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WALTER B. INTERVIEW.

Alene D. McDowell  
Research Field Worker S-149.

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The Life of an Early Day School Teacher  
Given by  
Walter B. Allen  
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Bartlesville, Oklahoma

Walter B. Allen was born in Franklin County, Kansas in 1866. His parents moved from Tennessee to Illinois, just prior to the Civil War. After the war in 1866 they moved from Illinois to Franklin County, Kansas where their son Walter B. was born.

In 1872 the Allens moved to Chautauqua County, Kansas where their children received their education. After the subject of this review completed his education, he taught two terms of school at Chautauqua in 1888 and 1889. He then taught several subscription schools in the county including a school south of Peru, Kansas and one west of Sedan.

In 1889 Mr. Allen came to the Indian Territory and worked on a section gang for a railroad company in Claremore, then decided to take a trip to Colorado and was gone about three months. When he returned he again took up the occupation of school teacher.

After the death of his parents in 1895, he settled in Fort Scott, Kansas, where he studied law. He did not attend

law school but received his law education in the school of "Hard Knocks".

On April 28, 1897, while living in Fort Scott, he was united in marriage to Miss Susie Keefer, who was also a school teacher. Mrs. Allen came from a pioneer family of the Indian Territory. She is a very intelligent woman, and taught school in Kansas and Oklahoma for twenty-two years. She taught in Dewey for seven years.

In 1901, Mr. and Mrs. Allen moved to Dewey in the Indian Territory, where they now live. Mr. Allen taught the first school in Dewey that same year, in a building located on the premises of the present school building, and the building that was used, was later torn down and the brick was used in a building now owned by Mrs. Mary Allen, who operates the Dewey Hotel. This was a subscription school and lasted eight months.

The Allens then moved to Pryor, Indian Territory, where Mr. Allen taught the first free school in that community. He only taught there one term, the parents thought his discipline was too severe. He described the children as untrained and very unruly, and said they had been accustomed to having their own way and when they were corrected the parents objected.

Their next move was to Talala where he taught two terms. While at play one day at noon, he was hit with a ball, cutting a place just above the eye. It was necessary to take two stitches to close the wound. The school ground was divided into three sections, one for the smaller children, one section for the intermediate ages and one for the larger boys and girls. His career as a school teacher lasted over a period of seventeen years.

His next venture was the practice of Law. Since 1905 Mr. Allen has practiced law in Washington County, serving as County Attorney from 1919 to 1921 and went to Washington D. C. as a member of the Legislation in 1928 and 1929. His political views are Republican.

The Allens are the parents of two children: a daughter, Miss Ida Allen, one of the most popular teachers in the Dewey school. She had taught in Dewey since 1920; and a son, Wendall B. Allen of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Wendall is a graduate of the University of Illinois and has a master degree from the Pitt University at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He is the athletic coach in the Shenly High School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Wendall has won two scholarships and is now working for one that will entitle him to a trip to Los Angeles, California. He is

very brilliant young man and has a bright future.

The Allen family have lived in Dewey continuously since 1905 and have seen Dewey grow from a little village to a flourishing little city of approximately 3,000, and have helped to educate the youngsters from Territory days in 1889 to the present time.