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Story as given by Rachel Ward to Breland Adams, Field Worker.

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I was born in the Flint district. I don't know just when, but I remember the Cholera epidemic. I was probably six or seven years old at that time.

Before the Civil War my folks belonged to the Beck's. (Joe Beck and Cynthia Beck). Father's name was Jim Beck and mother's name was Lottie. She was a Downing before she was married. Old Chief Downing was my grandmother's father, (so my father has told me). During the war Mr. Beck told my father that he had better leave or the "See Gesh" (Secessioners) would get him. So my father left the Flint district and brought his family to Fort Gibson. I remember we lived at the fort close to the old corral at the time of the Cholera. I remember the wagons passing with the corpse. My sister cooked for old Major Luginbeel. Lizzie Foster was my sister's name. Her husband was Solomon Foster. I looked after my sister's child, while she cooked, and used to run errands for her to the commissary. I remember there were great piles of sugar in the commissary. It was in little blocks about the size of a big dice, about enough to sweeten a cup of coffee. I used to get sacks of this sugar and trade it for different things. Yes, the folks at the Commissary knew I got it, but they didn't say anything. They were good to me. I was a good big girl when they built the stone barracks, that are there now. The big cisterns and big basements made an imprint on my mind. ~~Old Mrs. Beck (our old mistress)~~ would come down every spring. She had to come to Fort Gibson to get her cloth. Seems like it was given to her by the government, but I am not sure about that. She would stay at our house when she came and make all us children a couple of changes of clothes. Just like she used to do when we belonged to her. She had our family record in an old bible and the last time she was in Fort Gibson, she said she would bring it down the next

time she came. But she died before another trip. My father hauled wood, farmed, done odd jobs and worked quite a bit around the garrison. He is buried in the Fort Gibson city cemetery. The grave is not marked, we were not able to buy a stone. When I was about twelve years old, we moved out on the other side of the government cemetery. My father farmed out there for a long time. While living there, I would come to town and nurse children for different folks. I minded the children. I nursed for Billy Johnson and for a Mr. Cook, who farmed and raised cattle. I also worked for Laura Spears, a Cherokee woman. Wren Gray used to come to see her quite a bit. I remember he was a hair-lipped man. I sure was scared of him and he knew it so he would tease me. I finally got used to it and didn't pay any attention to him. He was one of the "worstest" man of that time. He finally got shot by the soldiers. Blue Foreman was another bad man. I lived with my father out east of the government cemetery until I was about twenty years old, then I married Amos Alfred. He is buried at the Cane Creek Church over close to Haskell in the Creek Nation. My second husband Nelse Ward. We separated and I don't know where he is now. I was allotted 75 acres of land and live on it now. I have been here about 50 years. I had a surplus allotment over in the oil fields, don't know just where. It has been sold a long time. My son, Dan Vann, had 50 or 60 acres allotted him over in the Fort Gibson bottom. His grandfather was Daniel Vann and is buried over in the Four-Mile Branch Cemetery.

I remember the Florine Nash Store, the Will Nash Store, the Lipe Store, the Ross Store, the Bushyhead Store and the Percival Store. I remember the steamboats. Don't remember any of the names but the "Virginia". I have seen two boats tied up to the landing several times. I remember lots of snakes were down by the landing. They called them Tie snakes. It was said

they would wrap around your body and drown you in the water. Several soldiers were drowned in this manner, so it was said. My father told me once that a white woman was washing down by the river and had her baby in a basket above her. She went to see about the baby and it was gone. About three days later there was a very large catfish caught in the river and when they dressed the catfish they found the baby. It wasn't spoiled or nothing, even the cap was still on the baby.

The Ike Nivens colored cemetery is about two miles south of here on the bayou, not far from the falls. The Mark Benge (Addie Benge's husband) cemetery is on the Bragg's Hill close to the top.