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INTERVIEW

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Robert H. Beatty  
Investigator  
April 15, 1938

Interview with Mr. C. D. Adkins  
Norman, Oklahoma

### Old Trading Posts

I was born in the state of Tennessee, June 9, 1869, and when I was ten years old I was loaded into a covered wagon with my parents and a team of horses was hitched to the wagon and in this way I was transported to the to the Indian Territory in 1879.

I first settled in the Choctaw Nation, just five miles east of where the town of Eufaula now is at what was known as old North Fork town. This was an old trading post and one of the earliest ones to be established in the Indian Territory. There was also a post which was owned by one of the Chisholm boys and another at old Silver City, four miles north of where Tuttle now is; then there was old Fort Reno on the Canadian River.

An old military trail entered the Territory at Fort Smith, running westward by way of old North Fork, crossing Little River near its mouth and on by the Chisholm post, thence northeasterly two miles east of Norman, by

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way of Silver City, and on to Fort Reno. These posts have all been discontinued except the old fort at Fort Reno. Old Silver City was discontinued in 1872. The old Chisholm post was discontinued in 1880 and old North Fork town was discontinued when the town of Kufaula was established.

This old Military Trail from Fort Smith, Arkansas, to Fort Reno was the only established route through that section of the country. The only bridge in this entire distance from Fort Smith to Fort Reno was one that was built across Little River, just two miles north from its mouth. The old Military Trail crossed Little River at this point and some of the old ruins of the bridge still can be seen as a marker of where the old trail crossed Little River.

When I first came to the Territory there were no laws other than the tribal laws of the Indians and the white people were exempt from those, so criminals of other states, seeking to escape justice, came to the Indian Territory. This, however, was stopped. United States Marshals were posted to bring such fugitives to

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justice. When captured the offender was taken to Fort Smith or Paris, Texas, for trial. Of course some few were not captured but the Territory ceased to be an outlaw hide-out.

When I first arrived in the Territory, it was a land of plenty. Game and wild life seemed to exist in an abundance almost inexhaustible. The prairie was strewn with the carcasses of buffalo. After Bufaula was established it was our trading post and still exists.

My first employment was herding cattle. The herds of all ranchers ranged together. The boundary or limits were from Old Center (near Ada) to the Caddo line. At round-up all the ranchers and their hands started separating the herds. They would start at one end and progress in a general direction until they reached the end of the trail. As they passed each ranch the rancher would drop out with his herd and in this way their herds were separated.

In herding cattle there were many things we learned to avoid, particularly a skunk or rattlesnake. The mere sight of a scurrying skunk or a hissing rattle-

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snake was enough to send the herd stampeding. There was no way to stop a stampede, we just tried to lull the herd gradually. At this time Jack McCurtain was Governor of the Choctaw tribe. There were several McCurtains in this tribe; I was a personal friend of Ed and Green McCurtain. McCurtain County was named after the McCurtain Indians.

My ancestors were all from North Carolina. How they migrated to Tennessee was a different story. I now reside five miles southwest of Norman and am in the farm and livestock business. Here I expect to remain. My mail address is Route 2, Norman, Oklahoma.