



Bradley Bolinger  
Field Worker  
June 9, 1937.

335

Interview with Sampson Collin (Choctaw Indian).  
Star Route, Wilburton, Oklahoma  
Born March 14, 1876.  
Father-Selmo Collin.  
Mother-Melvira Collin.

I was only two years old when my father died and not quite three when my mother died. I do not remember their ages nor the date of their death. They are both buried in the old Indian fashion by their nearest relatives out under two large trees in our cabin yard. These graves had two huge log huts with top and all built over them. The log huts as best I can remember were about four feet high over the grave. They are well rotted away now and hardly any of the log covering remains.

I was reared as a small boy by my father's relative living in what is now Latimer, County. <sup>When</sup> I was a boy growing up in this Choctaw Nation, the Indian man did not have to do much of the work around the cabin or any in what was the Tom-Fuller or Pashofa patch. This work, raising the little corn crop that the Indian used to make the Tom-Fuller and Pashofa, was done by the women. The duty of the Indian man was to look after the different wild game that they mostly lived on in the way of meats.

- 2 -

They had what they called the Indian doctor in this country in the early day. There were several of these scattered around over the country. They were full-blood Indians themselves. When any member of the Choctaw family took sick, this Indian doctor was called. However, the Indian doctors had not medical learning, only their ability to dig up roots and plants and things of this description and cook them down as low as possible for the sick, I do not know as I ever heard one of the Indians doctors call the name of the article that he had gathered for the medicine. The Indian did not talk much about his treatments. This Indian doctor, when he was called to see another sick Indian, did not carry any ready prepared medicine with him. He would come to see the sick Indian and look him over and decide what he thought was the trouble and would say very little. If he decided that he could help the sick Indian, he would immediately leave the house after gathering up some kind of tools for digging and go out in the woods and dig up the roots of the plants that he deemed necessary to help the patient. He would bring

them back to the Indian's cabin and cook them down to a small liquid for the treatment. If upon looking the patient over, he decided he could not help the sick Indian or save him from dying he would tell the relatives what he thought and would make no effort to give him any of this medicine that he could make. These would be nothing to do after the old doctor told them that he could not help the patient, only to sit by until it was over. Otherwise, if the old doctor decided that he could make something that would help the sick Indian he would not leave his bedside after he had gone out and gathered some of these herbs and made them into a kind of liquid and given him. The doctor never left until the patient either got well or died.

When I got to be what the Choctaws call grown, I believe I was about 18 years of age. I was a large Indian young man of good health and strength.

This part of the country was in those days called Gaines County by the Choctaw government.

Each of these counties in the Choctaw nation had what they called Indian ball teams. In other words, the Choctaw of one county would get together and play

- 4 -

some primary games of the old time Indian ball and decide which of the bunch was the strongest and the best players and get them together and make what they called a county team. The equipment for all Indian teams consisted of two Indian ball clubs. I do not remember the exact length of the handle to this club but it was I think three feet long, made of seasoned hickory. This handle had a thin piece at the end of it made rather cup shaped out of green hickory and dressed down and bent to fit the sides of the handles and was laced to the handle with deer hide, or buck skin strings. A good one was made very steady and would stand a lot of abuse. I was selected for the Gains County Choctaw team. About twice a year each of these Choctaw Counties would have about two games between the County teams. These games were really rough, any kind of rough treatment as long as the hands alone were used was permissible. You were not allowed to use these Indian ball clubs as defensive weapons, but you were permitted to take your opponent with your empty hands and, if you were the stronger of the two, throw him

- 5 -

down against the ground just as hard as you were able to. Under no consideration was the Indian ball club to be used, other than to pick up the small Indian ball and carry or throw it toward your goal. After many of these County Indian ball games in my young days, you could see a great many skinned up young bucks as they called them in that time.

I was considered the fastest foot racer in what was then called Gaines County, now Latimer County. I was able to run 100 yards in  $8\frac{3}{4}$  seconds. I could take an Indian pony without bridle or rope or anything but my hands, mount it and ride it.

In my younger manhood days a man by the name of Riddle operated a trading post around two miles south of what is now Wilburton, Oklahoma. The Choctaw tribe in those days took all their game and hides and everything to trade to him and could get a trade for other necessities for the family.

This Indian man went with me to the Mountain Station on the old and first stage road to go through this country to a burying place, which I will explain on an attached sheet.

## INDIAN MOUNTAIN STATION &amp; BURYINGGROUND OF EARLY INDIANS.

I made note on my daily report of today about going to Mountain Station. A station and trading post, established along about 1870. This post and graveyard are situated on the top of a large mountain. Mr. Sampson of Wilburton informs me this was an open place in the early days of this country. He went with me to see this place.

He tells me that the first road that ever came through this territory was made and called the Federal Government Road in order that the soldiers from Fort Smith might have a way to come to the Choctaw Nation to protect the Indian tribe. This Indian road was used by the early stage lines running from Fort Smith to the Texas border. This Mountain Station and one in now Atoka County were two of their main stops. The name of the Atoka County Station was Boggy Depot, one of the very oldest of the Choctaw Nation.

We walked over this burying ground, which is now covered with large trees and comprises what we considered about three acres. It was once fenced but the fence now is rotted down to a few posts and scattered

- 2 -

rails. This burying ground has a number of Indian graves, over each of which at one time was a small building. There is not much left of these buildings now except the rotting remains of what they once were. There were no grave monuments, only the remains of the little houses that once covered the graves and the ground over most of the graves has become level with the natural growth of vegetation.

There was a trading post established there along about the year of 1877, owned and operated by a white man by the name of Edwards. This place was located right on top of one of the highest mountains in the Choctaw Nation. Mr. Edwards operated this trading post and it was named at that time Mountain Station, and is still known today by the same name. Mr. Edwards kept the stage road (the only road that could be traveled through this country) pretty well worked up this mountain and also maintained a tall gate at the foot of the mountain, charging all travelers going through a fee of 25 cent per passage.

- 3 -

This charge was made for traffic in the way of teams and wagons or ox-teams and wagons going in either direction the road ran.

This burying place is now located on the border of the local road that now runs along through the Mountains to the Post Office and country settlement of what is now called Recyl, Oklahoma.