

## Whiskey Trail to Fort Arbuckle

*Retype of a 1937 interview with Henry M. Brown (1856-1954) of Overbrook, Ok. per Indian-Pioneer Papers #8428.*

In 1874 my brother, J.H. **Brown** owned and operated a ferry on Delaware Bend at **Bourland's Crossing** or **Bourland's Ford**, which had been used years before we moved there in 1869. Col. Bourland lived south of Red River and for a long time sold **corn** at **Fort Arbuckle**. He made a trail, "**Whiskey Trail**," from his home to the Fort. This road came up by the "**Devil's Neckbone**" near the present **Lake Murray** [Carter-Love county line] site, then intersected the Gainesville road at the Adam **Jimney** point. These two roads ran together across the Arbuckle Mountains. The **Whiskey Trail** branched off from this road near Woodford [now Carter County, Ok.].

There were several other ferries scattered up and down the Red River at this time. [W.M.] **Elliott's** ferry was on the river north of Cosefield, Cooke County. **Elliott** was killed and his widow married Frank **Meler**. They ran the ferry awhile, then sold out to [J.M.] **Tuck**, who moved it up the river and operated it until he was killed in Marietta in 1925.

A.M. **Brown**, who was not a relative of mine, operated a ferry about one-half mile from the new [in 1937] bridge between Thackerville and Marietta. Alva **Roff** owned a ferry at the **Roff Bend** [Walnut Bend], a little way below the H.M. **Brown Ferry**.

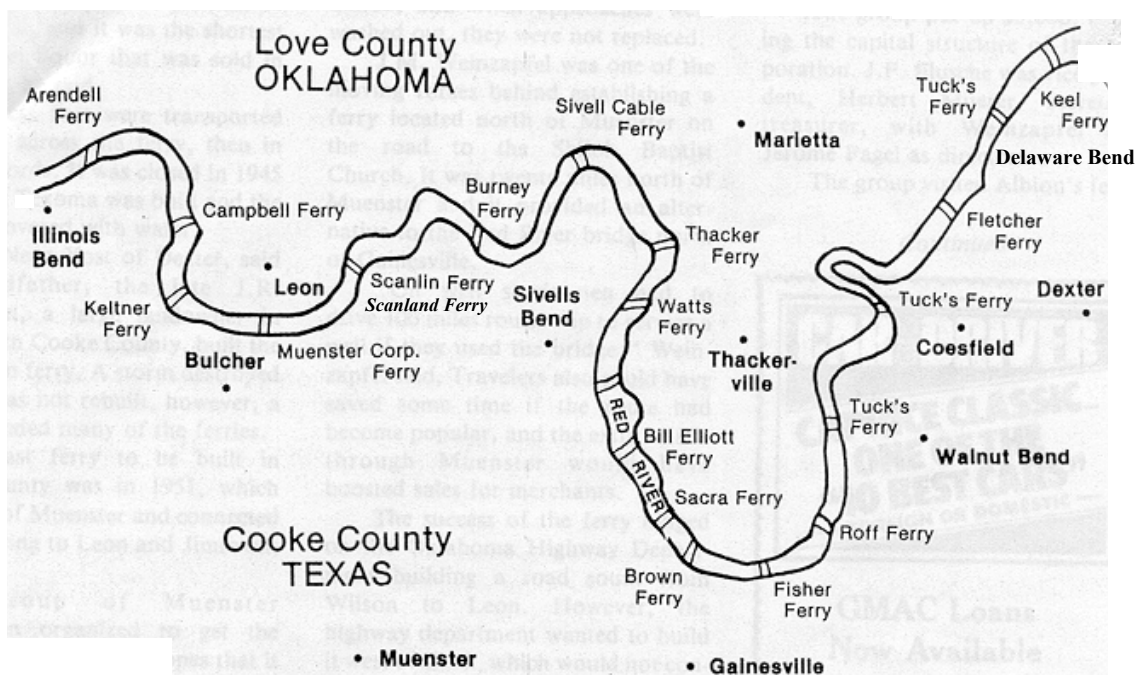
Wes **Talley** ran a government distillery on the Texas side of the River at **Willis Ferry**, which was located on the River at

the present town of **Willis** [now Marshall County Ok.]. This was one of the largest ferries on the Red River and was probably established about 1859.

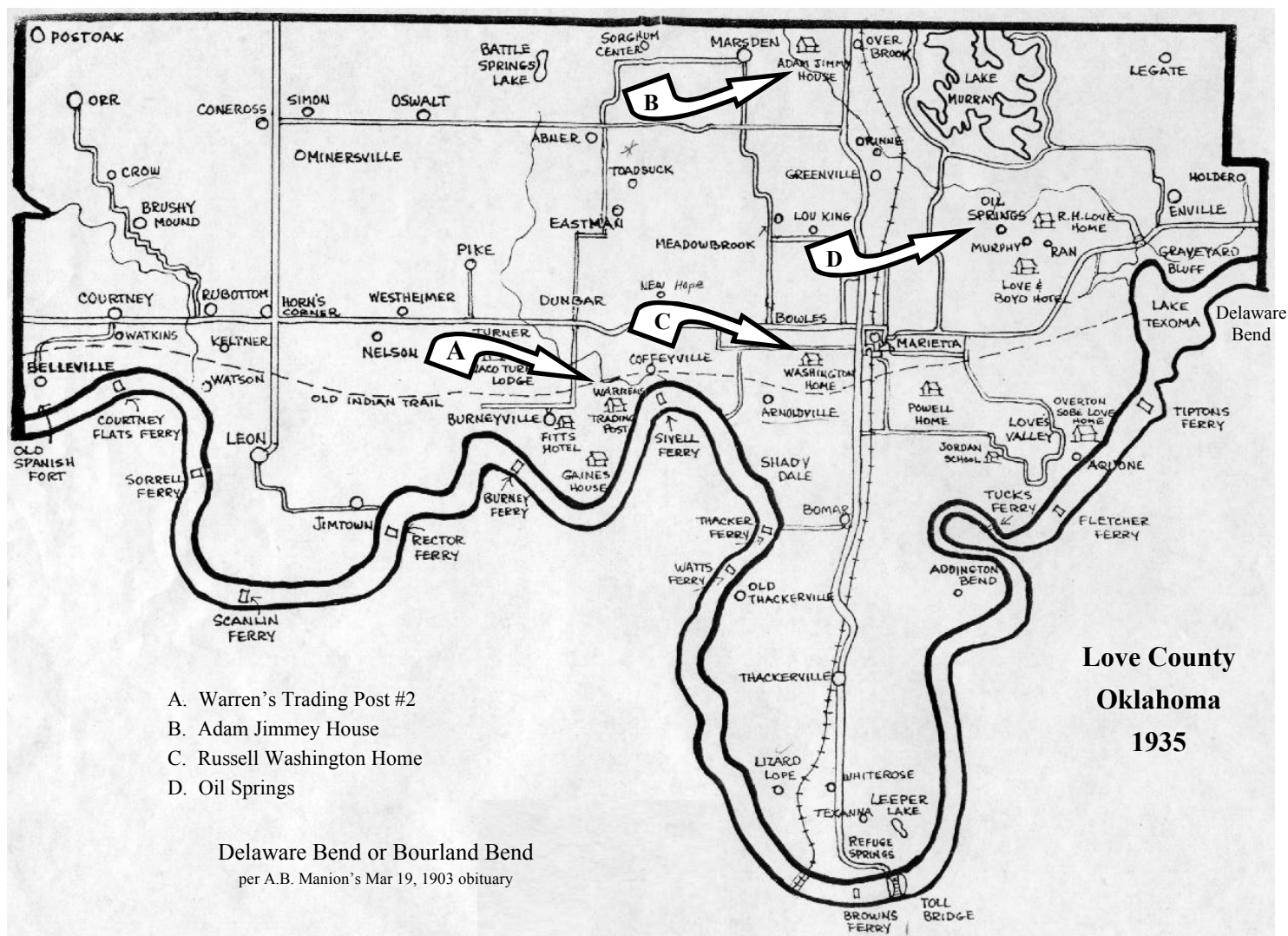
In 1907, I had my **horses stolen** and spent some time on the Red River looking for them; at that time there was a new ferry operating in Delaware Bend. I never found the horses. The man who stole them crossed the Red River at Boggy [River, Choctaw Co OK] and went into Arkansas.

In 1879 Alva **Roff** went to the site of the present town of Ardmore and cut the first logs for the house at the **700 Ranch** [1st house in Ardmore]. He also built another ranch house at Hell Roaring Creek and Hickory Creeks in Love County, known as the **Tee-Cross Ranch** [later owned by Sid **Bourland**]. [J.] Russell **Washington** had put in the "**1-B**" **Ranch** west of Ardmore near Prairie Valley school before this time.

About this time the Chickasaws passed what was known as the "two place" law. That is, each person in the Chickasaw Nation could own only one farm and one ranch. If Indians violated this law, the penalty was a \$500 fine and **39 licks** on the bare back at the **whipping post** at Tishomingo [now Johnston County, Ok.]. Alva **Roff** owned several ranches and places before this law was passed, and according to law, he could not permit his men on more than two places, and he already had men at Ardmore so he put a Mrs. [Dan] **Fitch** at Ardmore and let her control the ranch there, that is, as far as the law was concerned, she owned it. Dick **McLish** saw a chance to obtain a good ranch so he went out and talked Mrs. **Fitch** into giving him a quit-claim deed to the property. **Roff** took the case to court and **McLish** won the ranch.



**Red River Ferries.** The last ferry in Cooke County ceased operating in 1952.



(Continued from page 283.)

cannot exceed **500**. I have no idea that it will reach **200** in any one body, though there are doubtless **500** or over in that section of country that are now engaged in making efforts to leave the country and go to the enemy, either at Forts Smith or Gibson or some part of New Mexico, this spring.

### Ferretting disloyal soldiers

There are two companies of the **Frontier Regiment** stationed east of Fort Belknap that I desire placed at that post or west of it, as I think (owing to their uncertain loyalty) they may be more in our way than they do good; but I cannot find who commands them, and hence do not know where to apply to get them removed from their present localities. The militia force on that frontier have responded promptly to Maj. W. **Quayle's** orders, and many of them are now in active service, but having to furnish themselves they cannot remain from home but a few days at a time, and finding many of them disposed to enter Confederate service I directed Col. **Bourland** to fill the vacancies that have occurred in his companies by desertion to the enemy, and then raise two companies in Maj. **Quayle's** district, with his consent, for the war, to be attached to **Bourland's Border Regiment**, all of which I hope will be approved by the major-general commanding, as there is a great necessity for strengthening our forces in that immediate vicinity to give confidence to the people and guard against raids with which we are threatened.

This regiment also occupies a position from which it could be thrown speedily to **Fort Washita** or Boggy Depot, to reinforce either point should it be necessary; hence I desire to fill it as early as possible, and it would probably be better to do it from men who live in that section (if loyal, and Col. Bourland will receive none other) and are disposed to enter the Confederate service for their own protection and the defense of their own immediate section of country.

Col. **Bourland** is getting old, is in feeble health, and desires to be relieved from service. The major of the regiment