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BIOGRAPHY OF Herman Workman (White)

Paoli, Oklahoma

Born October 14, 1861 in Germany

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Mr. Herman Workman born October 14, 1861 in Germany came to America in 1880, landed at New York and went from there to Texas. There he worked as a crater on railroad from San Antonio and El Paso. In 1880 came to Choctaw Nation at what is now McAlester and Wister Junction.

"There was plenty of game to hunt; have hunted myself and killed bear and other game. Saw some Indians play ball; they used sticks to hold a small ball in the center and would throw ball to a pole at another end and that would count so many points for the team that made the score. Each pole was represented as a county. As the game was played an Indian squaw served hot coffee, then the weather was so hot you could hardly stand it. They only wore britch-clatch in those days and wore war paint. They would sell or trade anything they owned."

" In 1893 or 1894 a negro married an Indian girl of the Choctaw tribe and in a year or so killed his mother-in-law with an ax. For this he received one hundred lashes with a hickory stick. His back was cut in strips and about the time his back was healed he shot his wife.

He was taken to Fort Smith, Arkansas; was tried and sentenced by Judge Riddle, a full blood Choctaw, to be shot. I was there when he was shot. Saw them paint a white spot over his heart and stand him in front of the Marshall Perry of Gains County, who shot him with a saddle gun, a small Winchester. Saw a man take a peg and put a handkerchief over it and place in the hole to stop the blood."

" In 1895, I saw two boys murdered a mile from the section house where I worked at Wister Junction. The boy who murdered them was working with a man and when the boys walked past them he said he felt mean and said he was going to follow the boys. He murdered them with a knife and stole their team and wagon. The United States Marshall Phillips trailed him to Fort Smith, Arkansas, where he was trying to sell the team and wagon. Marshall Phillips arrested him and he was tried and hung in Fort Smith for the crime. The boy who killed the two boys was named Pointer."

" I came to what is known as Paoli, Oklahoma in 1896. It was a cattle country and open range. The only land that was cultivated was in patches on river bottom. In those days they didn't have mortgages or notes. If one didn't pay his debts he was in danger and was often run out of the country. My wife, Mrs. Workman and I were sight-seeing and saw an Indian with a britch-clatch

that had animal tails on the back. My wife wanted to buy it and the Indian started to pull it off, but my wife didn't want it then."

Mr. Workman doesn't remember much about the dates.

He is now living at Paoli, Oklahoma.

(End)

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