

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Published and unpublished materials may be protected by Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code). Any copies of published and unpublished materials provided by the Western History Collections are for research, scholarship, and study purposes only.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For citations in published or unpublished papers, this repository should be listed as the Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.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

Byrd, William L.

Stonewall

School--Chickasaw Nation

Camp Grounds--Choctaw Nation

Fencing--Choctaw Nation

Prisco

Merchandise Establishments--Chickasaw Nation

California Trail

Post Offices--Choctaw

Rayde.

Berty

Truax, George

Wealthy Indians--Chickasaw

Maurice R. Anderson
Field Worker
May 11, 1937

124

Interview with Mrs. L. K. Bingham
Born 1873. Old Stonewall, Indian Territory
Father-J. D. Molette
Mother-Harriet E. Byrd

A Story Told By Mrs. L. K. Bingham.

I was born, at Old Stonewall, Indian Territory, Pontotoc County, Chickasaw Nation, in 1873. My father was J. D. Molette, my mother's name was Harriet E. Byrd. My uncle, William L. Byrd, one time Governor of the Chickasaw Indian Nation took me when I was two years old and reared me as his own child. I always called my Aunt and Uncle Byrd, Papa Byrd and Mamma Byrd; they were just like my own father and mother. They had no children of their own and they both just loved little children.

The Chickasaw Nation consisted of four counties, Pontotoc, Tishomingo, Panola and Pickens, and Tishomingo was the county seat of these four counties, and Governor Byrd would have to go to Tishomingo when any business had to be attended to in the Chickasaw Nation.

I have heard people say that there was a whipping post at Old Stonewall in 1888. I don't remember any whipping post there at all, there might have been one there before my time.

My mother taught a Chickasaw Indian school on Blue

Creek near Tishomingo. She taught English to the Chickasaw Indian children.

There was a place called Buzzard Flop camping grounds for overland travelers in Indian Territory days. Before 1880 the country surrounding this camping place was very thinly populated. It was a possession of the Choctaw nation. This locality was not attractive as a settling place to many Indians of that period, but to those traveling or freighting on the trail from Fort Smith, Arkansas, through McAlester to Old Stonewall, it was attractive because of the springs of abundant water and the level flats forested with Red oaks and absolutely free from undergrowth. The only house near Buzzard Flop camping grounds was one Indian log cabin about two hundred yards west of the springs. There were, however, two other families in the locality. The Jim Leader family, natives and owners of the J. L. ranch, built in 1889 a log house one half mile east of the Flop and the Jim Flincham family lived three miles northeast of the camping grounds on the J. F. ranch. In 1893 Jim camped on the old trail, and he became so attracted to the Buzzard Flop camping grounds that he decided to settle there. He built a log cabin, put in a grocery store and established a

post office, which was named, Guertie. In 1910 the town's name changed to Rayden in memory of the man who founded the town, and several years later Rayden was changed to Certy. It has been called Certy ever since.

The town of Old Stonewall, now Frisco, was started around 1868, when a white man, named C. C. Rook, built a log store building and put in a small stock of groceries and dry-goods. Stonewall was on the south branch of the old California trail. William L. Byrd moved to Stonewall, and built a home. I was born there in 1873 and by 1887 the town of Stonewall contained six stores and between seventy-five and a hundred people lived there. William L. Byrd, one time governor of the Chickasaw Nation, put in a store at Stonewall. Doctor George H. Truax was postmaster at Stonewall in 1890. Doctor Truax was one of the first doctors to settle in this part of the country. I remember papa Byrd saying he was in the mercantile business at Doakville in 1875, then he moved to Stonewall. It was at this time 1875 that he and mama Byrd took me. At Stonewall he continued in the store business and stock-raising. In 1898 he sold out his store business and devoted his time to

farming and stock-raising. At one time he had around five hundred acres in cultivation. He raised lots of cattle and a great deal of cotton. In 1888, he was elected Governor of the Chickasaw Nation, and he was re-elected in 1890 and 1892.

I don't know much to tell only what has been told a thousand times about Ex-Governor William L. Byrd. I will say he was a fine man and loved little children and for mama Byrd, my aunt, she could make the best cookies of anybody and her cookie jar was always full until I made a raid on it, then she would have to start baking cookies again.

I now live at 220 East 13th Street, Ada, Oklahoma.