



FRANKLIN, DELILAH.

BIOGRAPHY FORM

INTERVIEW.

4891

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

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Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name John F. Daugherty

This report made on (date) June 30 1937

1. Name Delilah Franklin, ( Colored)

2. Post Office Address Davis, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) \_\_\_\_\_

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month X Day X Year 1867

5. Place of birth Wild Horse Creek, ten miles west of Tatums in Chickasaw Nation.

6. Name of Father Louis Stevenson Place of birth Indian Territory

Other information about father Farmer

7. Name of Mother Ruthie Stevenson Place of birth Indian Territory

Other information about mother \_\_\_\_\_

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 4.

John F. Daugherty  
Field Worker  
June 25, 1937

Interview with Delilah Franklin (Choctaw Freedman)  
Davis, Oklahoma.

My parents were Louis and Ruthie Stevenson, both born in the Choctaw Nation and Father was a farmer. There were fourteen children in our family.

I was born in 1867, ten miles west of Tatum, on Wild Horse Creek in the Chickasaw Nation. There were so many wild horses on this creek, that it acquired the name of Wild Horse.

I was born in a log house, with puncheon floor, and a stick and mud or "cat" chimney. The house caught afire many times and I would run for the water bucket and pour water on the fire to extinguish it. We used water from a spring and drank out of a gourd. Our table was made of a large box and our chairs were hewed log benches and blocks. Our beds were made of poles and the mattresses were of hay.

I didn't get to go to school. Father made me stay at home and work in the field. I picked cotton in my apron and carried it to a basket and when the basket was full it

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was taken to the wagon and weighed. This was the way I earned my clothes each year.

I wore split leather shoes with brass toes, and when the soles wore out, Father re-soled them with wooden pegs which he made from white oak. I had only one pair of shoes a year and when this pair wore out I went bare footed until time to buy another pair, which was late in the fall, after the cotton was picked.

Several wagons full of people went to market together, once a year to Gainesville, Texas, when the cotton was hauled off and marketed. We picked the seed from our cotton by hand. That was the way I spent my evenings each fall.

We drove oxen to market, and to church. Our wagon had wooden wheels and wooden axles. It moaned and groaned as we drove along.

The preachers in those days did not receive money for their services. We gave them food instead. Father was a very religious man. We were not allowed to cook on Sunday. Each Saturday we cut enough wood and cooked enough food to do

the family until Monday. We never missed church services, no matter how bad the weather.

My dresses were made of cotton, and it took ten yards for a dress. I wore bustles and hoops and a tight basque. The skirts were long, dragging the ground. We had to hold them out of our way as we walked.

Sunday was the only day of the week which I knew, and we always told the time of day by the sun. I used to enjoy going to dances. They were always square dances, and the music was furnished by men playing a fiddle and an accordion. We always watched the Big Dipper and Joles' Coffin to know when it was time to go home.

In those days we knew nothing about Beauty Shoppes. We curled our hair on corn shucks. First, we greased it thoroughly with lard, and then braided it up with corn shucks, all over our heads. When we got ready to go to these dances we unbraided it and combed it into curls. We used flour for face powder.

We washed our clothes in the creek and hung them on the bushes and trees to dry. We knew nothing about clothes lines. Our wash tubs were old barrels sawed

through the center, and our wash boards were battling sticks.

Our church had a fund for buying coffins for the members who died. They bought the lumber and made the coffin. These coffins were small at the head and the foot, and large in the center, covered with black sateen and lined with bleached muslin, and a cotton pillow was placed at the head. The body was hauled to the cemetery in an ox wagon, and the mourners sang as they proceeded slowly along.

The funeral was held at the grave. We followed the custom of the Indians and buried the things which the dead person had treasured with them.

Mother smoked an old pipe which she made from clay, using a piece of cane for the stem. We grew our own tobacco.

I was married to Ed Franklin and have eight children. My husband is dead. I have lived in Davis for thirty years. I wash for a living.

Father and Mother are buried at Five Mile Cemetery West of Davis.