

GAULT, HANNAH F. INTERVIEW 9652

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

GAULT, HANNAH.F.

INTERVIEW.

9652.

Field Worker's name Ruby Wolfenbarger.

This report made on (date) January 11, 1938. 1938

1. Name Hannah F. Gault.

2. Post Office Address Sentinel, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) Sentinel.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month November Day 28 Year 1862.

5. Place of birth Tennessee.

6. Name of Father Ben J. Bryant. Place of birth Tennessee.

Other information about father Shoemaker and farmer.

7. Name of Mother Mary Little. Place of birth Tennessee.

Other information about mother Housewife.

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 \_\_\_\_\_.

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Ruby Wolfenbarger,  
Investigator,  
Jan. 11, 1938.

An Interview With Hannah F. Gault,  
Sentinel, Oklahoma.

I was born in Tennessee, November 28, 1862. My father, Ben J. Bryant, was a shoemaker and farmer. My parents moved to Texas in 1872 and I lived there until I came to the Indian Territory with my husband and family. We had farmed in Texas but didn't have much success; at the time the Territory was talked of being opened to homesteaders, we were almost destitute. We didn't have any money, we were just renters and we didn't have any farming implements.

In 1888 my husband decided that he would come up here and make the opening run in '89. We traded around and managed to get two wagons and teams and a few provisions to make the trip. A doctor and his wife decided to come through with us; we crossed Red River on a boat. The roads were just cow trails. We met all kinds of people in ox-driven wagons, in buggies and on horseback coming for the run. Everyone was happy and friendly.

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We stopped at Noble, as my husband was going to make the run from there. He wanted to get a homestead near Noble, if he could. He had a very fast race horse with which to make the run.

Weeks before the run people began drifting in from all parts of the country. They were camped in tents just outside the line. As the time set for the opening drew near the people became more excited; you could hear men singing and talking all night. The women were just about as excited as the men; some of them had never had a home and here they expected to find peace and happiness for themselves and their families. My husband made the run but didn't get a homestead; the land that he had expected to get had already been staked and two men were plowing up the ground when he arrived. They had slipped in the night before and put up their stakes; these men were called Sooners. They had soldiers to guard the line but lots of men slipped across before the signal was given.

We camped there at Noble for about a month then we heard of a man who wanted to sell his claim and we went out to see him and bought him out for a few dollars. This

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claim was near Pauls Valley; we built a log house, had to haul the logs to a sawmill and have them trimmed so we could use them. We had a fireplace in one end, and two half-windows. That part of the country was timbered, so the first year the man and boys cut wood and hauled logs to the sawmill for the neighbors. We didn't have money to live on or to farm with the first year. We had lots of good wood to burn. We got our drinking water from a spring; we had to haul our water three miles up hill. We managed to get one cow, and with what little help we got from the neighbors we had plenty of good milk and butter. We did raise a little corn and had plenty of corn meal most of the time. I made all our clothes, I spun the thread to make our clothes and sheets. I made my hominy; I washed the corn in the creek, packed it into a basket and let it stand in the creek all day. At night the corn would be just as white as snow. I also made my lye and soap.

Our first schools were very poor; about the first thing the pioneers did was to build a school for the children. The schoolhouse was one room; the seats were logs split in two with pegs for the legs. The seats didn't have any backs and

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we didn't have any desks for a long time. We had church in the schoolhouse in the winter and on a brush arbor in the summer time. For entertainments we had spelling bees, box suppers and ice cream socials.

We stayed there for seven years, then we moved to Chickasha where we lived near the river and our children had to cross the river in a boat to get to school. This was very dangerous; sometimes our stock would get out in the river and get into the quicksand. We stayed at Chickasha until about 1906, then we moved to Sentinel about two miles south of the city, here we bought one hundred sixty acres of good farming land; it was well improved for that time. I still own the land but I have bought other land since coming up here.

We suffered as much, if not more, than any of the old pioneers who settled this country. We didn't have a penny when we started out but we were determined to make a home for ourselves and our children.