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THE ARBEKA STORE

An interview with Saber Jackson, 8 miles west, of Okemah, Oklahoma.

Billie Byrd, Field Worker
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On the very spot where the Indian Sanatorium is located near Shawnee, Oklahoma, a trading post was established and was owned by Nero Jones, a Creek Indian. The date of the establishment and name of store not known. Many people came to do their trading at this store, some came as far as Fort Gibson.

Jones hauled his freight or supplies from Muskogee. His manner of hauling supplies was by a team of oxen and wagon which was slow traveling. It was often fifteen days to go to Muskogee and back. He went by the route on the trail known as the Shawnee Trail (Sawanogee nene) but the exact location of the trail is not known to Saber Jackson.

One day a group of Cherokees came and requested credit of Nero Jones. This request was refused. These Cherokees left all on good terms seemingly, but that night the store was burned. It was believed that the Cherokees returned and burned the store as a revenge.

It was not long afterwards that Nero Jones established another little store in a different place, Section 10, township 11 North, Range 8 East now in Seminole County. This store was known as Arbeka (Abeka).

George Cornelius, deceased, was in charge of the pony express to Wetumka. Tingo Frank, now living, carried the mail for one day as

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did Joe Yabola, deceased.

The ceremonial grounds of Little Arbeka were in this neighborhood and the race track owned by the Davis boys, so there was much trading at the Arbeka store.

It was from this neighborhood of the Arbeka store that six men once successfully drove one hundred head of hogs to Muskogee. It took six days to make the trip. These hogs were sold for one dollar a head and the money was in turn spent for supplies and other necessities.

After the death of Nero Jones, the store became the property of Jesse Davis and George Davis, although the store was not in their possession for long. Other stores and small towns were gradually being established and business was decreasing and the store finally went out of business.