

DOUTHIT, JAMES

INTERVIEW.

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INDEX CARDS:

Stage Road
Cincinnati
Tahlequah

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May 28, 1937

Interview with James Douthit,
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The Old Line Road
from
Ft. Smith to South West City, Oklahoma.

This road began at Fort Smith and crossed the Arkansas river at Van Buren on the ferry before the first bridge was built and went north through Van Buren to Old Log Town. This town obtained its name because all the houses and business places were built out of logs. This town was not located in heavy timber but was built on a sandy hill where grew scrubby cedar trees.

The next stage stop was Cedarville and from there the road went to National dam which crossed big Lee's creek and over the Boston Mountains, down to Evansville. From there it next went to old Dutch Town which is Dutch Mills today. In this town Mr. Webber had a blacksmith shop. He was an old timer of this vicinity. Mr. Kimbrough ran the general merchandise store and an old flour mill was located here. The burrs of the flour mill that ground the wheat were made of the native rock. This

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mill was owned by Bill Whitaker and was a steam mill and fired by wood. The Indians and old settlers brought their wheat to this mill.

This road crossed Sugar Hill and from there went to an inland town by the name of Summers, which town was named after an old settler by this name. (Mr. Webber made turning plows for the farmers of that vicinity.) The next stage stop was Cincinnati, another inland town which was quite a manufacturing town. The J. Oats wagon was built at Cincinnati. This wagon was made of better timber than they can obtain today. This factory also built stage coaches which were used on the old Line road, which is called the Military trail today. And in this town was a tannery, that tanned hides of all kinds. The boys of that vicinity were given work stripping bark off the red oak trees. The bark was stacked in piles to season, and when it was dry, the strips were ground to a powder which they used at the tannery. The leather produced by this method was much better and would wear longer than what they have today. (Dutch Town received its

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name from a settlement of black Dutch. Mr. Seay and Mr. Goddard were prominent among the Dutch.

This old Line road passed through the disputed strip which was settled in 1877, through Siloam Springs to South West City which is in Arkansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma.

At Dutch Mills the road turned west down Barren Fork creek, across the country near where Baron station is now, and went in a northwesterly direction to near Proctor, then went on to near where Christie is, and where then was a toll gate.

There were two ways to go to Tahlequah--the one over the Mountain was the west road, going down Barren Fork creek and emerging on a Mountain near Boudinot Springs. Here was the Boudinot ford on the Illinois river and from there it went on into Tahlequah. The road out of Tahlequah ran in a southwesterly course to what was known as the Limestone Gap and on to a station known as Bayou which was a stage stop. From then on the same course right directly in front of the Military cemetery on the north side into Fort Gibson.