

RUTHERFORD, C. N.

INTERVIEW

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

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Field Worker's name Lula Austin

This report made on (date) January 5, 1936

1. Name Mr. C. N. Rutherford

2. Post Office Address Fishomingo

3. Residence address (or location) Northwest part of town.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month September Day 1 Year 1872

5. Place of birth Durant

6. Name of Father Sixon Durant Place of birth Mississippi

Other information about father Missionary

7. Name of Mother _____ Place of birth _____

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 2

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An Interview with Mr. C. N. Rutherford, Tishomingo.

By - Lula Austin - Investigator.

January 5, 1938.

The land grafters were after anyone they could get thirty years ago in what was then Indian Territory. My wife, who was Mattie Durant, a Choctaw Indian, was a victim of two prominent grafters who bought land from her at a very unjust price.

A relative who was a lawyer represented Mattie and before the trial came up the grafters bought him off, then I was employed by Miss Durant. Threats were made against me by men who said if I tried to bring the case to trial they would "get me".

The case was called to trial in the afternoon and continued after supper on the same day. Mattie Durant's relative was put on the stand for cross examination and became so angry at me when I told about his being bought off that he picked up a chair and came toward me. I put my hand up to ward off the blow and reached in my pocket for my forty-five six shooter, but it hung in the holster and when I pulled the gun out it went off and fired in

the ceiling. My man stepped in a cuspidor and fell to the floor and everyone thought he was shot. An Indian police who was in the room arrested me. I had my trial in Caddo and the charges were dismissed. Joe Ralls was my lawyer; he proved that I pulled my gun in self-defense.

I never met this man until a year later in Ardmore at the railroad station. I opened the door and he was coming in at the station. When he saw me he ran like a rabbit, but later came to me and apologized and said he didn't want to have trouble with me.