

INDEX CARDS

Fort Sill
Freighting
Plains Indians
Leasing--Chickasaw Nation
Immigration--Chickasaw Nation
Fords--Red River
Loco
Ranching--Chickasaw Nation
Crime--Chickasaw Nation
Cattle--Trail driving
Trails--markings
Chisholm Trail

HARRIS, CLAY. INTERVIEW.

201

Warren S. Morse, Field Worker
Indian-Pioneer History
May 10, 1937

Interview with Clay Harris,
North Third Street, Duncan,
Oklahoma.

Clay Harris was born in Texas in the year of 1877.

His father's name was Mart.

My father worked on the reservation at Fort Sill before he married, cutting and handling hay. He was freighting one time taking a load of goods from Texas up through Oklahoma where Walters is now. He was alone at the time with a Mexican guide. When they camped one night, the Mexican got scared of the Indians, and ran off and left my father. The Indians stole his ox team. My father tried to trail them but was not able to locate them.

He walked to the camp of some white people near Elm Springs, stayed all night, borrowed a horse from them, and rode home the next day.

We came to Loco, Oklahoma, in 1890 to stay. Father leased some land and we farmed, marketing most of our produce at Belcher, Texas. There were no bridges over creeks or the river so we made bridges out of old cottonwood logs. The river we had to ford. Sometimes we found old "Red" to be pretty "quicky," that is a lot of quicksand.

Settlement around Loco grew rapidly. Farming became an occupation rather than stock raising or ranching.

However, there were some ranchers, Bill Stone and Washington ranched in here.

Rev. J. J. Ward was a preacher and teacher here then. He went far and near visiting homes of people. Settlements were far apart with no way to reach them but wagon and team or horseback. There were no roads; only trails lead here and there.

Sometimes there were killings going on, also stealing. Everyone usually attended to his own business and kept his mouth shut. My father lost some cattle one time. That night he rode off. He didn't tell any of us where he was going. About sun-up he rode in with his cattle. I found out later that one of his neighbors had stolen them. Now, at that time they hanged most of the cattle thieves, but this man had a large family. I suppose father told him if he would pay for the stealing he wouldn't say anything.

There was a lot of fence cutting then. It was done more by cattlemen who came through with herds.

Indians came through often. In wooded sections they marked their trail by blazing trees as a sign of having

having been there before. On prairie land they made mounds to locate places. There is one on the old Chisholm Trail. We call it Monument Hills. It is down between Adding and Ryan or Sugdon. Cattle went right over the top of this hill.