, which they did.

We left that night, or the next morning; after the boys got into camp, we pulled out for Arkansas City, Kansas, and the night we got in they raised a party of forty or fifty men and went right out there to get the bodies of our boys to bury them. Colonel Deming sent a metallic casket out for the body of his boy and we put Edgar N. Deming's body in this casket and hauled it back to Arkansas City. Then Short and Thrasher (Darling and Barrett) applied to the Government for an escort to enable us to finish our work and they promised to send an escort from the Cheyenne Agency, and so we came back out and camped right where we had buried the boys. The escort failed to come, and I remember they lined us up one morning and those who wanted to work without an escort were to step to one side of the line and those that did not were to step on the other. Part of the crew wouldn't work.

Those of us who went on worked right on west. The first line we worked on after we came back was

there at the river; then we went ahead to the 100th Meridian and finished our contract. The Cheyenne Indians were very bad about digging up our corner stones and destroying them.

I never was in but one fight with the Indians that really amounted to anything and that was when the Indians had surrounded a party of buffalo hunters. With a party of eleven others, I was going across from Fort Elliott, Texas, where we had been to guard a wagon train, and we were taking a short cut back to Dodge City, Kansas, and camped for dinner, I hardly know how far from Protection, Kansas, but it was up in the sand hill country there. While we were eating dinner we thought we heard gunshots and two of the boys, Hank Medly and Jack Green, got on their horses and rode ahead to see if they could see where the shooting was being done. The wind was blowing awfully strong from the north that day, and they came hurrying back and told us to get ready as soon as we could, that a band

of Indians had some buffalo hunters corralled over there on the flat and were cleaning them out. We jumped on our horses and I should judge rode about two miles before we saw where the Indians had the buffalo hunters surrounded on a little flat. It seemed as though they must have been insane to put their wagons in a place like that, where the Indians could come right up on the sand hills and shoot right down on them. We put our horses on the dead run and came around those sand hills. The Indians were right up there, not more than fifty or sixty yards from us, and they did not know we were there, at least not until we had all dismounted and fired. We had the very best of arms, while they had only a few old rifles in addition to their bows and arrows. At the crack of our guns, they just whirled and looked that way and I suppose, there being only twelve of us and about thirty-five of them, they thought they could exterminate us in about a minute, but they didn't figure on the superior arms we had, (we had Winchester Rifles and Colt 45's). The Indians just whirled right around and came down that

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slope toward us. We had all the advantage in the world, we were behind our horses and shooting over them. They came right down toward us and we helped lots of them to answer the roll. That's where we killed old Black Dog, about the meanest Indian that ever lived. It looked like we all shot at him at once, five Winchester balls went through his back. They saw they couldn't get to us, so they came down to within thirty yards of us and then I think there were about ten or twelve of them left-they broke and flew west and just as they went around the sand hills, Jack Crane shot one immensely big Indian. I think there were twenty Indians left lying there and the one Jack Crane shot as they went away made twenty-one. There were twelve of the buffalo hunters and they were <sup>all</sup> killed but four, and two boys were also alive. The father of these two boys had taken a big buffalo hide and stretched it over a wagon wheel until it was as hard as flint. When the attack began, he just opened this

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buffalo hide and put the live boys back in it and they escaped without a scratch. We went into the fight with twelve men and we came out of it with five, but two of these were pretty badly shot up. I got mine there, was shot three times that day.