

Notice of Copyright

Published and unpublished materials may be protected by Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code). Any copies of published and unpublished materials provided by the Western History Collections are for research, scholarship, and study purposes only.

Use of certain published materials and manuscripts is restricted by law, by reason of their origin, or by donor agreement. For the protection of its holdings, the Western History Collections also reserves the right to restrict the use of unprocessed materials, or books and documents of exceptional value and fragility. Use of any material is subject to the approval of the Curator.

Citing Resources from the Western History Collections

For citations in published or unpublished papers, this repository should be listed as the Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

An example of a proper citation:

Oklahoma Federation of Labor Collection, M452, Box 5, Folder 2. Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

INDEX CARDS

Greer County
Home-Dugout
Wood Haulers

BIOGRAPHY FORM
 WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
 Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Virgil Coursey

This report made on (date) July 13 1937

1. Name Mr. R. J. Briscoe

2. Post Office Address Lipton, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month August Day 9 Year 1859

5. Place of birth Missouri

6. Name of Father James Briscoe Place of birth Missouri

Other information about father fought and died in civil war

7. Name of Mother Sarah Walton Place of birth Virginia

Other information about mother _____

Notes for 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 3.

Virgil Coursey
Interviewer
July 13, 1937

interview with
Mr. R. J. Briscoe
Tipton, Oklahoma

My forefathers crossed Red River into Texas from Missouri in 1845.

My father, James Briscoe, died in the Southern Army during the Civil War in an epidemic of measles.

I was born in 1859 and in 1889 I left Kaufman County, Texas, and moved to Oklahoma. I was married and had four children. It took eleven days to make the trip to Oklahoma. We settled one mile south and one half mile east of Friendship. In 1895 we moved south of Meas.

In 1889 this country was quite different in character and appearance to what it is now. There were thousands of head of cattle on free range and there were prairie dogs, and various kinds of game were very plentiful.

There were no roads and very few houses.

We lived in a dugout with a dirt floor. It took three days to make a round trip to Vernon for supplies and one found it difficult to cross rivers because of

-2-

quick sand. There were no bridges.

No wood could be found in this section of the country and most people were too poor to buy coal. So it was necessary to go to the Indian Territory for fuel. United States Marshals were stationed in the territory to keep people from cutting the timber. However lots of it was cut. The country could not have been settled up otherwise. If this source of fuel had not been available most people would have had to leave this country.

I was arrested a number of times and taken to Madarko and El Reno.

My first crops were mostly grain. In 1893 a big wheat crop was made. But the following three or four years were dry and very little grain was grown.

Many people became discouraged and left the country.

It was during these drouthy years that people discovered cotton could be successfully raised here. It had been considered too far north for cotton. However cotton was the salvation of this country. Cotton brought .03 3/8 cents in 1894.

I farmed up to seventeen years ago. My wife died in February two years ago. I am now living in Lipton.