

Notice of Copyright

Published and unpublished materials may be protected by Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code). Any copies of published and unpublished materials provided by the Western History Collections are for research, scholarship, and study purposes only.

Use of certain published materials and manuscripts is restricted by law, by reason of their origin, or by donor agreement. For the protection of its holdings, the Western History Collections also reserves the right to restrict the use of unprocessed materials, or books and documents of exceptional value and fragility. Use of any material is subject to the approval of the Curator.

Citing Resources from the Western History Collections

For citations in published or unpublished papers, this repository should be listed as the Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

An example of a proper citation:

Oklahoma Federation of Labor Collection, M452, Box 5, Folder 2. Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

INDEX CARDS

Indian Territory
Creek Nation
Okmulgee-1892
Captain Sivers
School-Free and Subscription
Early Trails
Due Bills
Ranches
Crazy Snake Rebellion
Okemah

FIELD WORKER GRACE KELLEY,
Indian-Lioneer History 3-149
June 10, 1937.

INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES BRANT
Henryetta, Oklahoma
Born 1860, Frankford, Ind.

Father's name John Brand
Born in Ohio.

Mother's name Mary J. Morse
Born in Ind.

WENT TO OKLAHOMA IN 1892

I couldn't say why I decided to come to the
Indian Territory except I just wanted to "go west."
I suppose it was meant for us to develop the country;
some folks call it an adventurous spirit.

We crossed into the Indian Territory at Fort Smith,
went to Webber Falls and ferried the river there; from
there to Muskogee and then Okmulgee, where I stopped.

OKMULGEE, 1892

There was one store; a general merchandise owned by
Cap. Devers, and Charlie Shields clerked in there. It
was where the Citizens National Bank is now. One block
North was a two story box house or hotel having about
six rooms. It was owned by a white man who was also the
owner of the blacksmith shop and was the blacksmith. His

wifé, some called a negro, was a motherly sort of person who really ran the hotel. There was a two room building where the Central National Bank is now that was used for the Post Office. C. C. Belcher was the **Postmaster** at that time.

There were about the same number of Indians and negroes, with a few whites.

CHILGEL'S FIRST SCHOOL

The first school was held in the Council House for both Indians and whites. It was a free school and they had to let the whites go in order to have enough pupils; even then there were only about fifteen.

Bronson, from New York State, was the teacher. He was a very capable, well educated man about sixty-five years old. He had come to the opening of Old Oklahoma; the first year was bad and he had starved out. He started back East by wagon, with some movers who were going East. He stopped at Sapulpa and started a school and taught for three months. (Sapulpa was the end of the railroad at that time). Then he came to Okmulgee and

3

taught for three months and had made enough money to buy a ticket back to New York. The schools were quite scattered at that time, Sapulpa and Okmulgee were the only free ones except the Missions and they were only for the Indians.

When that school played out I hired a teacher to come from Missouri to teach our four children. She stayed with us and taught them six months out of each year. Her brother, 1896, or four years later, organized a subscription school and she taught there three months, or for the summertime, that was called the Queens Valley school. The country had settled up more and they could afford a school. This school was built of logs and was about four miles north of Okmulgee.

TWO TRAILS FROM MUSKOGEE TO OKMULGEE

The North trail came up Cain Creek to Bald Hill and to Okmulgee.

The South trail was the one used most, it was the mail route. The only stop was the Lee Postoffice near where Boynton is now. (2 mi.N.) That was the only

residence or fence between the two towns. There wasn't a bridge in Okmulgee County, if it had rained and the creeks were full, they'd have to lay over till they ran down enough to cross.

A negro named Cherry carried the mail in a two-seated hack with passengers. In the winter it took all day till ten o'clock at night to make the trip, and sometimes they couldn't get through at all. In the summer they got to Okmulgee about five (every day) and it was considered a ten hour drive.

FARMED THE COUNTY FAIR GROUNDS

When I got to Okmulgee I located where the Fair Grounds are now and farmed those same grounds. There wasn't much demand for corn and what little cotton was raised had to be hauled to Muskogee or Checotah. The surplus cattle and hogs were sold to "buyers" who drove them to Red Fork to ship. We raised only what we needed for, (as there was no railroad) it was hard to sell.

GROWTH OF OKMULGEE

The first cause of Okmulgee's growth was the Indian Council being there. Before the Katy came to Muskogee

goods were freighted from Coffeyville, Kansas; after it came they were freighted from Muskogee.

When the Katy came to Muskogee four or five stores and some people moved to Muskogee because it would be the better place to make a living. Cap. Severs kept a store at Okmulgee but built one at Muskogee too. The old stores just rotted and fell down. Okmulgee stood at a standstill until the Frisco came through, then it started growing and then oil was found and it really got its growth.

INDIAN TRADES


Cap Severs had a big Indian and negro trade. They came from the whole Creek Country by a dozen wagons, with the kids on ponies and the dogs following, and would camp for a week at the time. They would buy on credit and pay in the fall, with cattle after they had gotten fat on the range. The Government was to pay a "\$29.00 Head Right" for land that was taken from the Indians, and did make one payment.

Cap. issued \$150,000.00 worth of "Due Bills" to the Indians, and it passed as legal money at that time.

6

Two years from the time he issued these bills the Government paid the Head Rights, and every Creek Indian and negro had to come to Okmulgee to get the money, but most of them had it traded out before they got it. Cap. considered the Indians truthful and honest so they must have paid him all that they owed the store.

DOE BILLS

These are hard to describe but I'll try. They were a strip of paper with the person's name on them, and below were some marks, three short and one  long, each for a quarter and the **long** one made the dollar. They were for five and ten dollars, not many tens, and I never saw over a ten dollar one. When they bought a quarter's worth at the store the clerk cut off one mark, if it was a dollar's worth he cut off four.

LANDS

Cap. Severs had the biggest ranch at Bald Hill, fifteen miles northeast of Okmulgee. Dave Carr.

7

was an Indian Rancher across Deep Fork, west of Okmulgee.

Moty Tiger had the Tiger Flats five miles south of Okmulgee which were the grazing land for the C. W. Wilson Ranch.

There was no settlement

South of Okmulgee there was just some Indian and negro homes or settlements, but no settlement, I think it started about 1899.

INDIAN HOSPITALITY

Each member of an Indian family owned his own cattle, ponies, and hogs; in a white family the father or man owned the stock. Whenever they needed clothes or food they would trade an animal for it or for the money to buy what he needed. When an Indian got plenty of groceries his friends or relatives came to see him and stayed until they gave out, then they all went to see the next Indian who happened to have the groceries.

BRONSON'S STORIES OF EUCHEE HOSPITALITY

He was the first school teacher of Okmulgee and he didn't like Indians at all. He told me these stories of when he taught at Sapulpa.

He was staying with some Indians, William Sapulpa, and they needed some groceries so he went to the School Board and they advanced him enough to buy a months supply. He noticed that they had lots of visitors but didn't say anything. All that week they had visitors and at the end of the week the man came to him and said, "Grub all gone, got to have more grub."

POLE CAT MEAT

One morning they had some meat that was cooked well, and tasted very good. When they had finished eating the man pointed at the meat plate and asked him if he knew what kind of meat he had eaten. He said it was squirrel he thought. "No that wasn't squirrel, it was pole cat."

William Sapulpa was one of the families of Euchee Indians Sapulpa was named for.

SNAKE UPRISING

I went to the trial at Muskogee. I think there were about eighty-five Indians and negroes. They were tried

in a bunch for riotin ; it took about thirty minutes to try them; and they were given a two year suspended sentence, and turned loose on good behavior. The court appointed a lawyer for them.

ROADS OR TRAILS

One trail was a Government Route and went southwest. The Government had built a bridge (where the present bridge is on the sand road to sharp from Okmulgee). It washed out and a ferryboat was there for many years. The McDermott Ranch was the first white residence, four miles southeast of the present Okmulgee. There wasn't any Okmulgee then. From there it went west on a line with the Highway 75 into old Oklahoma and the Chickasaw Country.

The other one followed the Deep Fork River bottom to the Sac and Fox Agency, which was on the Deep Fork River, on the west line of the Creek Nation.

OUR VACATION TRIP

We went to the Sac and Fox Agency the next summer after the opening, in a wagon. It took us two days

10

to go. We stayed two days and two days for the return trip. We didn't see anybody on the route. The Horse Shoe Ranch was half-way between and that was the only white folk on the route. We camped on a creek so that we could get plenty of water and wood. It would take about an hour and a half to make the same trip now in a car.

JUDGE MOORE

Judge Moore was rather an important person as he was a large rancher, owning the Horse Shoe Ranch, one near Shoska and the Half Moon, where Morris is now. He was a half-breed and a member of the Council. In 1895 he ran the Kuyuka school and his wife and her sister, Alice Robertson, were teachers there. Mrs. Susan Tiger was reared by him and his wife.

FRED B. FIELD OKEMAH

After the railroad came through Okemah and it was just a rag town, Fred Smith, the second mayor

of Okmulgee, Walter Weimer and I went down there and leased eighty acres east of the business part of town, where the gins and depot are now. We had a surveyor in our crowd and we started a little town of our own, cut the eighty acres up into lots and sold them. Ours didn't seem to take, didn't build much more than it is at the present time.