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BLAVER, CLEM

INTERVIEW

#7991

261

BEAVER, CLEM.

INTERVIEW.

BIOGRAPHY FORM

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Hummingbird & Bigby.

This report made on (date) October 25, 1937. 1937

1. Name Clem Beaver.

2. Post Office Address Stilwell, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month November Day 15 Year 1871.

5. Place of birth Flint District Cherokee Nation.

6. Name of Father Jim Beaver. Place of birth Cherokee Nation.

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Nellie Beaver. Place of Birth Cherokee Nation.

Other information about mother _____

Notes or complete narrative by the field worker dealing with the life and story of the person interviewed. Refer to Manual for suggested subjects and questions. Continue on blank sheets if necessary and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached 7.

Hummingbird, & Bigby.

Interviewers.

October 25, 1937.

An Interview With Clem Beaver,
Stilwell, Oklahoma.

Clem Beaver was born in Flint D strict, Cherokee Nation; November 15th, 1871. His father was Jim Beaver, a fullblood Creek Indian. His mother was Wellie Beaver, a fullblood Cherokee Indian. Clem's grandfather Old Creek Beaver as he was known came from the state of Georgia with the Cherokee emigrants in 1837.

Creek Beaver had lived in Alabama all of his life until the talk of the removal began in the east.

At that time a group of Creeks went to the Cherokee Nation in Georgia. The purpose of this mission was to discuss the matter of removal with the leaders of the Cherokees. While in the Cherokee Nation he became acquainted with this Cherokee girl whom he married later. After this marriage they went to live with his wife's folks.

When the Cherokees agreed to move to their western home, Old Creek Beaver came along with them. They only lived in this country a short while when his Cherokee wife died. He then went to the Creek Nation and married a

BEAVER, CLEM.

INTERVIEW.

7991.

-2-

Creek lady. To this union there were five children born, Jim, Susie, Lamb, Lydia and Anna.

Jim Beaver married a Cherokee woman and she is the mother of Clem.

EARLY LIFE.

Most of the early life of Clem was spent on the small tract of land that his grandfather claimed which was located about three miles southeast of the present village of Lyons.

Clem was not like other Indian boys of his time. He learned to speak the Creek language first and it was difficult for him to play with the Cherokee children in his community.

He was taught at an early age to be a close observer of events that happened in the Cherokee Nation. His grandfather was a leader of the Night Hawk Indian Society. The ceremonial ground was located at Beaver Springs within about a hundred yards of where Clem was raised.

EDUCATION.

Clem received what little education he has at Round Springs; this was a small school located where Bradshaw

-3-

Springs is now about three miles southwest of Lyons. He completed the fifth grade at this place. Later he was sent to the Male Seminary at Tahlequah which at that time was the highest institution of learning in the Cherokee Nation. Clem received a fair education for that time.

At Round Springs he was taught by Baxter Choate a Cherokee teacher and Frank Sanders.

CHURCH.

There were no churches in this part of the Flint District at that time. The nearest church was the Double Springs church which was about eight miles north of where the Beaver family lived. The Beaver family did not attend this church. Later there were preachers who would come to the Flint Court House and hold services at people's homes.

A Cherokee by the name of Gettingdown lived at Flint. They would come to his home and have services. The Flint Court House at that time was located on Sallisaw Creek near the Fletcher farm now about three miles south of the

-4-

town of Stilwell. Clem has been to this place many times during the trials. The mill was located, later, at Flint and Clem used to go often to the mill.

TRADING POINT.

The nearest town at that time was Evansville, Arkansas which was about ten miles away. Sallisaw, I. T. was another trading place. Sallisaw at that time consisted of two stores. Tahlequah was another trading point in the early times. A man by the name of Stapler operated a store at Tahlequah.

Evansville was also a milling point for most of the people in this part of the country. Later there was a grist mill brought to the Flint Court House. The blacksmith at Flint at that time was a white man named Peler Hannah.

INDIANS.

The Indians at that time were honest people. They were a class of people who believed that honesty won. They hated an Indian who would lie and double-cross. After the things that had happened back in the east, this belief in honesty became more strict. Old Creek Beaver was present when the plot was made to kill the treaty signers.

-5-

They also believed in law enforcement. If a man was convicted of murder it was death. He only had five days to live, after he was convicted.

FOOD.

Most of the food that was to be found at an Indian home was the produce raised on their small patches that they cultivated near their homes. The farms at that time were small; the average size of a farm was about five acres. A ten or twenty acre farm was considered large.

The food that was to be found on their tables consisted of bean-bread, dried pumpkin, dry fruit and wild meats.

Wild meats would be at almost every home at that time. Deer, hog, turkeys, and many other animals were plentiful. Clem has killed three deer at one time within fifty yards of the place where he now lives.

Some of these Indians would dry their meat; others would just eat it up as quickly as they could. Sometimes they would have as many as seven deer hanging in their smoke houses.

BEAVER, CLEM.

INTERVIEW.

7991:

-6-

The Night Hawks would have their Stomp Dance at this place in the fall of the year. Deer meat was served three times a day as long as these meetings lasted. People from all over the country would come from around ^{where} Okemah is now. Most of the relatives of old Creek Beaver settled around Okemah when they came to their western home.

MEDICINE.

Most of the medicine used at that time was brought from the woods in the way of herbs and bark. The Cherokee and the Creeks doctored almost the same way. Both methods were used in serious cases of sickness, actual medicines and mythical doctoring. A real Indian doctor who knows medicine would not go on a call at once, that is, just when he is notified. He usually found out whether he can do the patient any good or not. They have a method to find out these things. The same case applied to finding stolen things. They can locate things that have been stolen ^{as} this gift of finding stolen things has been proven to the white man several times.

The Indian doctor knows the very moment he studies the feelings of the sick person whether that person believes

-7-

in him. If the sick person did believe in the doctor, he would not go. But would tell the sick person that he can not do him any good.

Clem is a noted Indian doctor among the Indians in this county, therefore he does not want to talk too much about his doctoring. He could talk all day on this subject he says.

CIVIL WAR.

Clem's father and grandfather both served in the Civil War in the Union Army. They were stationed at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. His father did not take a part in any battle but his grandfather was in two battles but he does not know the names of these battles.

OLD TIMERS.

The old timers with whom he was acquainted are Old Creek Beaver his grandfather, who lived to be one hundred and fifteen years of age, Cheu-Wa-Leu-Kee, a Cherokee, and Ta-Ga-Wese, another Cherokee, The last mentioned was a leader of Cherokees at Dry Creek.

Arch Bigfeet was a noted Medicine Man among the Cherokees; he lived on Greasy Creek.