

KEY, EDGAR

INTERVIEW

12603

- 461

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#12503

Carl R. Sherwood,  
Investigator,  
December 30, 1937.

An Interview with Edgar Key,  
207½ West Okmulgee, Muskogee,  
Oklahoma.

I was born April 3, 1876, in Blount County, Tennessee.

My mother was Marguerite McGee, born in Tennessee, July 17, 1837. My father was Ranson Marion Key, born March 2, 1834. Ranson Key was married to Marguerite McGee March 6, 1856, and to this union were born twelve children, nine boys and three girls.

My parents came to the Indian Territory from Blount County, Tennessee, in September, 1880, and located in the Choctaw Nation on the Fort Towson Military Road about fifteen miles south of Fort Smith, Arkansas.

We left Tennessee in covered wagons drawn by horses, and were many days on the road; our first location was at a toll gate on the Fort Towson road at the foot of Back Bone Mountain. This toll gate was operated by a Choctaw Indian named Jessie Riddle. Here my father rented a farm and he, like all other non-citizens, had to get a permit from the Choctaw Council. This permit reads as follows:

KEY, EDGAR.

INTERVIEW.

#12603

-2-

"The General Council of the Choctaw Nation declares that it shall not be lawful for any man or non-citizen of this Nation to enclose for his own use more land than he and his family can cultivate."

I helped my parents on the farm until I was twenty-four years of age, and on November 25, 1900, I was married to Miss Maude Salsman of Cameron. My wife was born August 6, 1881, in the Choctaw Nation. I farmed for two years near Cameron and made good money both years. Turning from farm life we moved into Cameron where I worked on the section of the Frisco Railroad Company for several years.

After leaving the railroad service, I was appointed deputy sheriff under Sheriff George Noble, and was given about sixty convicts out of McAlester to build good roads through the mountains of the Choctaw Nation. I was on the police force at Ft. Sill for five years under United States Marshal B. A. Enloe, now deceased.