

INDEX CARDS

Kickapoo
McKinley
Iowa
Jennings
Outlaws--Oklahoma Territory
Guthrie
Jennings, Joe
Canton, Frank M.
Timber stealing
Chandler
Mail routes
Tepees--Kickapoo
Tepees--Iowa
Pioneer life--Oklahoma Territory

Field Worker: Harry M. Dreyer

BIOGRAPHY OF William Shoemaker
5222 Classen Ave.
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

BORN In the year 1862
Atchinson, Kansas

William Shoemaker was born in Kansas in territorial days of that state. He was raised near the Kickapoo Indians Of Kansas. He can recall going by Indians teepees at night, and the Indians would be lying on their cooling boards. His father's neighbor, who was a good carpenter built a house for their Indian neighbor. The Indian lived in the house for short time, and one day traded the house for a sack of flour, and went down on the creek and built him a teepee and a cooling board. He said he did not like a house as there was too much "scratchim", meaning that bed bugs bit too much in a white man's house.

William Shoemaker came to Oklahoma in 1891, and settled near McKinley, Oklahoma. He had a full blood Indian, of Northern Iowa tribe as his neighbor, who claimed to be the only full blood Indian of his tribe. He recalls when the run was made for the town of Chandler, people were driven back to the line before opening and all made a run for the town. He states the town of Jennings was named after Joe Jennings, who played greater part in organizing group to lay out same. He states there were group of former marshals, U. S. marshalls, deputy and local former marshals, who terrorized the country a good deal making others believe they were the law. He recalls Jennings and Canton and former Sheriff of Logan county selling

2

lots between main part of Guthrie and old state capitol. To carry on this racket, they would arrest people on other lots and sell the lots. The people were either kept in jail, or run out of the country. He states a band of these former officers took homesteads near him, and have sent threatening letters to him. Jennings who was no kin to notorious Al Jennings made it a business rustling livestock. He recalls seeing him with a load of hogs which he claimed were wild hogs that were astray and abandoned by owners. He sold them in Guthrie. He states Canton worked with militia for awhile, but all worked pretty close in co-partnership with officers against citizens. He recalls the arrest of one of his neighbors for cutting one tree on an Indian land by consent of his neighbor Indian. The man was otherwise a first class citizen, but was hounded and annoyed by officers. Many illegal arrests were made, in some cases by men who had no authority, but such cases were later dropped. Joe Jennings was first to contest any case, in the Iowa Tribe section, Shoemaker was called as witness on part of guardian of former Governor Trap.

Mr. Shoemaker recalls that first mail carrier who carried mail from McKinley to Guthrie and Chandler, seeing milk cow, belonging to Shoemaker, got out and tied a rope around its neck and tied it to his wagon and was leading it off claiming it was a stray. Until a neighbor informed him he had Shoemaker's cow, and he then released it and the cow returned home.

3

He states that (Mr. Grant) full blood Iowa Indian and neighbor; Indian name Running Deer, named so because he was very fast on his feet when young, and himself were very good friends, calling to see each other often. Running Deer had a 3 room teepee which was warmer than his own house. He had a hole at the top of the teepee for smoke and a strip across the north side of flue to turn the wind and keep the smoke out of the tent. Mr. Grant, Indian, lost his ponies at one time, that either strayed or were stolen, and he had no way to get his supplies, so Mr. Shoemaker would take him to the agency for supplies and the Indian would usually give him part of the supplies for taking him.

There was another Indian by the name of Moore, who was partly French. That being true Mr. Grant called him a Frenchman, and not an Indian as he was the only full-blood of the tribe. The Indian later found his ponies at Guthrie, they had been picked up and sold at public auction, thus, Mr. Grant never recovered them. He recalls that with another neighbor, who had a team of Texas (called Cherokee steers crossed with white face) Oxen, he upon many occasions rode to Guthrie starting in the morning when cool and team running all the way at high speed taking them there always safely. All individuals with horses gave them trail when seeing them because of their vicious horns, and could not always be driven in a straight direction. The team was very powerful and fine for farm work.

4

Mr. Shoemaker claims story book of spoilers written in Alaska, will tell story of Canton, who with fellow deputy officers went to Alaska from Oklahoma. Canton killed his gang and has story of them. This book will describe them as they were in Oklahoma.

Supplement of William Shoemaker Biography.

In describing an Indian cemetery 1 mile north of Durant, Shoemaker says that the Indians built small cedar houses above each grave and put weapons, beads, blankets and saddles in the small house. When the Indians were asked concerning the graves they would never comment. Oil was discovered in that vicinity and the houses were removed.

Some of the Indians swindled oil brokers during boom by taking them out to where some of the Indian graves were and claiming their deceased relatives were owners of the property, to prove some would show the Indian grave as proof of heirship. They gave lease to the property to the brokers. The brokers later discovered the Indians could not claim a title to the land.