

INDEX CARDS

Okmulgee  
Finance--Creek Nation  
Severs, F. B.  
Payments--Creek  
Springs--Creek Nation  
Camp grounds--Creek Nation

Jerome M. Emmons  
Field Worker  
June 8, 1937

485

Interview with Mr. A. E. Dixon

Mr. Dixon moved to Okmulgee in 1902 from Lincoln, Missouri. He and Mr. A. H. Terrell are in the Insurance and Real Estate business in Okmulgee and have homes side by side in Okmulgee. His address is 512 E. 6th Street.

I moved to Okmulgee, Indian Territory, when I was 32 years of age. My mother is a native of Ohio and my father of Michigan. My father is buried in Nevada and my mother still lives in Missouri.

Mr. Terrell had lived in Shawnee but had returned to Missouri. He told us what a wonderful country it was, so we decided to move here. Besides Mr. Terrell in the move, there was another brother-in-law, Mr. J. B. Wright. No other families came with us, although others came later. None of my family made the run into Oklahoma.

We opened a two story grocery and hotel at the location now occupied by the Rhea Department store.

We came by train as the railroad had been built into Okmulgee two years previously.

-2-

## EARLY OKMULGEE

Mr. Terrell preceded me to Okmulgee and Jim Roper, a negro, was Postmaster then. When I came, a change was made and Mr. J. E. Jenness was appointed. The post office, which was on the south side of the Council House, was moved to a location east of the Sever's store when Jenness took it over.

Church was held in a frame building located where the High School is now and also above Morrison's Drug store, which was near the Council House.

Ed Grayson, a negro, was breaking a horse when both of them crashed through the front window of the Citizen's National Bank. This happened about 1905 or 1906.

We got our water from wells, until a water system was installed. In 1904, an electric light plant was built near the railroad, which gave good service. We used coal and wood for fuel. The water system included a standpipe, which used to stand at Alabama and Second streets.

## MERCHANDISING

Our store was the first cash store in town. The

-3-

other merchants still used script and tokens. We did a good business with the Indians here.

Captain Severs had a frame building where the Central Drug store is now. When the Loyal Creek Payment was made in 1904, it was made in cash. Captain Severs collected his money from the Creeks who owned him and put it into a gunny sack.

The Kennedy building was a grocery store and had a dwelling behind it.

The Checotes, Sam Haines, and Pleasant Porter, then Chief of the Creeks, used to trade some with us and occasionally took rooms at our hotel.

We built our present homes in 1904. They were furnished with furniture brought from Missouri.

In a short while we sold the grocery and hotel to Baker and Mabry. This was located on the north side of the second block on Main Street, east of the Council House. In November, 1903, we started a grocery on the south side of the first block east of the Council House. In 1907, we sold out to T. H. Davidson. Another grocery we owned was sold in 1911. Mr. Terrell and I entered the Real Estate,

-4-

Oil and Insurance business about that year, and started some wells near Morris, which wells we sold to the Tidal Oil Company. In 1919, Okmulgee had an oil boom, which played out in 1926.

## GAME

I have an item in my diary: "December 4th, 1905, Killed a deer south of town." There were wild turkey and quail in abundance. In the fall ducks were thick on the lakes and streams near town.

Dripping Springs was a favorite camp ground. It was located about a half of a mile north of the bridge close to what is now Lake Okmulgee. We would sometimes sit in our tent and kill squirrels. There was also good fishing over on Salt Creek.

Indians who attended the Councils in 1902 and '03, used to tell me of a large lake about where the Sun Lumber Company is located on Main street now. This was there in 1880 and drained down through the south part of town before I came to Okmulgee. It wasn't completely drained until a sewerage system was completed in 1904.

Ducks were still alighting there when I came home.

#### CRIME

Dr. Hensley lived in a frame house at the east end of Main street. A brother of Charlie Shields came to Dr. Hensley's house to shoot him and he, Dr. Hensley, killed Shields instead. At another time, Dr. Hensley caught a negro crawling into his office and killed him. That time he had a hard time clearing himself, as lots of people didn't like him.

A mob at one time came to get him. Mrs. Hensley happened to hear them and leaned out of a window with a pistol and told them she would shoot the first one that made a move. The crowd left shortly.

One Sunday, I believe in 1908, I heard shooting about three or four blocks north of my home and ran out into the yard with my gun. A man ran by and said it was a race riot. Later, I found out it was a negro, who was crazy drunk. He beat up an Indian, who had got off the train. I saw Dr. Hensley ride over on a horse. Dick Farr, as I remember, was shot in the arm and two negroes killed trying to disarm the negro. Then

-6-

the shooting started in earnest. The negro went into his home and anyway 2000 shots were fired before it was over. A tree in the yard was cut into pieces.

The sheriff, who was shooting from a house next door, would empty his gun and then duck until he had reloaded. He was killed as he was taking aim at the negro in the other house. The sheriff's name was Robertson.

A negro girl was wounded in the fight, but I think she recovered. Also, Steve Grayson was shot twice through the stomach.

The house next door was fired to try to set off the negro's place and get him out. I think this worked all right. I heard that Charley Wilson was the first to enter the burned house. The negro had been shot badly, but was trying to rise. I heard that perhaps Charley finished him. However, the body was badly burned and about all that was left was the torso.

#### RELICS

I have a gun which I bought from an outlaw for \$1.75, the price of train fare to Holdenville. It's a pistol, I believe, a .41 on a .45 frame.