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- BURNS, WILLIAM ROSS

INTERVIEW

, 4295

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

BURNS, WILLIAM BROWN

INTERVIEW.

4295.

Field Worker's name Ruby Wolfenbarger

This report made on (date) June 4, 1937

1. Name William Brown Burns

2. Post Office Address Sentinel, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) Sentinel, Oklahoma.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month May Day 20 Year 1860

5. Place of birth Hopkins County, Texas

6. Name of Father Ewing Burns Place of birth Missouri

Other information about father Presbyterian Minister

7. Name of Mother Julia Brown Place of birth Missouri

Other information about mother Housewife

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 3.

BURNS, WILLIAM BROWN

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Ruby Wolfenbarger,
June 4, 1937.
Field Worker

Interview with William Brown Burns
Sentinel, Oklahoma
Born May 20, 1860.
Father-Ewing Burns
Mother Julie Brown

William Brown Burns came to Oklahoma in the fall of 1889, following the "run". He came from Hopkins County, Texas, bringing his family, a wife and five children with him. Tom Elmore and his family came with them. They came in covered wagons, four wagons making up the party. They were several weeks on the road. They made camp at night near a water hole, or spring, hobbling their horses near by so they could graze and not run away. Mr. Burns located near Lawton, where he lived for about one year. Then he filed on eighty acres of land near what is now Hollis, This town is located in Southwestern Oklahoma, on Red River. Their first home was a dugout and small log room with one half-window and door. Their furniture was very meager. It consisted of beds, two straw mattresses, chairs, cookstove, tent and a few dishes and cooking utensils. They got their water from a well that Mr. Burns dug down by the river. It was about three feet deep, and the water was very good. They got their fuel

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from the land which they had cleared up for their farm and home. They also burned mesquite, which they got off the river bank. Some of the logs had drifted down the river. These were used to burn and also to build houses.

They did not raise nor raise any crops the first year, only a small garden. Their livestock consisted of two horses, three cows and a calf. Their chief foods were milk, butter, eggs, sorghum, and corn meal which they ground themselves.

Mr. Burns worked out for wages, receiving from fifty cents to one dollar per day for his work. They bought their supplies from Alvarado and Quanah, Texas, which were about eighteen and twenty-five miles away. There were no country stores or trading posts near by. Both these towns are now little cities.

The Burness did not have any trouble nor dealings in any way with the Indians; both kept to themselves.

There was not much game in this part of the country at this time. Fish, however, was very plentiful. There were several ferry boats located up and down the river. It cost about one dollar per wagon to across. There were several large cattle ranches located in the western part of Oklahoma.

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The country was very thinly settled. The farmers usually held their church in the school building, or under "Brush Arbor Tabernacles." The people came to church in wagons, drawn by oxen. The school house was a one room log building. Children walked several miles to school; the term usually lasted about six months out of the year. Each child had to pay tuition of one dollar per month, which was used to pay the teacher. There were about twenty pupils in these schools, their ages being from six to sixteen years.

Mr. Burns brought into Oklahoma with him, an old-fashioned skillet and lid, and also an old spinning-wheel stick, which they used to turn the spinning-wheel. He still has these things in his possession.

Both his parents are buried in Texas.