

MARSHALL, J. W.

INTERVIEW

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BIOGRAPHY FORM  
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION  
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

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Field Worker's name Amelia F. Harris

This report made on (date) June 24, 1937

1. Name Buck (J. W.) Marshall

2. Post Office Address Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) 216 N. E. 10th Street,

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month October Day 11 Year 1860

5. Place of birth New Albany, Mississippi

6. Name of Father Mark Marshall Place of birth Mississippi

Other information about father Civil War Veteran; came to Texas

7. Name of Mother Elizabeth Marshall Place of birth Mississippi

Other information about mother Dead

Notes or complete narrative by the field worker dealing with the life and story of the person interviewed. Refer to Manual for suggested subjects and questions. Continue on blank sheets if necessary and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached 5.

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Amelia F. Harris,  
Interviewer,  
June 24, 1937.

An Interview with Buck (J. W.) Marshall,  
216 N. E. 10th Street,  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

I came from Mississippi to Hunt County, Texas, in 1878, punched cattle here for one year, then moved to Sadler's Bend where there was an old fort where the Rangers and cattlemen would congregate when the Comanche Indians would go on a rampage.

In 1880 I drifted into Indian Territory near Jimstown where I worked on a ranch with Joe Cross. Our nearest neighbor was a rancher whose name was T. Belcher. Mr. Belcher had come from Gainesville, Texas, to Indian Territory. He owned or leased fifteen sections of land and Mud Creek ran through his land. His ranch was known as the A Bar (A) Ranch and was about two miles from us.

Mr. Cross only had seven sections of land leased from the Chickasaw Indians.

While I was working for Cross, he and his son-in-law, Ed Burney, and I, took a contract to build a four wire barbed wire fence ten miles square for Belcher. Ed Burney, Mr. Cross' son-in-law, was a

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half-blood Chickasaw, well educated and from a fine family. This is the way we did it. Mr. Belcher bought posts of bois d'arc trees and dropped these down where he wanted them put, (about/ <sup>every</sup> thirty feet) then he placed 4 x 4 inch oak lumber every ten feet between these posts. Mr. Belcher had us to bore holes with a post auger two feet deep to put the posts into and then we tamped the ground well around the posts. When we had all the posts in we started from the corner posts and put four spools of wire down at once. We stretched and nailed up four wires all at the same time. Mr. Cross made a windlass of two oak posts at each end, and put a long pole in the center, on the side of the wagon, and we put four spools of wire on this center pole at once. We started by one wire wrapped around the corner post and nailed well with staples. Then we would drive the wagon down the line, the full length of the spool of wire stretched tight by the wagon and by the windlass, and when we stopped we threw on our brakes. We had a big plow attached to the

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brakes which we stuck into the ground both to keep our brakes on and to keep the wagon from slipping.

Two men followed and nailed all four wires to the posts; in this manner we could stretch ten miles of fence per day. This was a crude way but clever.

In those days we made some money on the pasture deal and looked after Mr. Cross' cattle too.

I saved my part of the money on the deal to go into business for myself some day.

Belcher sold out to the Washingtons who were big ranchers before they bought Belcher's holdings. The Washingtons offered me more wages than Cross was paying and I then went to work for them. I have helped to drive cattle over the Ozark Trail from where it crossed Red River a little below Gainesville and up into Wyoming. We would often be on these drives for three and four months before we got back to the ranch.

I punched cattle for the Washingtons until the fall of '93; then I was married and moved to a lease. I had 640 acres near Ada. I bought 700 head of cattle and went into business alone.

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My wife and I worked hard and often when there was snow on the ground she would drive the wagon loaded with hay and cottonseed while I would stand in the wagon and throw the hay and cottonseed out to the cattle. Our cattle increased and our family did too.

The South Canadian River was a boundary line between the Seminole and Chickasaw Nations. I had permission to graze my cattle in the Chickasaw Nation but they would sometimes cross the river and range in the Seminole Nation. Governor Brown had eighteen miles of drift wire along the border of the South Canadian River to Keokuk Falls and up Little River to Violet Springs. This fence was to keep cattle out of the Pottawatomie Nation as they would herd law the cattlemen if their cattle crossed the line. I went to Governor Brown and told him that I could not keep the cattle on the Chickasaw range and he said "Let them alone."

There was a full blood Seminole, Isaac Wolfe, and his family who had land where my cattle crossed the Canadian River and I gave him \$15.00 a year to herd them back but he just let them alone, so these cattle ranged this way for sixteen years, until the Indian country was all settled

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up, with the free range gone. I shipped my three and four year old fat steers to St. Louis to market and got a good price for them.

I sold the balance of the herd out to Tom, Dick, and Harry saving only a few good milk cows and we then moved to Tuttle and bought a hundred acres of good farm land, then I leased two hundred acres of grass land and raised mares for breeding registered stock.

Dad had a quirt and bridle reins made of the scalps of Comanche Indians.