

Field Worker: Joe Southern 5481  
 April 26, 1937

Interview with Willie Tumbler, age 65,  
 a Choctaw, of Atoka, Oklahoma,  
 General Delivery.

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I was born in Atoka County, Indian Territory,  
 December 24, 1872, southeast of Atoka four miles, near  
 Tumbler Creek, which was named after my father. My  
 father's name was Jerry Tumbler, and he was a full blood  
 Choctaw Indian doctor. He gathered herbs and roots  
 from the forest and used them for his medicine. In  
 treating a broken limb he would take clay from the  
 earth, and mix with water till a thick paste. Apply  
 around broken limb 1/2 inch thick; then wrap with cloth;  
 then take wooden splints and place them and wrap with  
 Slippery Elm bark. Then keep damp with cold spring  
 water to keep down fever.

We owned hogs, cattle and ponies. Had small  
 farm for corn and vegetables, fenced with poles and rails  
 made from native timber.

Our dwellings were of native logs.

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Live stock grazed loose on range and we did not have to feed them in winter.

Wild game was plentiful.

We had a small orchard of pears, apples, peaches, berries--wild fruits were plentiful, also, and we would gather, peel and slice and sun dry peaches, apples and pears for winter use.

Farming implements were Bull tongue, double shovel and hoe.

Our markets were Fort Smith, Arkansas, and Paris, Texas.

District Court was located 25 miles southeast of Atoka, I. T. Ed M. Averidge, District Judge; Paul E. Harris, District Clerk.

Atoka Lake was old camp ground for fishing and hunting. It was located 20 miles southeast of Atoka, I. T. Also the Witch Hole on Boggy River one mile east of lake. There are several persons drowned there is why it acquired its name.

The roads that led to the District Court grounds from different directions were marked two notches.

Firearms, when I was a boy, were the muzzle loading shot guns, rifles and pistols--Ammunition was made from lead, melted and put in bullet moulds.

Costume dresses were made from calico cloth, and women had shawls, handkerchiefs and collars, blue, red and striped.

The market for hides, furs and snake root was at Atoka, I. T. Julius Hass was the name of buyer.

At the snake root grounds, southeast of Atoka, I.T., between the two Boggy Rivers, there was an M. K. & T. R.R. spur built from Smallwood Switch, three miles south of Atoka, east three miles to near where father lived, and used to haul sand and gravel taken from hill side for railroad use.

All these are not now in existence.

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