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ARENDELL, MITCHELL B.

SECOND INTERVIEW #1287646

ARENDELL, MITCHELL B. SECOND INTERVIEW.

12876

Charline M. Culbertson
Investigator
January 1st, 1938

Interview with Mitchell B. Arendell
West Jackson Street
McAlester, Oklahoma.

I was born in Smith County, Tennessee, in the year of 1855. My parents were John L. and Licity Tibbs Arendell. Mother is buried in Tennessee and Father is buried in Texas. I was living in Texas prior to my coming to the Indian Territory. My first trip here was January 1, 1873, at which time I came over into the Chickasaw Nation on a hunting trip. My brother and I lived one-half mile from the bank of Red River. When we decided to go on this hunting trip we went across the river on the floating ice. We were hunting for turkey and killed a few. On this trip we found some nice valley land so we decided to return to the Territory and make a home. You could have as much land as you wanted as long as you didn't intrude on some one. The place where we decided to farm was called Courtney Flats. I was only a young boy, fifteen years of age.

This was a wild and scattered country. Brother Ben and I built a log house to live in. The logs were four to six

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inches in diameter. We lived here about a year and our intention was to farm but on account of the wild Indians we were unable to do so. The Indians from the reservation at Fort Sill would come and steal our horses and were making such raids on the whites that we couldn't stay. The Indians were the Apaches, Kiowas and Comanches. When they would make these raids there would be both the Indians and white men killed. We sold our improvements on this farm which was located at the mouth of Mud Creek to a Mr. Morris, who later made a big hog ranch out of the place. Then in later years it was sold to Big Federal, a one-half Chickasaw Indian, and was known as the Big Federal place.

After we sold our place we moved back across the Texas line to Badlers Bend where my father was living at that time. We made our home here but would travel back and forth into the Territory.

I have had several fights with the Indians and had to kill to save my own life. The only trouble we ever had with the Indians was with these from the reservation and tribes I have mentioned. They fought with bows and arrows on a particular fight I was in on the bank of Red River. They used

flint pointed arrows and later the spike point. Their arrows were a foot and a half long usually made from good hickory wood. The point was placed in the slit end of the stick and a strip of animal hide wrapped around this to hold it in place. This would be dried till very hard. When it went into the flesh it was very hard to be removed as the point softened and many times had to be left in the flesh till it could be cut out. One man I recall was shot and I rushed to him and jerked the arrow from his leg which had gone from one side of his leg to the other and in jerking the arrow out it left the point in his leg.

Another fight we had there were fifteen Indians in this group; all were killed but one, he escaped. We had to fight to save our lives.

At Sadlers Bend in the year of 1874 we had no blacksmith; a blacksmith was a very necessary thing in these days. There was a man of the name of Bob Rogers who came through our village. He was a blacksmith by trade so we persuaded him to stay and do our blacksmith work. The neighbors in this community would do his farm work for him in return for blacksmithing work. One day a group were down on his place making rail fences and at noon we had gone down in a ravine to eat lunch. During lunch a lot of these Indians from the reservation came riding over

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the hill and at first glance they couldn't see how many there were of us but thought we had them out numbered, so they ran. We had not had any raids for a year or more and their coming upon us was quite a surprise and there happened to not be a gun in the crowd.

Father made the ferryboat which went across Red River at Badlers Bend; it was operated by a Mr. Burns.