



BIOGRAPHY FORM  
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION  
Indian-Pioneer History Project for OklahomaField Worker's name Alene D. McDowellThis report made on (date) October 15, 1937

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1. Name Smith Lounsbury
  2. Post Office Address 2nd. and Delaware, Bartlesville, Oklahoma
  3. Residence address (or location) 2nd and Delaware, Bartlesville, Okla.
  4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month June Day 12 Year 1862
  5. Place of birth Indiana

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6. Name of Father Nathan Lounsbury Place of birth Connecticut  
Other information about father Buried in Bartlesville, Okla.
  7. Name of Mother Octava Granstaff-Lounsbury Place of birth Virginia  
Other information about mother Buried in Bartlesville, Okla.

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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 10.

LOUNSBURY, SMITH

INTERVIEW.

#7875

Investigator,  
Alene D. McDowell,  
October 15, 1937

Interview with Smith Lounsbury  
2nd. and Delaware Ave.  
Bartlesville, Oklahoma

Smith Lounsbury was born June 12, 1862 in Indiana.

Father-Nathan Lounsbury was born in Connecticut and is buried in White Rose Cemetery at Bartlesville, Oklahoma

Mother-Octave Granstaff-Lounsbury was born in Virginia and is buried in the White Rose Cemetery at Bartlesville, Oklahoma.

In 1888, I married Zetta Adkins at Broken Bow, Nebraska, where we lived for five years, then removed to Kansas and a short time later we came to the Indian Territory, where we have made our home since . We have no children, but partially raised a boy.

In 1893, I came to Hunnewell, Kansas, to make the run into the Cherokee Strip. I made the run on horseback and tried to secure a claim on Salt Fork, near Blackwell, twenty-four miles southeast of Hunnewell, but lost to a Sooner. It was my own fault because I did not receive a claim. I was prejudiced against prairie land and when I arrived at the desired location of bottom land and found another man already there, I

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gave up. He claimed he had been there for forty minutes, I knew this was not true, for I had made the run in less than an hour. I did not contest him but returned home. I could have secured a good claim of prairie land but refused anything except bottom land. This run was the most exciting experience I ever witnessed. It is as clear in my mind now as it was forty-four years ago.

THE RUN: The weather was hot and dry on the morning of the run, September 16, 1893, and people were there from all parts of the United States. They had been congregating for weeks and by the time set for the registration the crowds were so great about the canvas booths, where the registration office was, that a system was necessary to keep order. A certificate was issued to each person who registered and these certificates were to be held until opening day. ~~Thou-~~  
~~sands registered for the race. At five minutes until twelve~~  
o'clock, noon, September 16, 1893, all was tense and ready for the greatest race in the history of the Indian Territory.

The United States soldier, on horseback fired the signal shot and the race was on everybody for himself. Those on horseback were soon leading the race. Conveyances were broken down, horses stumbled, fell and others became exhausted

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and dropped out of the race, but all were there for the same purpose, "a claim." By sundown the tide of homeseekers had scattered over the entire Cherokee Strip, seeking a desired claim or town lot on which to establish a home, many tired and hungry, but happy that they had succeeded in securing land.

Of course, there were rough characters among the thousands of people, who were there for a claim, regardless of principal. The Government had tried to prevent "Sooners" from entering the Outlet before the appointed time but this failed for many homeseekers, like myself, were beaten out of their claims. Just before the signal was fired South of Hunnewell, a man on horseback stampeded the crowd and "they were over the line like a cattle stampede." It was useless to try to stop them and the race was well under way when the signal was fired. There were few casualties, considering the vast crowd.

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On July 31, 1894, my father, Nathan Lounsbury, my brother Allen, my wife and I came from Kansas to the Indian Territory in a covered wagon. We brought about twelve head of horses with us. We settled on the south side of Caney River in Bartlesville, and lived in our covered wagons until August

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14th, when I traded a horse for a one room log house with a lean-to kitchen on the present location of my home. At that time the town was all located on North Delaware Avenue and my home was at the south end of the one street. Arthur Morgan and Henry Clay owned a blacksmith shop on the side of the street and our one drug store was next door to the blacksmith shop. William Johnstone and George B. Keeler owned a general merchandise store on the west side of the street. Frank M. Overlees operated a store on the west side of the street and Tom Hick's livery barn stood next door to his store. Sam Bopst's residence was in the center of the street. George B. Keeler's home was on the banks of Caney River at the north end of the street.

There was one well dug in the town after we came here and we all carried water from this well. It was located about one-half block from our home.

I had been here about ten days when I found work with a threshing machine crew south of town. I heard the threshing machine and with my pitchfork over my shoulder, I set out to locate it. When I arrived the gauge of the machine was broke and Albert Alexander, the owner, saw me and said, "I'll bet this man is able to guess the measurement of wheat by the half

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bushel." I went to work for him and stayed until the threshing season was finished.

I hauled freight from Coffeyville and Camey, Kansas, into the Indian Territory for several years and have made many trips with Dave Phelps, who now lives at 117 N. Cheyenne, Bartlesville. There were no roads in those days and we followed trails or blazed our own trail through the country. My brother, Allen, and I hauled flour from the Bartles Mill to Cleveland over some of the worst trails in the country. On one of these trips, my wagon got stuck, going down hill. The rocks were so large in the trails, the wheels of the wagon would cramp in such a position we would often get stuck. My brother hooked his team on the back of my wagon and pulled it back so I could straighten the wheels around, then my team could pull the load.

There was a ferry over the Arkansas River, southeast of Cleveland where we crossed with our freight. We went across the deep part of the river on the ferry, then teams were hooked on to pull us out of the sand.

I helped haul the oil field equipment from Red Fork to Bartlesville to drill the first oil well in Oklahoma. We scattered hay on the ice across the Arkansas River to keep our

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teams from slipping when we crossed. This was forty years ago and this well is still producing about two and one-half barrels a day. The well was drilled on the northeast corner, section 12, township 26 north, range 12 east. This was the first well of commercial importance in what is now the state of Oklahoma. A marker is now being erected on the site of this well and will be presented to the Oklahoma Historical Society.

There was a ford over Caney River at the north end of Delaware Avenue and another located three blocks east at the north end of Seneca Avenue, just north of the Arthur Armstrong residence. There was a ford crossed Caney River, south of town on the Jimmy Day place. Later a toll bridge was built across the river at this ford and was run by Bill Shinn. A Mr. Hill was operating the bridge when the toll was taken off. There was a ford across Sand Creek near the Bill Lewis Ranch at Okesa, in Osage County. This ford was at about the same location of the present bridge on the highway from Okesa to Pawhuska.

When I removed from Nebraska to Kansas I brought most of my living to last for two years. There was no market for hogs, so I butchered mine and brought the meat with me. I traded a load of wheat for supplies at the store and also brought 1300 pounds



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of flour. I was only in Kansas for a short time, so when I came to the Indian Territory I had supplies to last for two years. I lived in Kansas previous to my removal to Nebraska, where I lived for eight years, then returned to Kansas and from there to Bartlesville, where I have made my home for forty-three years. I farmed for two years and raised one hundred acres of wheat. This land was east of town.

There was a dispute over the mail when we first came here and we never knew where we would receive what little mail we did get. The post office had been located in the Bartles store on the north side of the river and Frank Bellows was the postmaster.. Keeler and Johnstone who had established a town on the south side of the river, applied for the post office, it was then moved to the south side. Mr. Bartles resented this move and the dispute became a heated one. When the office was on the north side we had to wade across the river for our mail. The mail was delivered from Coffeyville, Kansas, to Bartlesville by the mail hack and I think Jesse Morgan, brother of Arthur Morgan, one of our early day business men, was the first driver of the mail hack.

When the Santa Fe Railroad decided to build their line through Bartlesville, another heated argument between Jake

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Bartles and Johnstone and Keeler began. Mr. Johnstone asked Mr. Bartles to plot one hundred and sixty acres of his land and co-operate in establishing a town. Bartles, of course, refused and informed them when he built a town he would build it alone. Mr. Johnstone then cut his wheat field and a surveyor was hired by Senator Kerr to plot a forty acre tract, which is now Bartlesville. The wrangle then started for the location of the depot. Bartles wanted it on the north side of the river and the citizens on the south side wanted it in their town. When it was located on the south side, Bartles moved his store four miles north and started the town of Dewey.

I drilled water wells in the new town of Bartlesville and cleared \$24 and \$30 per day. The town was really booming and water was in great demand. I was a busy man in those days.

The first Daily newspaper published in Bartlesville was the Bartlesville Daily Pointer. Howard A. Tucker was the Editor and the first copy was issued August 7, 1905. This paper was issued every afternoon at four o'clock except Sunday and distributed free to every resident and business house in the city. There were twelve hundred copies daily. The advertising rates were 5¢ per line and display ads were 25¢ per inch. Their office

ROBERT LOVE, (Chickasaw) Informant. April 26, 37  
1719 North 24th, street,  
Muskogee, Oklahoma.

By Jas. S. Buchanan

Subject- Fountain Baptist Church-First Baptist church  
in the Creek Nation.

As I have stated in a previous interview, after the Civil war and the slaves were made free, my mother, with my brother, sister and myself left the Love plantation near Red river and came to the Creek nation and lived in the vicinity of what was called Marshalltown between the Arkansas river and Verdigris river north of Muskogee. That was in 1867 and I was thirteen years of age and as I remember the Fountain Baptist Church was the only church in that vicinity, located about three miles northwest of where the town of Wybark now stands. It was a log structure about eighteen feet in width by thirty-five feet in length. The furniture consisted of benches hewed from logs and the pulpit was of the same material. The first preacher I can remember hearing at that old church was an old colored preacher by the name of Ketch Barnett, who was the regular minister for a long time. I also remember hearing John Bemo, a Seminole, preach there. In the summer time they would hold camp meetings there and the people would come from miles around and camp on the camp ground around the old

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ROBERT LOVE

Subject-Fountain Baptist Church.

church. Generally starting on Wednesday and lasting over Sunday and all the converts to the church would be baptised Sunday afternoon in the Verdigris river at the Slanting ford which was about three miles up the river from where the town of Okay is now located.

All the people attending the camp meetings would bring plenty to eat, such as roasted or barbecued deer, wild hog, wild turkey, etc, and all this would be spread together and was enjoyed by all.

The colored people and the Creek Indians attended the services at this church together and the majority of the Creeks could not understand the English language, therefore it was necessary for an interpreter to assist the minister as the sermon would be delivered in English. The preacher would announce his text and the interpreter would announce it after him in Creek, and likewise each sentence, and if the minister shouted in a loud voice so as to make his point impressive, the interpreter would repeat it in the same tone and manner. Two people that I can remember that acted as such interpreters at those meetings were Samson Stidham and Dock Barnett.

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ROBERT LOVE

Subject-Fountain Baptist Church

There is one thing I wish to say for the full blood Indian in reference to the church, and that is they were very serious in their belief when they became converted, very devout and never practiced hypocrisy. If an Indian once converted and became active in the church, then committed something wrong, he would not take his usual place in the church at his next attendance and would sit off to himself back of the congregation, and the minister understanding them as he did, would go to him and ask as to the cause of his actions and most generally the Indian would say "me no good, I quit". Then after much explanation of God's forgiveness of sin and a convincing talk that he could yet be a good man, he generally came back and took his place in the church, and generally <sup>was</sup> a better Indian from the experience.