RAY, HERMAN LEE INTERVIEW 13663

W. T. Holland,
Investigator,
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An Interview with Mr. Herman Lee Ray,
2501 E-5th Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

My grandparents, on my mother's side of the house, were half Cherokee. The Rays were English. They came over in the early days and some of my family settled in East Tennessee, among the Cherokee Indians, along about 1800, several years before they were removed to the western country. The Rays married into the "Harris Tribe" of the Cherokees, as it was known in those days.

Some of them migrated to Kentucky about 1830, I think my father, David Ray, and my mother, Lucy Ray (they were distant cousins) were born in Kentucky. Some of the Rays later moved into Missouri. There I was born March 27, 1875.

Prior to the Civil War, my people lived in Missouri about half way between St. Louis and Kansas City, where they owned and operated about nine thousand acres of land. During the Civil War though they were forced to flee for safety, as General Price and his men were ravaging the country, taking

everything they wanted and destroying the balance. So, after one of these raids, my parents escaped into Illinois, where they, with other relations, remained until the close of the War, when they returned to Missouri to resume farming activities left off during the War. My parents came to Vinita in 1896 and enrolled us, or registered us, but for some reason unknown to me we children never received allotments. I am a blacksmith by trade so my first work in Vinita was at Vinita where I went in 1898. I remained in Vinita until 1900 when I came to Tulsa where I have since been. I returned to Missouri in the Fall of 1898 and stayed long enough to marry Missouri A. Rex of Cooper County.

I located my shop on West First Street where I bought a space, now known as 114-116 West 1st, which I still own, as well as property at 113-115 South Cheyenne Street, Tulsa. My business was fine until about 1914 when automobiles began to multiply and to gradually ruin blacksmithing work. During the fourteen years I made many wagons, buggies and surreys, shod horses, sharpened and made plows, outright, and repaired all kinds of tools and vehicles. I recall, too,

making forty-one steel stakes, three quarters of an inch in diameter, which were used to mark the forty-one corners when the townsite of Tulsa, six hundred and forty acres, was surveyed by Gus Patton, at the request of and for the Creek Nation. The Creek Nation paid the expense of this survey and plat. After the town was divided into lots, a commission of three men, two whites and one Indian, was appointed to appraise the lots, and after this was done, then the lots were sold for 50 % of the appraised value. My first shop was where the Thomas Hardware Store now is, between Boston and Cincinnati on the south side of the street.

R.N. Bynum was elected mayor the year I came here. L.M. Poe (still living) was a candidate at that time. Sherman Pender was elected Chief of Police (and is now on the force) and Brent Lemons was night watchman, these two constituted the police force of Tulsa in 1900.

L. W. Lindsay, husband of Mrs. Lilah Lindsay, an early day teacher, was I think Tulsa's first census enumerator. Under the Dawes Commission, a tax of five mills could be assessed and collected, so Mr. Lindsay took the census and then assessed

all are and probably for the five mile tax. Some men have their property in at one tenth of its value, when the [illegible] make a better place to the [illegible] the people lived, and hence [illegible] own real estate.

[illegible] Tulsa. The [illegible] of Tulsa [illegible] it. I [illegible] thirteen days, when we went as far as New York City. This was about 1904, I think. I [illegible] remember well the [illegible] who went on this trip, [illegible] and Emmet Dalton. Will did rope tricks and [illegible] art, too. This, I think, was one of the first trips of this nature Will Roger took. Any way, before that time and for years after, Will was a familiar figure in Tulsa.

[illegible] Miller carried a Star mail route from Tulsa to Cleveland. It was a common sight to see great herds of cattle driven through Tulsa, even in 1900. I have seen thousands of head of long horned cattle come right where up town Tulsa Fourth Avenue is now.

Brother Mobrey was pastor of the Northern Methodist Church on Main Street north of Archer on the west side of street.

A Mr. R. L. Owens was pastor of the Baptist Church, between First and Second on Cincinnati Avenue.

Dr. Kerr was pastor of the First Presbyterian Church located at Fourth and Boston Streets at that time. He has seen continued service since about 1900. I have seen him administer to the down and out in Tulsa's early day, as well as later.

The post office was at the southeast corner of Second and Main Streets in the place of the old Putte Building.

Charline [illegible] Culberton
Investigator
November 1[illegible]

Interview with [illegible]
[illegible] Washington,
[illegible], Oklahoma.

[illegible] Springfield [illegible]

[illegible] buried [illegible]

[illegible] came to the Indian Territory in 18[illegible] and located [illegible] Nation [illegible] the [illegible] valley.

[illegible] to Texas and then started [illegible] the [illegible] to [illegible] drifted to [illegible] where we stayed for some time.

We started from [illegible], Arkansas, in a wagon driving an ox team. [illegible] to us [illegible] mountains [illegible] we [illegible] to [illegible] we [illegible] to [illegible] urging everyone to come to the [illegible] rich the country was. We expected [illegible] what we found after we arrived [illegible]

Ar, J. D. [illegible] 1903.

After I was here [illegible] wife died and it was necessary for me to find homes for my three children.

I then found my [illegible] sister and I also to add this ground to do at will I was appointed Sit[illegible] Marshal.

I never had no trouble with the Indian men at once, they were alwa[illegible] my best friends. On one occasion I was in the woods [illegible] an Indian man [illegible] and [illegible] that I was hunting without a permit and that hunting without a permit was against the law. I replied that there was no law but Winchester law. He also threatened to take my horse and dogs but I pulled my gun and told him to ride on and leave me alone which he did. I saw him several times after that but was never bothered any more. This Indian told me that the Indians would not rent the more land but they did.

Some of my personal Indian friends were Bill King, Crawford Anderson, John McGreen, Glover and Buckhannon.