

GUFFY, WARD.

INTERVIEW

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

GUFFY, WARD

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Field Worker's name Charles H. Holt,This report made on (date) December 20, 19371. Name Ward Guffy,2. Post Office Address Cleveland, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month _____ Day _____ Year 18665. Place of birth Iowa.6. Name of Father W. S. Guffy, Place of birth Pennsylvania7. Name of Mother Ann Broodbook, Place of birth New York.

Other information about mother _____

Other information about father Served in Civil War.

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 _____.

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Charles H. Holt,
Investigator,
December 20, 1937.

An Interview with Ward Guffy,
Cleveland, Oklahoma.

Ward Guffy was born in Iowa in 1866 and his life's vocation has been that of a blacksmith. His father served in the 40th Iowa Infantry during the Civil War and was discharged at Fort Gibson.

The parents moved to Kansas from Iowa before Ward was grown, but soon he began working as a helper in a blacksmith shop in Kansas and soon learned the trade and bought a shop of his own. He had heard a great deal about the opportunities in the Indian Territory and in 1893 he bundled up a little clothing and came to the Territory, stopping first at Vinita. He was not married at this time, so when he got to Vinita all he had to do was to find a job, as he had decided to work for some one as a blacksmith before buying a shop for himself. He found a job almost immediately after arriving at Vinita in a shop owned by a man named Burkwith. He soon saw from working for Mr. Burkwith that the blacksmith business in the Territory was better than it was in Kansas, and there was a bigger variety of work.

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There was a great deal of work to be done for the people traveling from Kansas and Missouri into the Territory, such as wagon repairing and horseshoeing; this was extra to the local trade, which was good.

Prices in those days for blacksmithing work and horseshoeing were less than they have been since. A common price for shoeing a horse all around, the blacksmith furnishing the shoes, was \$1.00 and from 10 to 15 cents was charged for sharpening a plowshare or blade.

There were a great many Cherokee Indians in and out of Vinita, as the Government made a payment of some kind to them at Vinita which made an extra circulation of money for the community.

After working for a year and a half at Vinita a job was secured at Nowata by Mr. Guffy which paid him a better salary. The first job at Nowata was working for a blacksmith named Craft, and the business was even better at Nowata than at Vinita.

There was a great deal of horseshoeing and some of it was done for outlaws but usually the blacksmith never knew who owned the horse he was shoeing, as an outlaw

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usually would send his horse to the shop by some one else.

After working in Craft's shop for several months a change was made by Mr. Guffy to the other shop in town owned by Joe Titsworth. He worked at this shop for about two years, when he got married. Then he decided that he should find a location for a shop for himself and decided that it would not be in Nowata, as there had been eight or ten killings in Nowata at different times since Mr. Guffy had been working there and some of these killings he had witnessed. These killings did not really bluff him from staying in Nowata as he had gotten used to the roughness of the new country by this time but what he wanted was a good location for a shop of his own.

This he found at Cleveland and moving to Cleveland in 1897, he set up his own shop at once, and found good business from the start. At Cleveland he bought a house and had to get a loan of \$150.00 to make the purchase, and had to pay 2% interest per month on the loan.

Money was not so flourishing in Cleveland at first. J. P. Martin was a merchant in Cleveland at that time, and he issued scrip and it was used in the community generally

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at face value just the same as United States money.

After operating his shop in Cleveland for a number of years Mr. Guffy retired and is at present living at Cleveland.