

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Published and unpublished materials may be protected by Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code). Any copies of published and unpublished materials provided by the Western History Collections are for research, scholarship, and study purposes only.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For citations in published or unpublished papers, this repository should be listed as the Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.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

BLACK, Z. T.

INTERVIEW

9752

233

LEGEND & STORY FORM  
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

234

Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

BLACK, Z. T.

INTERVIEW.

9752.

Field worker's name Robert H. Boatman,

This report made on (date) January 21, 1938. 1938

1. This legend was secured from (name) Z. T. Black,

Address Route 2, Blanchard, Oklahoma.

This person is (male or female) White, Negro, Indian,

If Indian, give tribe \_\_\_\_\_

2. Origin and history of legend or story \_\_\_\_\_

3. Write out the legend or story as completely as possible. Use blank sheets and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached 4

BLACK, Z. T.

INTERVIEW.

9752.

Robert H. Boatman,  
Investigator,  
Jan. 21, 1938.

An Interview With Z. T. Black,  
Rt. #2, Blanchard, Oklahoma.

I was born in the state of Texas in 1880, on June 14, coming to the Indian Territory at a very early age, this being in the year of 1881. From Texas the trip to the Territory was made by ox teams and wagons. There were several different families in the group and it was a very slow trip, and being in the winter it was a very hard trip. My father's wagon was once bogged in the sand and we were several hours getting out of the bog. There was no wood for fuel at this particular place and we nearly froze to death. We burned everything that was loose, including a feather-bed and several quilts. After several more days of mud and ice we finally settled at the old Pearl store on Fish Creek.

Pearl store was a shack store that was located on Fish Creek in the Arbuckle Mountains and was an old trading post of the very early days of the Indian Territory. There was nothing there except a few old trading posts that were located several miles from each other and a big

BLACK, Z. T.

INTERVIEW.

9752.

-2-

open country filled with many head of cattle and all kinds of wild game.

There were very few white people in the Indian Territory then, although there were many Indians in this country. The Choctaws and Chickasaws were very friendly. The Indians nearly all lived in log huts.

As I remember my first home in the Territory it was of the very crudest type of pole structure and was located at the foot of a hill near a small stream that was supplied with an abundance of fish of all kinds, although most of them were mountain trout.

It was no trouble at all to keep supplied with food for game was very plentiful; turkey, deer, bear and all kinds of smaller game. There were, also, some animals that were feared by man, such as panther, and many Mexican lions were in the mountains.

It was in the very early spring of 1887 that a great many people came over from Texas to the Territory seeking a fortune in the new world. They farmed in what was called the Squatter Settlement. Then some few months later an epidemic of unknown origin developed in this colony and

BLACK, Z. T.

INTERVIEW.

9752.

-3-

about eighty per cent of the people died and the rest of them went back to Texas. This epidemic existed only among the very new settlers and none of the earlier people had the disease. Many of the Indians, however, had tuberculosis.

My father erected the first cotton gin in the Indian Territory and many peculiar things happened compared with today. When the Indians first raised cotton they would only raise from 50 to 500 pounds. This they would bring to the gin, after which it was taken home by them where it was put to little or no use at all. Many times they would just hang it around on bushes and watch it blow away.

There was a trap bridge across Red River and I decided to ride my pony across. When I was only about half way across the pony became scared and began cantering around, then ran backward off the bridge. I lost my boots and Winchester in the river. It was my first and only experience of going swimming on a horse.

Alec Robinson, a chief of the Chickasaws, got mad at me for riding across a certain section of territory and, after several days of bitter feelings between the Indian

BLACK, Z. T.

INTERVIEW.

9752.

-4-

and myself, it was settled by a shooting scrape. I escaped his fire, receiving no wounds, but I never knew what happened to the chief. Tribal life existed along the usual routine till statehood.

The old post once known as Pearl's store has long been discontinued and is now Doyle. I spent most of my life as bronc buster and cowman until this business was practically abandoned, since which time I have been engaged in the agricultural business. I now live some 15 miles southeast of Blanchard where I have lived for several years.