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BRASHEARS, J. B.

INTERVIEW

#9092

BIOGRAPHY FORM
WORKS PROGRAMS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for OklahomaField Worker's name John F. DaughertyThis report made on (date) October 29, 1937

-
1. Name J. B. Brashears
2. Post Office Address Sulphur, Oklahoma
3. Residence address (or location) Route 3
4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month April Day 1 Year 1870
5. Place of birth Tennessee

-
6. Name of Father Henry Brashears Place of birth Tennessee
Other information about father Farmer
7. Name of Mother Mary Brownlow Place of birth Tennessee
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 6.

Interview with J. B. Brashears
Sulphur, Oklahoma

Investigator, John F. Daugherty
Indian-Pioneer History, S-149
October 29, 1937

LIFE OF A COWBOY IN TERRITORIAL DAYS.

My parents were Henry Brashears and Mary Brownlow Brashears, born in Tennessee (dates unknown). There were seven children. Father was a farmer. I was born in Tennessee, April 1, 1870.

When I was thirteen years old I ran away from home and went to Texas. I got a job on a ranch belonging to Dan Harrison.

I helped drive a herd of about twenty-eight hundred head of cattle to the Osage country, in 1883. I went back to Texas and in a few months we drove about nineteen hundred to the Osage country. This time as we got to Twelve Mile Prairie, in the Chickasaw Nation it was time to camp for the night. In the meantime my father had moved to the Territory, and was living on Twelve Mile Prairie. I asked my boss if I might spend the night with Father and he said that I could. Father's house was not far from where we

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camped, so I went over there for the night. During the night our cattle stampeded. I hurriedly jumped on my horse and rode toward Blue River to get ahead of them. The river was high and it was early in the Spring so I knew the water was cold. But I plunged my horse into the racing water and some of the cattle followed me. Then I turned my horse and swam back to the bank, shooting. We finally got them to milling, but the next morning we found three hundred dead steers. I received thirty dollars per month and my board.

One day not long after I came here I went to see Frank Byrd. I was sitting in the house talking with Frank when Governor Harris of the Chickasaws rode up. I asked him if he would give me a job. He replied that they were just ready to begin the Spring roundup and I could go to work. That afternoon I rode to Blue Prairie where the roundup was to be held. It was just about sundown when I got there and the boys were all sitting near the chuck wagon waiting for supper. I got off my horse, staked him and went to

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the merry circle.

The boys didn't say much but they laughed a great deal among themselves. I wondered why there were so amused, but after supper I found out the cause of their merriment. Two of them arrested me, and took me to the center of the circle. I was very much perplexed about what I had done to be treated in such a manner. They had a judge and jury and held court. I was charged with riding too near the chuck wagon. They found me guilty and sentenced me to fifty stripes with a leather belt. I was tied to a barrel, face down and the punishment was administered amid shouts of laughter. To me it wasn't so funny but I wasn't hurt.

The next evening Governor Harris came to the ranch and tied his team to the wheel of the chuck wagon. Alas, the boss had committed a crime and he must be brought to justice. I was appointed judge and the Governor was given a fair and impartial trial by the high court. I decided he should be rolled in a blanket and rolled to the creek where he must be

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plunged into the water. My orders were fulfilled and Governor Harris took it all as it was meant, in fun. We had some fine times on his ranch. I worked here for three years then I went to work for Frank Byrd. I hauled the first machinery for his mill from Coalgate with seven yoke of oxen. It took five days to make the trip.

I attended several Pashofah dances near Stonewall. The sick Indian was placed in a hut and guards stood near. If anything came near the dancers it was shot. It was thought to be the evil spirit which was causing the Indian's illness.

One night I was forced to ride through Robber's Roost. I was alone and there were so many murders committed there that I was very frightened before I entered the Roost. However, I had a six shooter and I could use it if it became necessary. Just after I passed the spring, a man reached up and grabbed the bridle reins. My horse reared twice and he held to the reins. I had a loaded riding quirt and I struck him a blow with it. He fell to the ground,

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stunned, and I rode away in a gallop. I didn't even remember that I had a gun. I gave it to a man for a night's lodging a few days later. If I couldn't remember to use it in case of necessity, I decided there was no need to carry it.

We drove our cattle to Davis to ship them before the Frisco was built through Scullin, Mill Creek, and Ada.

I married Paralee Kirk in 1892 at Hickory.

~~I have~~ lived in Murray County forty years.