

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Published and unpublished materials may be protected by Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code). Any copies of published and unpublished materials provided by the Western History Collections are for research, scholarship, and study purposes only.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For citations in published or unpublished papers, this repository should be listed as the Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.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

INTERVIEW

9894

201

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

212

BLACK, ARTHUR

INTERVIEW

9894

Field Worker's name Linnaeus B. Ranck,

This report made on (date) February 5, 1938

- 1. Name Arthur Black,
- 2. Post Office Address Arnett, Oklahoma.
- 3. Residence address (or location) _____
- 4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month October, Day - Year 1856
- 5. Place of birth Illinois.

6. Name of Father _____ Place of birth _____

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother _____ Place of birth _____

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 5

BLACK, ARTHUR

INTERVIEW

9894

Linnaeus B. Ranck,
Investigator,
February 5, 1938.

Interview with Mr. Arthur Black,
Arnett, Oklahoma.

With my family, I came to No Man's Land in a prairie schooner in 1887 and settled on Clear Creek southeast of Beaver City. At that time Beaver City was quite a frontier town with a population of "six or seven hundred people". There was not a single frame building in the town, nothing but "soddies" and doby buildings. The country had been surveyed but into no smaller sub-divisions or units than townships. The settlers did their freighting from Dodge City mostly. Vigilance Committees sought to maintain order in the country, and as an example of how harshly and summarily they dealt with offenders against the public good, I will relate an incident wherein a settler's horses were stolen and not many days later found by members of the Vigilance Committee about where the Logan post office and store are at this time. A youth was herding a bunch of horses in which the stolen animals were included. With little or no preliminary the young fellow was taken from

BLACK, ARTHUR

INTERVIEW

9894

-2-

his horse and hanged to the limb of a nearby cottonwood tree. Not long afterward it was found that an entirely innocent party had been so unceremoniously "strung up".

The winter of 1888 I, with some neighbor settlers in No Man's Land, went to the Cheyenne-Arapaho country to hunt. We established our camp on Turkey Creek, toward the east line of what is now Ellis County. We had killed a number of deer and wild turkey. One morning after we had left our camp to scout for more game, two soldiers and several Indian scouts rode in on us. They arrested us and took us, game and all, to the soldier's camp, away to the east on Trail Creek. We were held under arrest through the night and the next forenoon were called to the tent of a Lieutenant in command of the military detachment and, after some bickering with the officer, were released. In the meantime, however, one of the Indian scouts advised us we were to be released and that we had better salvage a part of the carcasses of the deer we had killed and stored away in our wagon for we would not be permitted to leave with the animals. After we were released

BLACK, ARTHUR

INTERVIEW

9894

-3-

the officer in command dispatched a number in the detachment to escort us out of the country.

In 1890 I came to Shattuck, or that point on the railroad where Shattuck later was built. I worked on the railroad section gang between Shattuck and Fargo. At that time, however, Fargo was known as Whitehead. In the course of time I located at Whitehead. Work on the section was not steady, so during the periods I was off I devoted most of my time to hunting. There was a good outlet at large cities in the east for all the wild game I could kill. I shipped many prairie chickens as far east as New York. Usually they brought from six to eight dollars per dozen.

When the Cheyenne-Arapaho country opened the spring of '92 I pre-empted a claim in old Day County, not far from Ioland, its first county seat. Not long after the opening a number of settlers from my locality who had cut cedars from the surrounding public lands to use for building purposes on their claims were arrested and taken over to Kingfisher for arraignment. When they arrived at Kingfisher they discovered they were charged with unlawful

BLACK, ARTHUR

INTERVIEW

9894

-4-

cutting of government timber in Kingfisher County. Later, these men were made to appear again before Judge Burford at old Ioland at the first and only term of court held at Ioland. All except my brother, who was charged with the others, plead guilty and were fined \$10.00 by Judge Burford. My brother refused to plead guilty so Burford ordered his clerk to draft commitment papers for him which was done. Ioland had no jail to commit the prisoner to so finally Judge Burford discharged him.

I took the lead in organizing the first school district in old Day County; it was District No. 1 and included the entire county. An abandoned ranch line-camp dugout in the settlement was used for a schoolhouse. An old preacher in the neighborhood was employed to teach the school. The settlers drug in cedar logs for seats for the children who attended this school; the teacher used a kitchen chair. They had no stove for the schoolhouse so they built sort of a fireplace in one wall.

After the county seat was moved to Grand, I happened to be on the jury at a term of court held by old Judge

BLACK, ARTEUR

INTERVIEW

9894

-5-

McAtee in Grand. While court was in session one afternoon one Guffy, Grand's saloon proprietor, got gloriously drunk and unruly. The courthouse was not far from the saloon and the scene of Mr. Guffy's rabbleroising conduct. Judge McAtee finally ordered the sheriff to arrest Guffy, and, there being no jail at Grand, to take him one thousand yards distant from the courthouse and keep him that far away till Guffy recovered from his drunk and then bring him before the court. The sheriff complied with the orders of the court very satisfactorily. At least the officer arrested and handcuffed Guffy, secured an ordinary trace chain and took the prisoner away to the river bottoms and chained him to a tree, where he was left over night. The morning following the sheriff brought him before the court. Guffy begged for a drink "to sober up on" and after a severe reprimand by Judge McAtee, he was released to get it.