

### **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Published and unpublished materials may be protected by Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code). Any copies of published and unpublished materials provided by the Western History Collections are for research, scholarship, and study purposes only.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For citations in published or unpublished papers, this repository should be listed as the Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.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.

BYRUM, EDWARD C.

INTERVIEW

6353

384

BYRUM, EDWARD C.

INTERVIEW.

6353

Dovey P. Heady  
Field Worker  
June 15, 1937.

Interview with Edward C. Byrum  
Indianola, Oklahoma

I was born August 20, 1876, in Franklin County, Arkansas. My father was born in Tennessee; his name was Tom B. Byrum.

I came to Indian Territory with my parents in 1892. We settled at old Indianola, which was about a mile south and a half mile east of the present town of Indianola.

We came to the Indian Territory because we heard it was a good farming country. We settled at Indianola because the land was mostly river bottom land. My father farmed several years on the South Canadian River. My parents both died and were buried in the old Indianola cemetery.

Marion Atwood and family came to Indian Territory with us. We traveled in covered wagons and drove some cattle through.

After we had farmed a few years I learned to cook and got a job cooking for the crew that was building the

Fort Smith and Western Railroad through Indianola to Crowder.

Our first house was a story and half box structure with a clapboard shingle roof and a puncheon floor. It was located on the Cheattle farm about a mile northeast of Indianola close to the South Canadian River. We brought most of our furniture with us. This consisted of two cord beds, a trundle-bed, a stove and table, and these were all home made except the stove. The cord beds were made of oak lumber with ropes laced back and forth from one side to the other. This served the purpose that slats do to-day. The trundle-bed was made on casters to slip under the cord bed and was out of the way in the day time. We had two feather beds and one straw tick.

#### Farming and Implements

A twenty acre farm was considered large. Most land was broken with oxen. Our farming implements consisted of the Cash turning plow, home made drum planter, single stock plow and later, in about 1900, we had the factory made Muley Cultivator and the grasshopper planter.

The main crops were corn, cotton and oats. Corn sold at prices from 25 cents to 30 cents per bushel, cotton

sold for \$50.00 for five hundred pounds in the lint.

Most foods were preserved by drying them such as corn, pumpkin, okra, green beans, peaches and apples. These were dried by placing the fruit or vegetables on sheets on top of the house or barn and turning them over every day to prevent molding. In this same manner the Indians dried their meats, such as venison, pork and beef.

Old settlers here when we came in 1892 were Jim H. Bynum and Albert S. Cornelison who had a small grocery store at old Indianola. The store was first owned by Log Johnson, then by a Mr. McElhany and later by Jim Bynum and Albert Cornelison. The mail was carried from Canadian on horseback and given out at this store.

George Choate, a Choctaw Indian, had a small grocery store at his home near old Indianola. He is dead now.

A man named Thurman had a store northwest on the South Canadian River. He also had a ferry for which he charged 10 cents per person to cross on horseback and 25 cents for each wagon and team.

Dan Davis, Choctaw and Cherokee Indian, was here and owned a lot of land. He is dead now.

R. E. Cheatle, Choctaw Indian, was about the most prominent Indian here. He owned most of the land in and around Indianola. He had a large ranch and about five hundred head of Hereford cattle. He had several cow hands working for him and in the fall he drove cattle to the Kansas City market; later he shipped cattle to Kansas City on the railroad. Mr. Cheatle is dead now. His wife, a Choctaw and Cherokee Indian, is still living and is some where in western Oklahoma. John Bolen, Choctaw-Cherokee, is some relation to her. He is living at Crowder. John Nail, full-blood Choctaw, is living in the Nail school district, where he has lived all his life. The district was named after him.

#### Dyes

Dyes were made from barks. Red oak boiled made a dark blue dye. Sumach bush roots boiled made a very dark brown dye. Poke berries made a purple dye when boiled down to a thick solution. Hulls from green walnuts boiled made a brown color. Copperas was used to set the colors.

#### Ghost Towns

There used to be a town close to Spiro. It was a little Indian town, known as Shakerag. Its population was about

BYRUM, EDWARD C.

INTERVIEW.

6353

## 5

four hundred. It had four or five small stores, a hotel and post office. This was in the Choctaw Nation. The Midland Valley Railroad ran through Shakerag town. This town is no longer in existence.

My mother had an uncle, named Thye Harron, who came to Indian Territory in about 1872. He was county judge in Carter County for several years. I suppose he is still living there.

My grandfather came to Indian Territory in 1892. He is buried in Oklahoma but I don't know just where. His name was Baless Potts.

## Salt Springs

There used to be a salt spring on Dirty (Dierdy) Creek, two miles southwest of Webbers Falls, in the Cherokee Nation. It was on the road from Fort Smith, Arkansas, to Muskogee. This road is a highway now.