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INTERVIEW WITH W. A. ARNOLD
As Given to O. C. Davidson
Field Worker.

I was born in the Cherokee Nation, Canadian District at Webbers Falls November 18, 1874. My father was a Doctor. Dr. Clarence G. Arnold. He and my mother separated when I was four years old and he left that country and I never knew much about him. I grew up around Webbers Falls. Worked on ranches at odd jobs until I got large enough to hold a top-hand job. My first real job was for the Pitch Fork outfit, owned by John H. Lewis. He branded with the  (Pitch Fork) Brand. His ranch was seven miles northwest of Webbers Falls. Pet Sadderwhite was foreman of the outfit. Mr. Lewis went to Texas and bought several thousand head of steers. We drove them through on the old Texas Trail, branded them and turned them loose on the range.

Every year we would have what the ranchers called the fall round-up. We would ride the range for miles around and gather up all the cattle and drive them back to the home range, brand the calves and all the other cattle that were not branded.

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Usually all of the ranchers of the community would throw in together for the round-up.

The first round-up I made I was working for the Pitchfork outfit, and drove the chuck wagon and cooked for the cow-boys. On this round-up there were cow-boys from the Harmon Vann ranch, three miles Northeast of Porum. They branded with the HV brand. The Cicero Davis ranch who used the half-circle (C) brand, located 12 miles east of Checotah. We finished gathering supplies at the Circle C Ranch. Mr. Davis put in 12 big sides of meat and a 10 gallon can of lard. The first stop we made was at the Tuck Thornburg farm 12 miles south of Checotah. We were there for about a week. The boys riding the range for miles around gathering upcattle. When we left there we crossed the Canadian river at the Gol Condy Ferry into the Choctaw Nation. We camped that night on top of the Winding Stair Mountain. It took me about 6 hours to climb the mountain with the chuck wagon. It rained so hard that night that I had to get under the chuck wagon to cook supper. From there we went to Enterprize and gathered up several thousand head of cattle that had stray-

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ed over into that country. Coming back into the Cherokee Nation we crossed the Canadian river at Hoyt Ferry. We got stuck in quick sand, and the cow-boys had to tie the wagon bed down with ropes to keep it from floating off, then tied ropes to the wagon tongue and to their saddle horses and the cowponys pulled us out;

Ceeper Surratt, a full blood Chectaw Indian. lived at Whitefield and always helped swim cattle across the river. He could swim a horse around and herd cattle as good in a river as most cow-boys could on a prairie.

Pony Starr was another extray good hand at swimming cattle. Clem Vann and Jack Foreman were the best brush hands on the round-up. They could rope a steer in the thickest brush and never miss. They were also considered the best bronc-riders in the country. In those days a man had to know how to handle a rope and to ride a bronc to make a hand on a ranch.

The cow-ponys were turned loose on the range to graze at night and drove in in the morning by what they called the horse wrangler.

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Every cow-boy had to rope his horse and if he missed it was just to bad. After he was roped and saddled the cow-boy usually had to be a good rider to stay in the saddle for the first few minutes.

We were out in this round-up for almost three months. None of the boys had shaved during the time.

About 1895 Bill Vann, a Cherokee Indian, living three miles northwest of Webbers Falls, and whose wife was a Chickasaw Indian, moved to the Chickasaw Nation in order to get in an allotment. When the allotments were made to the Chickasaws, he took with him a big herd of cattle and also a big herd of horses. We were about six weeks making the trip. Mr. Vann had a lot of money and he had it in an old trunk in the bottom of one of the wagons. (There were about eight wagons in the outfit) and other stuff packed around and a mattress on top. He and his wife rode on top of all this all the way and slept there at night. There was quite a lot of robbing being done and we were expecting to be held up and robbed all the way but nothing happened . we camped one night at a little town called Hilliby, about 12 miles South of e Eufaula and the Indians were having a stemp dance there. They made so much noise we didn't go to sleep that night.

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Tishomingo was the next town we went through, then Stonewall and Woodville where they stopped again.

Later I went to work on the Blackstone ranch owned by Nip and George Blackstone, located three miles due North of Perum. The ranch house was a two room boxed shack built of cotton wood lumber. The ranch consisted of 4,200 acres of land. Their cattle brand was the (□) Box brand and the (V) Hat Up brand. Their horse brand was III. I worked on this ranch for about 20 years.

In 1911 at Perum, there was a bunch of people started what they called the Black Cap Gang. They accused Pony Starr and Joe Davis of rustling cattle. On the 29th day of May they decided they would go to Pony Starr house and kill him and Joe Davis. They went there, 29 in number, and in about thirty minutes 16 men had been killed and wounded. Several died right on the spot. Several of their horses were killed but Starr or Davis didn't receive a wound.

That was what started what was known as the Starr and Davis feud at Perum.