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Mauncey O. Moore, Supervisor

Indian-Pioneer History, S-149

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Frank J. Still
Field Worker

Interview: Houston Ratliff

Houston Ratliff, who lives at Park Hill, Oklahoma, was born December 8th, 1878, in Cherokee County. His is Cherokee Indian.

Father - Daniel Ratliff

Mother - Anna Ballard

His father came from Tennessee in 1838 when he was one year old.

EARLY DAY REMEMBRANCES

My father raised a lot of cattle. My uncle, Robbin Ratliff, had a large herd and the bushwhackers killed him for his cattle. My father found him and his body was so decayed that all he could do was to pile rock around him.

My father traded Old Jack Cookson, a negro boy, for the place in which he was born and reared.

I guarded Wash Downing at the Garfield Court House. He was accused of stealing a pony. I guarded Snow Wild Cat charged with killing Nick Sanders. He was released when Statehood came.

I went to school to W. H. Ballentine, Sr. in a log house with log benches. I attended the Male Seminary. Taxy Brown was Superintendent. One of the teachers, a white man, would waylay the boys when they would slip off and go to town. One night George Gourd hit him in the head and he soon left.

My mother said they hid her father in an old stump to keep him from going to war. She would ride from Greenleaf Creek to Beck's Mill at Flint to get meal, about 60 miles. They could not get salt so they dug the dirt up around the smokehouse and boiled it down.