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Field Worker: Maurice R. Anderson

Date: March 18, 1937

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Pauls Valley, Oklahoma

BORN 1877 in Minnesota

PARENTS: Father: Iveno Gay
Mother: Kate Watson

I was four years old when my father and mother left Minnesota. We passed through the Indian Territory. There were three wagons, two other families were with us. I was small but I can remember some things that happened. I remember we stopped in Muskogee, Indian Territory for three days. There was a big celebration going on there at the time. The Indians, I guess, were putting this on. Everywhere I looked there would be Indians, all dressed up with beads and paint on their faces. There were lots of cowboys in roping and riding contests. I don't know what trail we took from there. My father was driving the head wagon. My father was working two horses, and I think that was what the other two wagons were working. I know we stopped and stayed two days at Cherokee Town, Indian Territory. Of course, I did not know that it was Cherokee Town at that time. After leaving Cherokee Town, my father took his wagon train on into Texas, near Austin. And in 1886 we moved from Austin, Texas, to Cherokee Town, Indian Territory. My father owned at that time, four horses and ten milk cows. We lived on milk, butter and cornbread. Of course, we had plenty of squirrel, turkey, rabbit, quail, and fish. After settling near Cherokee Town on the Washita River, we lived in a tent. My job was to look after the cows in the day time. Grass was waist high and I would graze them near the Washita River where they could get plenty of water and so I could fish. I made me a hook out of a piece of stiff wire, crooked it and

filed a barb on it. I would turn over a log and get me some worms. ²⁹² There were lots of fish in the Washita River. In the evening I would take the cows home, or to our tene, which was a good home in those days because there weren't very many houses. As I said, in bringing the cows home in the evening, I have brought home 8 to 10 pounds of fish that I had caught during the day. I have caught lots of o'possum and skunks, (there wasn't any mink or muskrat then) - lots of beaver, but I never did catch any. I would skin the o'possums and skunks I caught and take green sticks and bend them and tie the two ends together and stretch my furs on these sticks. I sold my furs to a man that had a store at Cherokee Town, I think his name was John Walner. At Cherokee Town there were two stores and a log house made into a hotel (I remember they had a sign hanging out on the porch which said "Hotel"). I was never inside of this place. There was a stage barn and two or three houses. I have been at the store lots of times and ^{have} seen men come and stop at Cherokee Town. Some of them would be riding fine horses and some would be riding poor looking horses. I remember one time a man rode up on a big fine horse. He wore a high top hat, and two big pistols on each side of his saddle horn. This man didn't stay very long. He talked to this man who ran the store awhile, then this man that wore the high top hat got on his horse and rode off. The man that ran the store told some of the men standing around then that this man with the high hat was a great gambler. He talked as if he had known him for a long time. I said he wore two guns - that wasn't what attracted my attention for nearly all the men wore guns in that time. That high top hat was what I was looking at; it was the first time I ever saw anybody wear that kind of a hat. My father sold milk and butter to this hotel and store at Cherokee Town and when there was a bull calf born, my father would fatten it up and he usually

got from twenty to twenty-five dollars for it.

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I always carried my father's pistol with me when I was herding the milk cows, on account of so many wolves. But I was never bothered by them, but I have shot many a rattlesnake's head off. There was lots of timber in this country then. My father did some farm work after we settled at Cherokee Town, he raised lots of corn for feeding purposes and for bread.

In 1888, I believe it was, Cherokee Town moved to where Wynnewood is now. The Santa Fe Railroad was put through there in 1887 and it missed Cherokee Town, so that was why they moved and settled where the railroad was. Of course, they didn't move all of Cherokee Town right then. I think someone at Pauls Valley bought one of the buildings and moved it to Pauls Valley. We left there in 1889 and moved to the Choctaw Nation in the east part of the Indian Territory near Coalgate, Indian Territory. My father sold some of his milk cows before we left. We farmed near Coalgate, raised some cotton and lots of corn.

I was married to Miss Kelly Palmer, a Half Choctaw Indian. She didn't know much about her father, as he died when she was very small. Her mother now lives in the east part of Garvin County. In those days when a white man married an Indian woman, he was called squaw man and sometimes called galvanized citizen. I lived around Coalgate until after statehood. I now live in Pauls Valley, Oklahoma.

(End)