

INDEX CARDS:

Cherokee Nation
Ranch Life
Living Conditions
Opening Cherokee Strip
Silver Lake
Oil Field Work

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

Field Worker's name Alene D. McDowell

This report made on (date) June 18, 1937

1. Name Andrew Jackson Fugate

2. Post Office Address 610 Armstrong, Bartlesville, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) 610 Armstrong, Bartlesville

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month January Day 10 Year 1872

5. Place of birth Charleston, Indiana

6. Name of Father Thomas A. Fugate Place of birth Indiana

Other information about father Farmer, buried at Caney, Kas.

7. Name of Mother Anna M. Whitesell-Fugate Place of birth Indiana

Other information about mother buried at Caney, Kansas

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 9.

Alene D. McDowell

Research Field Worker

Indian-Pioneer History, S-149

June 18, 1937

EARLY RANCH LIFE IN THE
INDIAN TERRITORY
Given by Andrew J. Fugate
610 Armstrong Ave.
Bartlesville, Oklahoma

Andrew Jackson Fugate was born January 10, 1872, at Charleston, Indiana.

Father - Thomas Armstrong Fugate was born May 7, 1837, in Indiana. He died in Kansas at the age of 60 years and is buried in the Sunnyside Cemetery at Caney, Kansas.

Mother - Anna M. Whitesell-Fugate was born in 1840 in Indiana. She died in Kansas at the age of 60 years and is buried in the Sunnyside Cemetery at Caney, Kansas.

I came to the Indian Territory with my parents, March 4, 1880, when I was 8 years old. We made the trip in a covered wagon. My father was a farmer and we settled on a farm, leased from W. B. Brown, located 12 miles north of Dewey, on Caney river, on Brown's Ranch.

Our first home was a two story, frame house. My parents boarded the cowboys who worked for Mr. Brown and the boys slept up stairs. There were usually about 20 cowboys.

Mr. Brown shipped cattle from Alabama and grazed them on his ranch. The ranch was 15 miles square and at that time there were no fences, and the cowboys rode herd on the cattle. Later the land was fenced, with a three wire fence, and riding around the fence to see that it was kept in repair was an added duty for the cowboy.

The nearest shipping point was Elgin, Kansas, and the cattle were driven from Elgin to the ranch.

The ranchers of the Indian Territory were hospitable and generous, they lived true, clean lives and grew to love the open range. They were held in high regard. Many of them were educated men and had much to offer in the building of Oklahoma. These men were brave men and had no use for a coward. Since there ^{was} ~~were~~ no local government, they had to depend upon their six-shooters for protection. All cattlemen carried their six shooters; however, they were accounted peaceable citizens anywhere.

Many of the cattlemen had moved north from

Texas into the Indian Territory and were honorable men, willing to back their statements, even if it was necessary to use their fire arms. A cattleman's word was his bond.

Many of the Ranch buildings were made of logs, the "bunk houses" for the cowboys, the cook shack, dining room and store house.

There was always a corral on the ranch and, often, a branding chute, where the cattle were branded. Each ranch had a special brand and all the ranch men knew the cattle by their brand. Sometimes the ears were cut a certain way to make further identification. I was too small to be of much help, but I carried the red hot branding iron to the men, for which Mr. Brown paid me \$1 per day.

The "round up" was held in the spring and this was a great event of ranch life. The cattle were driven together in a large herd, divided into small herds according to their brand. The calf was known by the brand of its mother. The two and three year old unbranded cattle, that could not

be identified were called "mavericks" and the one who caught them were allowed to put their brand on them and claim ownership.

Many cattlemen used their initials for the brand of their herd. The brand was made of iron. These brand irons were heated red hot, in the great fire. The unmarked cattle were driven into the corral or branding pen, roped, thrown and branded with the red hot iron.

The "chuck wagon" filled with provisions, and usually driven by the cook, was always taken to the round up. The cook served hot meals and plenty of coffee to the men. A visitor was always welcome at the round up and expected to feel at home. Bill Johnstone's chuck wagon, used in the early days, is in the museum at the Phillips Ranch, south east of Bartlesville.

Mr. Brown made the run into the Cherokee strip, in 1893, and filed an 80 acre claim joining the Pawnee townsite, on Black Bear Creek. Another man, a sooner, had staked the same claim but it was proven that he was a sooner and Mr. Brown became

the first legal land owner at what is now Pawnee. I made the run in a spring wagon, ^{and drove} ~~with~~ two Spanish mules. After driving over a few miles of washed out soil I became disgusted and returned home. The soil was washed out the depth of the plowing and I could see where each furrow had been.

We lived in the Sundown bottoms at the time of the big flood May 7, 1885. The water from the Caney river rushed over the bottoms with a four feet wave from hill to hill. This farm was across the river from Mr. Brown's ranch and was known as Sundown bottoms because of a large hill that shaded the valley and the sunset could not be seen. We received our supplies and mail from Caney, Kansas, and a man named Smith drove the first mail hack and hauled passengers from Coffeyville, Kansas. This mail hack is also in the museum at the Phillips Ranch.

My cousin came from Illinois in 1885 to visit us. He had never seen wild game and when he ^{saw} ~~seen~~ the beds in the grass where the cattle

laid down, he thought they were bear beds. He was not interested in the pioneer life in the wild west and returned to Illionis.

Jake Bartles always promoted a big celebration on the Fourth of July, where people gathered for three or four days' picnic. One year I operated a gasoline boat owned by Earnest Lewis, and hauled 110 passengers at a load. I was made deputy sheriff and given a gun. John Wheeler was drunk and when I tried to quiet him, he tried to pull his gun but I succeeded in making him drop the gun and arrested him.

One year Mr. Bartles shot a big cannon at the picnic grounds on the north side of the river and the cannon ball came across the river and went through the roof of John McCallister's barber shop and nearly killed a man in the barber chair. That concluded the celebration that year.

I have attended many Osage and Delaware smokes held at Post Oak, north of Dewey. At these smokes they would smoke their ponies from one tribe to the other. My brother Curt married Minnie Revard,

a sixteenth Osage. Their children do not look like they have any Indian blood.

In 1896 I was united in marriage to Margaret Irwin at Independence, Kansas. We settled on Buck creek, west of Bartlesville where we lived for one year, then moved to a place at Silver Lake, south of Bartlesville. I farmed and worked in the oil field. We then removed to Bartlesville .

In the winter of 1896 I helped haul the machinery from Red Fork to drill the first oil well in Oklahoma. This well is located in what is now Johnstone Park at Bartlesville. We used an ox team to pull the band wheels. We had to ford the Arkansas river at Tulsa and ice was frozen over the river and we were compelled to camp for a week until the ice melted. It snowed and sleeted on us most of the way and we were three weeks on the trip. We left Red Fork with twenty wagons loaded with tools, pipe and the rig and we arrived in Bartlesville with about one-half of them. The roads were so bad, the wagons broke down and we left them along the road side. Part of the machinery was shipped by freight.

McBride and Bloom were the contractors and Ora Bloom stayed with us through the entire trip.

In 1907 I drove a nitroglycerin wagon for the Du Pont Powder Company, now the American Glycerin Company. I hauled the stock from the magazine west of Bartlesville to Alluwe and hauled 800 quarts at a load. Each can weighed 40 pounds and held 10 quarts. I was not allowed to bring the wagon inside the city limits, so would leave it out side of town and go into Nowata and spend the night. I was not afraid of anyone disturbing anything about the wagon. The only danger I felt was when I unloaded at Alluwe for there was no platform and the cans were heavy to handle.

COMMENTS

Mr. Fugate has lived in the Indian Territory and Oklahoma for 57 years and has seen the country develop from the open cattle range to the present modern ranches. He has also seen the rapid development of the oil industry of this county. He was glad to give this story, but stated he had forgotten

many interesting events that happened in his early life.

Mr. and Mrs. Fugate are both "old timers" here. Mrs. Fugate was born near Bartlesville and has never lived outside of the state. She was reared on a farm about two miles northwest of Bartlesville.