

INDEX CARDS

Ralston  
Churches--Oklahoma Territory  
Intruders--Osage Reservation  
Ferries--Arkansas River  
Finance--Oklahoma Territory  
Game--Osage Reservation  
Stage Routes  
Saloons--Oklahoma Territory

Leona Bryan  
Field Worker  
May 19, 1937

194

Interview with Charles F. Stuart  
1419 North Smith. Pawhuska, Oklahoma.  
Born July 5, 1874. Walnut, Iowa  
Father-Donald Stuart  
Mother-Elizabeth Good

I came to Oklahoma in 1900. I was twenty six years of age. I came here from Iowa and located at Ralston, Pawnee County. The Santa Fe Rail Road was building from Guthrie to Arkansas City and I expected the road to be built from Pawnee to Ralston.

I started a bank there and lived there six years. Later in 1906 I moved to Pawhuska and started the American National Bank.

When in Ralston the chief food was fish. I boarded there and we had fish three times a day. There was a scarcity of fruit and milk and butter. Supplies were bought at <sup>a</sup>country store in the village. There were no Rail-Roads. Supplies were brought in overland from Ponca City.

I loaned money to the Indians and all of them were friendly.

There were deer and wild turkey in abundance. Also lots of fish.

There were four Churches in Ralston at one time but they were not financially able to support independent churches so

the four churches combined and became a federated church, where any protestant minister could officiate.

Warren Bennett was a Deputy U. S. Marshal in those days. The first time I came to Pawhuska, in 1901 or 1902 Bennett gave orders to move out, strangers were not allowed on the reservation.

Most of the farms in that day were small and were not very well improved. However they were farmed almost as extensively as they are now.

There was a ferry boat just below Ralston owned by Walter McCague and Charlie Orr. There was another ferry west about seven or eight miles and one at Blackburn. They charged twenty-five cents for a horseman and one dollar for a team, wagon and passengers. The Ralston citizens later built a free ferry and put the other fellow out of business.

The farmers and merchants were financed through the bank. I have always been a heavy loaner to farmers.

There were no bridges. Streams were forded or were crossed by ferry.

There was lots of horse racing. That was about their only method of diversion. They usually raced on a straight track and raced for a prize.

There were a great many cattle and hogs raised and a few

horses.

There was no Rail-Road nearer than Ponca City or Elgin, Kansas. Most of the crops raised were used for feed. The cattle were driven to Elgin, Kansas, and shipped, and the hogs were most of them hauled to Ponca City and shipped from there.

Nearly all merchandising was done through the general store. Most of these stores were in frame buildings and were over-run with rats.

Doctors were very few. There was one Doctor in Ralston and a Government Doctor in Pawhuska and one in Grayhorse. We who lived in Ralston had to go to Pawnee for all of our medicine.

Prospects at that time looked favorable for oil but there were no known minerals there at that time.

There was no Newspaper in Ralston but there was one in Pawnee. A year or so later one came in at Ralston.

The following names are some of the old timers I knew;  
-H. N. Cook, Fairfax, Okla.; J. J. Quarles, Fairfax, Okla.;  
A. C. Hunsaker, Fairfax, Okla.; R. C. Nash, Fairfax, Okla.;  
Joe Hinkle, Ralston, Okla.; Jess Hegge, Ralston, Okla.; Joe  
Venvator,, Ralston, Okla.; Boyd Young, Ralston, Okla.; Mr.  
- and Mrs. A. M. Harry, Ralston, Okla.; W. M. Ballard, Fair-  
fax, Okla.; and Bill Spurgeon, Fairfax, Oklahoma.

The Santa Fe built a railroad from Ralston to Newkirk some time between 1902 and 1904. The first railroad in Osage county was the M. K. & T. This road was built from Parsons, Kansas, to Oklahoma City in 1903. The Midland Valley Rail Road was built into Pawhuska about 1908.

We didn't seem to lack amusements in those days, there was horse racing, baseball games, horse-back riding and buggy riding. There was lots of good hunting in Osage County just across the river and fishing was also good. There was a dance some place every week.

Osage County was attached to Pawnee County and taxes were paid only for judicial purposes. That is for the up-keep of the District and Probate Courts at Pawnee.

There were no roads in Osage County, trails were all there were.

There were no schools in the Osage except the Catholic schools and the Government school for Indians.

Gray Horse, Hominy and Pawhuska were all trading posts. The traders all had to have permits and a Government Traders license.

There was a stage route from Ponca City via Gray Horse to Pawhuska. There was one from Gray Horse to Ralston, from Ralston to Pawnee, from Pawnee to Guthrie, and from Guthrie to Oklahoma City.

All temperance movements in Ralston were not successful — there were ten saloons there. In Osage County, however, liquor was banned.

Telephone lines were not built through here until 1901 or 1902.

There was lots of timber. Some of the farmers would saw up rough lumber but there was no milling done.

All transportation was by horse or mule.

Six shooters were the most common weapon used.