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Toll gates-- Cherokee Nation

Toll gates--Creek Nation

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Chauncey O. Moore, Supervisor
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Frank J. Still
Field Worker

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Interview: C. H. Hatfield
75 years of age
416 Choctaw Street
Tahlequah, Oklahoma

Subject: The Old Toll Gate

Iron Beck got the first Choctaw to operate the toll gate, located near Oaks, Oklahoma. It was on a ridge with deep canyons on each side, and only room for a wagon to pass. This "Gate" was made by putting two posts on each side. A long pole was fixed so it would pull straight up to let the wagons pass. He charged \$1.00 for a wagon, and 50¢ for horses. He did not charge the Indians, but only white settlers passing through. Mr. Beck maintained the road leading from Lowery's Prairie to Oaks Mission. He was a full-blood Indian, and blind, but he could distinguish voices.

The Dalton Gang rode this trail, and passed through this toll gate. They robbed other travelers.

Mr. Beck's house was built over one side of the canyon by an abutment.

The weight that raised the gate was of flint rocks in a box-like affair. A rope inside the house released the pole and the weight swung the pole around so the people could pass through. Mr. Beck had a grown girl that helped with the gate.

Mr. W. W. Sitz, 416 Keetoowah St., Tahlequah, says that in 1888, he came from Maysville, Arkansas, with two other boys. We came through the toll gate. The old man that took care of the toll gate was going to charge \$1.00, but we "jewed" him down to 75¢. We were in a two-horse wagon on our way to Texas. We came through Tahlequah, Ft. Gibson and Muskogee. After we passed to Muskogee, we ran on to another toll gate, and had to pay \$1.00 to get past it.

This old trail was used by the stage coach. There was a stage stop at Oaks. It was half-way between Siloam Springs, Ark., and Tahlequah.

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Mr. Grant Foreman
Director S149

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Interview with Mr. David Newton Hatfield
410 Forest Street, Pawnee, Oklahoma.

By Gertie Goodfox Field worker.

April 23, 1937

I was born July 3rd, 1862. I came from Kansas to the Osage nation and worked around in the Osage nation, living around there till the opening of the Strip. I was about sixteen years old when I worked for Mr. Newman Gilbert Miles, who owned the S-Z-Ranch, and at the same time he was an agent for the Osage Indians. He had his agency down at Pawhuska.

The Dean Brothers were bankers in Arkansas City, Kansas. They made a twenty mile pasture in old Oklahoma about south of Ingalls. I helped make the pasture. There was nothing there but a wagon trail in all that rough country.

When I was twenty-six years old I got married and we lived in Hominy. The fall of the run, there were six of us boys left Osage country, and circled around the Strip till we got to Ingalls. We went to Stillwater to register. It took us a day and a half before we could register, and when you looked back at the line, it was a line back as far as you could see. You had to stand in the one place or lose it if you stepped out of line. We stayed right there night and day. Of course we six stayed together, and watched out for each other when one left for a drink of water or something to eat.