

GRALL, FRANK

INTERVIEW

#8277

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BIOGRAPHY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

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Field Worker's name Ethel B. Tackitt

This report made on (date) August 10, 1937

Lone Wolf Kiowa County Oklahoma.

1. Name Frank Grall

2. Post office Address Wewoka, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location), _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month September Day 9 Year 1869

5. Place of birth 42 miles South of St. Louis, Missouri

6. Name of Father Grall
Christian Fredrich Place of birth Germany

Other information about father Road Construction Contractor
Grall

7. Name of Mother Sarah Angeline Cozart Place of birth Ohio

Other information about mother Left a widow in 1881

reared her family. Lived to be 93 years old. Buried at
Shawnee, Oklahoma.

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 _____

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Ethel B. Tackitt,
Interviewer,
August 10, 1937.

An Interview with Mr. Frank Grall,
Wewoka, Oklahoma.

I was born forty-two miles south of St. Louis,
Missouri, September 9, 1869.

In 1891 a friend of mine, Taylor Brown, and I got a
new wagon, harness and team and a lot of shining new tin-
ware and some salve and came to the Indian Territory to
make our fortune. The salve was good for ~~me~~ made it, our-
selves.

We went to the trading posts and sold to both whites
and Indians at Okmulgee, Muskogee, and Dead Man's Crossing
on the North Canadian River. This place was called Dead
Man's Crossing on account of the numbers of people who had
lost their lives in an effort to ford the river there.

In the summer of 1892, we were near Keokuk Falls on
North Canadian River and we learned that a ball game was
to be staged between the Tulsa and the Theowalthioe* In-
dians so we waited and watched their preparations.

The two tribes moved in three days before the game
(which was nothing more nor less than a battle) was to take

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place. One tribe camped directly south of the other with a strip of land between them. This strip of land was strictly guarded by Indian Braves on horseback. These were from both tribes. There was no passing between the two tribes but they would howl and bark at one another day and night.

The braves who were to take part in the game made themselves ready by taking medicine, which they called Spanish Tea. This was made of the bark of red-oak trees. They did not eat and slept little, doing everything in their power to work themselves into a fury of hate and rage-to make themselves fierce and mean was their object.

When the time came for the game, the squaws brought out to the grounds ponies loaded with everything that an Indian at that time could get. There were blankets, moccasins, food, beads. These ponies, blankets, moccasins, food, beads and other things were all to be put up as bets on the game. Many white men and negroes would also bet on the game. A big crowd was present.

When the game started, it was wonderful to see how the braves could handle the ball with their handmade clubs

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but when the first fellow got the ball some player hit him over the head with a club, peeling the skin until it hung over his ear. As soon as a player was knocked out, the squaws would carry him off the field, to a pool of water nearby; here they would wash his wounds and restore him to consciousness, if possible.

The battle was so fierce, that when the game was ended and one side had been chased from the ground, the pool was perfectly bloody.

This was the last Indian ball game played in such a brutal manner for the Government took notice of such brutality and sent deputy marshals to the games to prevent such cruelty.

At this game I saw players bite one another.

We continued our trading expedition through the Territory to Fort Sill. My brother All Grall, who was eleven years older than myself accompanied Taylor Brown and me and we camped at the Red Store while at Fort Sill.

The Comanche Indians were camped on Cache Creek and I went to trade with them. I sold bright tin cups and tin

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plates at twenty-five cents each. Some of the young squaws were rather pretty and I talked to them quite a lot. The bucks were there and we soon saw that something was wrong and that the bucks were mad but we did not know what was the matter. The interpreter told my brother that the bucks were mad because I had talked too much to the squaws and that we had better get out.

We hitched our horses to the wagon and did get out and did not stop all night until we got to Wichita Falls, Texas.

We soon returned to the Indian Territory and Brother All Grall was made the first city marshal of Shawnee in 1893.

There was no jail house and as I was a strapping young fellow I took the job of cutting logs and building a jail house ten feet wide by twenty feet long.

These logs I cut on the exact spot where the Mammoth Department Store on Bell Street now stands.

I worked bareheaded and barefooted and dragged the logs with a yoke of bulls.

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In 1893, I got six acres of land, one and one half miles east of Shawnee cleared and then plowed it with a walking turning plow. Then I took a chopping axe and dug holes the right distance apart and planted the six acres to corn. I worked it very little but the yield was forty bushels to the acre.

I was appointed Deputy United States Marshal and as such I acted as guard on the construction train which laid the rails on the road bed of the Choctaw, Oklahoma and Gulf Railroad when it came into Wewoka.

I witnessed the last Seminole Indian Tribal whipping which took place at the old Seminole Whipping Tree which now stands on the Courthouse lawn in Wewoka.

An Indian boy, Soloman Mitchel, lived with his mother, Emma Mitchel, and brother, Walter Mitchel, in the north part of the Seminole Nation.

He was accused of stealing a pony and was tried before a Seminole Indian Court and was found guilty. John Brown was First Chief and Sam Haney was Second Chief.

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After conviction Mitchel was turned loose and told to return in three weeks for his whipping.

When the three weeks were up and the day arrived he was on the spot and took the whipping which was a good one and never said a word. I do not believe a white man would have done as he did.

I have served the State of Oklahoma as a Peace Officer many years at different times and I appreciate the fact that my name is to appear on the stone slab at the City Hall in Shawnee when I pass on.

This slab with my name on it is to be in memory of my services as Chief of Police in 1898.