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Jack Gordon was born in Tennessee, fifty miles south of Nashville on April 14th, 1861, and moved to the Cherokee Nation in the Indian territory in 1871 locating in the neighborhood of the present town of Blue Jacket, Oklahoma, the same year.

Father-Charlie Gordon, was born in Scotland in 1828 and came to America when a young man. He traveled about some and we do not have very much of his early life.

Mother-Caroline(Welch) Gordon, born in North Carolina near the town of Murphy, North Carolina in 1836 and in 1859 at Murphy North Carolina, was married to Charlie Gordon, and the following year they moved to Tennessee where they lived until 1870.

While in Tennessee the Gordons farmed and raised stock and after the Civil War was over, they accumulated quite a little, especially cattle; also they had been successful in growing crops of cotton, corn, tobacco and vegetables. Their success made it possible for them to make the trip which they had been contemplating for several years, the trip to the New Cherokee Nation, Indian Territory, which they, with quite a company of people, began in the early' summer of 1870. It is not known the exact number of

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people in this company. We imagine that there were at least two-hundred and fifty, since there were seventy wagons in the wagon train. Sixty-nine of the wagons were drawn by oxen and one by horses. Some of the wagons had one yoks of oxen and some two yoke.

The wagons were not just like wagons are today;. They did not have the iron skeins as they do now but were wooden skeins and instead of the axle-grease like we have now being used it was pine tar. This they made from pine, while camped in the pine woods. They would make enough pine-tar at once to last them for several days and it was kept in buckets hung underneath the wagons, ready to be used when needed.

This trip was a long, trying and wearisome trip, especially when we consider the poor roads or trails, the lack of bridges on the streams, the wild sparsely settled country that much of the trip was made thru, our slow mode of travel and also that the company consisted of people from the infant to the aged. The winter that we were on our trip was a very cold winter and this added much to the discomfort of the people since the open camp and the covered wagon were the best accomodations to be had in most cases. In several instances they would be forced to camp for several days on the bank of some swollen stream

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during a rainy spell of weather until the water ran down to where they could ford it. Other times they would, during the winter, come to a stream that was frozen to a thickness that they could drive across on the ice. This was done several times, while crossing the river on the ice at St. Louis, Missouri, Charlie Gordon broke thru the ice and was drowned. There were three other deaths occurred while crossing the river on the trip, Betsy Hair, an aunt of Jack Gordon's and two others (their names not remembered), all four were buried (not just by the roadside as was the case by many other but their relative and friends in each case found grave yards and buried them.)

OTHER HARDSHIPS ON THE WAY:

Sometimes food became scarce and difficult to get, for it was a long way between towns and in the country food was not often found in quantities to accommodate this company; however, they usually kept a supply on hand to last them from one town to another but in the cases where they were delayed unexpectedly, scarcity of food would occur. Of course they never suffered so badly, because they could always find plenty of game for meat, and this minimized suffering.

They could almost always find sufficient grass for the stock to subsist on. Even during the winter there was dead grass for the stock to eat readily while during the warm weather grass was good and the stock did well of it.

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They arrived in the Cherokee Nation, Indian Territory, in the spring of 1871, locating in the neighborhood of the present town of Blue Jacket Oklahoma. Upon their arrival, Mrs. Gordon traded three of her cows for a small house, made of rough boards, which was their first home in the Territory. Here life was quite different to what they had been used to in their former home. Their nearest neighbors lived five miles away and their nearest trading place even farther away. There was no school near enough to attend and at first no church near enough so Jack Gordon, the subject of this interview, never attended but one short term of school, but says that he has educated fourteen children, four of his and ten others. He gave each one a high school education. The widow Gordon and her child, Jack, the only child, being only ten years old, farmed for a living and were successful in a great measure, growing cotton, corn, oats and vegetables. There was plenty of game in that part of the Territory and often this made up a part of the meals for the family.

Here in this neighborhood Jack lived until he was thirty-two years old, when he became acquainted with Miss Clara Elliott, a white woman, who lived in Arkansas near Sulphur Springs. They were married in 1893 at Sulphur Springs, Arkansas, and moved to Southwest City where Mr. Gordon entered the pool business. Later he moved to Vinita where he again engaged in the pool business.

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In 1896 he moved to the present town of Stilwell, Oklahoma and entered the hotel business and has continued in the same business here ever since. He is now seventy-six years old but still active in his business.

Mr. and Mrs. Gordon are the parents of four children, three boys and one girl.