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INDEX CARDS

Civil War-Confederate Army
Chickasaw Nation-Thackerville
Native of Graineries
Home Made Tools
Household Necessities
Cattle Permits

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

Field Worker's name John F. Daugherty

This report made on (date) June 15, 1937

Name Wylie Bearden

Post Office Address Sulphur, Oklahoma

Residence address (or location) _____

DATE OF BIRTH: Month unknown Day unknown Year 1842

Place of birth Chattanooga, Georgia

Name of Father Kenyon Bearden Place of birth Georgia

Other information about father _____

Name of Mother Elizabeth Black Place of birth Georgia

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

My parents were Kenyon Bearden and Elizabeth Black Bearden, both born in Georgia (dates unknown). Father was a farmer. There were six children in our family. I was born in Chattanooga, Georgia, in 1842. When the Civil War began, I volunteered and served in the Confederate Army. My company was nearly wiped out in the Battle of Shiloh, but I escaped, due to the fact that I had Pneumonia and Typhoid Fever, and couldn't fight. They left me at a house to recuperate.

I moved to Thackerville, Indian Territory, Chickasaw Nation in 1893 from Grant County, Arkansas. We came in a covered wagon and were twenty-four days making the trip. We had relatives here and they urged us to come.

I took a ten year lease from Sam Gattin on forty acres. I put a rail fence around it and set in to farm it. At that time ten acres of farm land was a crop. I planted this in wheat, corn, and some cotton. We always had good crops and corn was sold for about fifteen cents a bushel, cotton was worth about three or four cents a pound. The cottonseed was thrown away. It was of no use whatever. We cut our wheat with crooked hooks and threshed it by laying buffalo hides in a circle, spreading the wheat on this and making a horse tramp it out of the husks. After

he had thoroughly tramped it, it was gathered up in a large sheet and the chaff blown out, by shaking the sheet.

Our granaries were made by burning the inside out of a large tree, about fifteen feet high. The wheat was poured into this. There was a hole with a peg in it at the bottom of the tree and a chute was built to run the grain into sacks. When we wanted a sack of wheat or oats we pulled the peg out of the hole and the grain ran into the sack through the chute. We ground this wheat on a small steel mill which held a gallon at a time. We ground it three times and it was ready for use.

We raised our own tobacco. We mortised a hole in a tree, put the tobacco in this hole after we had twisted it, and pressed it, with a pole. This was used for both smoking and chewing.

I burned pine knots and used the charcoal for coal to sharpen my plow points. I used a homemade scooter plow, and an eye hoe. I gathered my corn with a slide which held about ten bushels of corn and was pulled by one horse. I always shucked my corn before putting it into the crib. We had husking bees. A jug of whiskey was covered with corn as it was hauled in from the fields. The neighbors were invited in to help husk the corn. The women prepared

a big dinner while the men husked the corn. They sat in a circle at the foot of the pile of corn and as they husked, the corn came down and kept the jug of whiskey covered. The first one to reach the jug claimed it. That night we had a big dance.

I threshed oats over a pole. I set two forked poles in the ground and placed another pole in these forks. I then hit the cross pole with a bundle of oats. This caused the grain to fall out on a large sheet which I had placed underneath.

I made my own horse collars of corn shucks. These were braided in three braids and sewed together with flax thread. I also made my rope of cotton thread, coarsely spun, and the hair from cow's tails and horse's tails and manes. The thread or hair was attached to three pegs in a board which I turned to twist it.

I packed cotton for High's Gin at Shackerville for which I received twenty-five cents per bale. This gin had three stands and ginned about six bales a day by running day and night. It had a wooden screw press pulled by a windlass. The bales were tied with rope. The cotton

was pulled from the seed by pinchers. Many people didn't like this because it left too much lint on the seed, so they would invite the neighbors in to pull the seed out by hand. About midnight they had a feast and the neighbors departed. Each neighbor in turn had the neighbors come in to help pull seeds from the cotton. Then what was left was pulled out each night before bedtime by the children.

The women spun and knit all of the clothes we wore. The men wore claw hammer coats and high hats. Copperas colored breeches were the style. We made our own shoes out of cow hides. We tanned the leather with Red Oak bark. The soles were tacked on with homemade shumas pegs. The laces were made of squirrel skins. The woman's Sunday shoes were made of buck hide. Holes were punched with a punch to lace them with.

The washing was done with a paddle. The clothes were boiled, then put on a wooden bench or block and beat with a wooden paddle in which holes were bored. We had only soft soap made from ash hopper lye. Our dishes were earthenware, and we stored the lard in large gourds about as large around as a wash tub. We used parched wheat, rye and corn for coffee.

I paid a cattle permit to Hampton Willis each year.

I was married to Amy Riddle about 1866 (exact date unknown). We didn't have to buy a license when I was married. We had six children.

I have lived in Murray County for twenty years.