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Interview with Henry Vogel.  
By L. W. Wilson, Field Worker.

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Mr. Vogel's answer to questions asked were as follows:

I am 73 years old. Was born in Switzerland and came to Indian Territory in December 1887 and I now reside at 1518 West Okmulgee Avenue, Muskogee, Oklahoma.

My father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Vogel were born in Switzerland, resided a while in southern Kansas and finally came to the Indian Territory at the instigation of my correspondence with them from Indian Territory Points.

MIGRATION TO INDIAN TERRITORY

I came by wagon from Siloam Springs, Arkansas, with a Mr. Billy Rogers (no relation to any of the Rogers of Indian descent) who was bringing apples, chickens, eggs and possibly other produce to Tahlequah, Indian Territory, for sale. (He made such trips often to sell the products from his farm in Arkansas.)

There were two roads from Siloam Springs, Arkansas, to Tahlequah, Indian Territory. One was called "Ridge Road" the other "The River Road". We traveled the

"Ridge Road" (travel was at the minimum on the "River Road".) That is, we came west out of Siloam Springs, Arkansas and down the mountain crossing Flint Creek into the hollow, thence south through the hollow, known as "Nine Mile Hollow" for it was nine miles through this hollow before reaching Post Oak Flat, continuing south over the ridge coming out at a point about where Highway #10 intersects Highway #62 west of the Illinois River, thence west up the hill into Tahlequah, Indian Territory, running into the Main Street of Tahlequah, Indian Territory, at the present spring, at the present south entrance to Northeastern Teachers College. (Then the Female Seminary).

The exact date of my arrival at Tahlequah, Indian Territory was the day that Joel Mayes, Cherokee Indian Chief was sworn into office.

I have traveled this road a-foot, wagon, and stage in the early days, and many things occurred to me along this road, which would be of only minor importance.

At a point on this road, on the ridge, an old Indian had secured permission to operate a toll bridge, with the understanding that he would maintain a certain part of the road for this concession. Well, he ran the toll gate all right, he would collect fifty cents for a team and wagon, and twenty-five cents for a man and horse, those a-foot would go around the side of the bluff and did not have to pay anything. The gate was so located on the road that a great bluff could not be maneuvered with a horse or a team.

This road was sometimes called the "Hilderbrand Road" account of the Old Hilderbrand water mill being located on Flint Creek. The present town of Kansas, Oklahoma, is at the head of this hollow at about the site of the old "Moravian Mission" at which place I stopped in my travels, for rest and and food.

#### MARRIAGES.

I was married in the states, and was not remarried by the Indian laws to become a citizen. I was, however,

compelled to secure a permit both in the Cherokee and the Creek Nations. In the Creek Nation I had to pay \$2.00 a month evidenced by a copy of permit attached hereto.

LIFE AND CUSTOMS.

Houses in the hill country were constructed principally of log with fire-place made of native stone. As to the schools and churches I did not pay a great deal of attention as to their construction or can I say as to the language taught in the schools or to the faith preached in the churches.

There were some log houses in Tahlequah, Indian Territory. I recall the Double Log house of the Trainor family, the Capitol Building was brick as well as the business concerns of Stapleton Bros, Johnson & Thompson, and the Female Seminary. I helped, personally, in the construction of the old Seminary.

They raised some corn and other products but not any in abundance - just for their home consumption.

The only mills which I can recall was the Hilderbrand Water Mill and Saw Mill on Flint Creek near the present town of Kansas, Oklahoma. This mill was an old water-mill and ground wheat. The wheat was brought to mill principally by Arkansas farmers.

There was a salt works located near Grand River close to the Mayes Ferry which was 10 miles due east from the present town of Pryor, Oklahoma. It is sometimes at this date referred to, as "Mineral Springs", while in reality the Government bored wells there and found salt water and they proceeded to set up the salt works. In the recent years, I was by there, and some of the old iron kettles were still lying around. The nearest town or trading point to the salt works was Locust Grove, Indian Territory, (now Oklahoma), at that time, only a store and Post Office constituted the town.

There were lots of wild berries and fruits such as: blackberries, dewberries, strawberries, Plums, etc., as well as plenty of hickory nuts and walnuts.

Wild game was also in abundance, such as: rabbits, squirrels, coons, opossum, deer, turkeys, etc. I have seen droves of deer in the vicinity of the old salt works many times and it has not been very long ago as I recall it, five crossed the road ahead of me. I remember one time an old Indian had killed a wild turkey, he tried to sell it to the Cherokee Orphan's Asylum, now at Salina, Oklahoma, but as the one turkey was not enough for the institution to make a complete meal they would not buy it, so he accosted me and I purchased it for fifty cents. It was a twenty pound turkey.

I was busily engaged and so could not participate in hunting and fishing and really never cared much about these sports. (There was lots of fish in all the rivers and creeks).

The Indians as well as the whites, raised some sheep, hogs, goats, and ponies, but their stock raising was confined to cattle, principally, due to their running open on the range.

I suppose there were social affairs but I never attended any of their barbecues, camp meetings, and

the like. I just didn't take any part in their sports and social activities and consequently, I am unable to go into details in connection with them.

#### ROADS, TRAILS, ETC.

I have described above the old Ridge Road but I might add that the driver of the stage between Tahlequah, Indian Territory, and Siloam Springs, Arkansas, was by name a Mr. Simpson. He carried mail and passengers taking a day for a trip, each way.

#### BRIDGES, FERRIES & FORDS.

Well, we would ford lots of creeks but I do not know that they had any particular name. I do remember the Nevins Ferry between Fort Gibson, and Muskogee, Indian Territory, run by a Mrs. Julia Nevins. The West landing of this ferry was near the present Muskogee Pump Station and the East landing was near the mouth of Grand River. This ferry was on the main artery of travel for all points east and west between Fort Gibson, Indian



Territory. The Rogers Ferry, or sometimes referred to as the Frozen Rock Ferry, was located near the present Frisco R. R. Bridge across the Arkansas River, East of Muskogee, Oklahoma. This ferry was controlled, owned, and operated by the Rogers Brothers, Connell, Hugh, and Alec Rogers.

#### RANCHES.

I knew of many ranches over the country and would pass and repass them but cannot remember the names, owners, or the exact locations. I do remember however over near the present village of Bald Hill, between Muskogee and Okmulgee, Oklahoma, that Captain Severs owned this ranch and that is about all.

#### WARS AND UPRISINGS.

I remember the Crazy Snake Uprising down near Eufaula, Oklahoma in recent years. Chitto Harjo was nick-named Crazy Snake and he was with a number of other crazy Indians that rebelled against the Government. They were soon subdued and Harjo was brought into court for an accountin. This being so recent, I expect others could tell all the details better

than I. I might add here that the Indians in Eastern Oklahoma were a law abiding and peaceful race and the biggest enemies that we had in the early days was the United States Marshals.

#### FORTS AND POSTS.

I never visited Fort Gibson while the soldiers were in the Fort. They had evacuated before my arrival in that city. I did, however, see the old barracks and officers homes shortly after they had evacuated and that is about all the information I can give.

#### RAILROADS.

The St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern Railroad built through Wagoner, Indian Territory in 1887. When I had occasion to see this Railroad being constructed for the first time the ties and rails were not yet laid. The Frisco, Midland Valley, and M. O. & G. built into Muskogee in the late years, meaning all were built since 1900. The M. K. & T. Railroad was built when I got here.

#### POLICE

I knew quite a few of the United States

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Marshals and their Deputys, Viz: John West, Bud Kell, Heck Thomas, Ike Rogers and Bud Ledbetter and others. Bud Ledbetter still lives and resides southeast of Muskogee, Oklahoma. Ike Rogers was killed by Cherokee Bill on the Depot Platform of Fort Gibson in 1898.

#### MERCHANDISING

In Muskogee, Indian Territory, J. A. Patterson & Co, J. E. Turner did most of the business in this section and their principal customers were Cherokee, Creek and Choctaw Indians. There was no banks and should you get more money than you cared to carry around with you, you could just take it down to these most responsible men and they would put it in their safe and keep it for you until you called for it. If one wanted to borrow money to buy cattle, make a crop or what not, they would accept a mortgage and make the loan. They also issued script which was used as a medium of exchange between the different merchants. This was thoroughly good script and was redeemable at any time as these concerns were honest and upright in all their transaction. Later on, a Mr. H. P. Spaulding came in and he also issued a piece of

green paper with his picture on one end and the amount on the other. It rather resembled money and was about the size of our present paper money, all the other firms had script but it was just ordinary pieces of paper.

#### SETTLEMENTS AND ALLOTMENTS

My father, brother and sister participated in the Cherokee Strip Run in 1893. None of them got a claim but my sister, who got 160 acres in the present Alfalfa County, near the present little town of Burlington, Oklahoma. My brother is living on it now. I can't tell any of the details of this run other than what has already been told or written.

#### SCHOOLS AND MISSIONS.

There was a great deal of building going on in the Creek Nation by the Government sponsored by the Creek Indian Tribes in the years 1890 to 1895 and it was during these years I helped to construct the following: The Creek Orphanage, at the present northeast city limits of Okmulgee, Oklahoma. It was originally a frame structure and it is thought that some of the inmates were instrumental in it being burned. We reconstructed this asylum of native stone and brick that was near by.

At the time we constructed this stone and brick asylum, the city of Okmulgee consisted of only the Creek Council House and a store or two. This was in the year 1891.

In 1892 eighteen miles Northwest of the present town of Wewoka, Oklahoma, we built the old "Mickasooka Mission" of rock and hand made brick. (This Building is still standing.)

During the years of 1892 and 1893 we built the "Emmahocka Mission" four miles south of the present town of Wewoka, of stone and brick, but I do not know whether this building is standing or not.

During the years of 1893, 1894, and 1895, we constructed the following boarding schools: The Negro School West of Muskogee on Pecan Creek, Creek Indian School at now, Coweta, Oklahoma, The Wealaka School near the present town of Leonard, Oklahoma. The Creek Indian School at the town of Sapulpa, Oklahoma, and the Indian School at Eufaula, Oklahoma.

In 1890 we remodeled the old Negro Orphan Asylum on Agency Hill, West of the present town of Muskogee, Oklahoma.

TAXES.

During my early days in the present city of Muskogee I had no real estate taxes to pay nor did any one else have real-estate taxes to pay, however, we did have a personal tax to pay on our personal belongings, which is evidenced by the tax receipt attached hereto.

COMMENTS.

Mr. John Dill started a small banking institution, if you would care to call it that, between Okmulgee and Broadway on North Main Street at about the present location of one of the south rooms of the Muskogee Seed House Building. This was in the year of 1888. In 1889 together with Dave Fink, C. W. Turner, myself and others started the Commercial National Bank at the Northwest Corner of the present intersection of North Main Street and Broadway in the city of Muskogee, Oklahoma. I have the first deposit book that was issued by this bank. This bank at present, is located at Third and Broadway and has never ceased operation from the time it was incorporated.

Mr. Vogel has the distinction of being the first City Street Commissioner in Muskogee. He was first appointed by Pat Burns, and then, at a city election held on the second day of April, 1901 he was elected by popular vote, as city Street Commissioner, as evidenced by the attached notification signed by D. M. Wisdom, Mayor.

Mr. Vogel has been a hard, honest and conscientious worker in the making of Oklahoma, the state it is today, and particularly the city of Muskogee. He has served the city in different official capacities and his ever trying, striving and unretiring efforts has helped to make the city an ideal place to live and rear a family, due to its ideal schools, churches, utilities and all that goes to make a city of contented people. He has always held uppermost in his mind to make it all the name implies "The City of Hospitality".

It is stated of [unclear]  
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear]

*Army Vogel*

*Chief Commissioner*

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*A. M. [unclear]*