



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

Field Worker's name Elizabeth L. Duncan

This report made on (date) January 13 1938

1. Name Edward A. Krause

2. Post Office Address Renfrow, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) On Main Street

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month January Day 31 Year 1872

5. Place of birth Potosi, Grant County, Wisconsin.

6. Name of Father Carl John Krause Place of birth Berlin, Germany

Other information about father M. D. Surgical

7. Name of Mother Mary Sullivan Place of birth Close to the  
Lakes of Killarney, Ireland, Munster "Prov."

Other information about mother She had seen the Queen Victoria, many  
times.

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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Elizabeth L. Duncan

Journalist

January 13, 1938

Interview with Edward A. Krause,  
Renfrow, Oklahoma.

I was born in Potosi, Grant County, Wisconsin, of Carl John Krause and Mary Sullivan Krause. I was quite a restless sort of a person, moving from one place to another until I settled on a forty acre farm close to Hickman, Nebraska, where my mother and father died after which the children scattered here and there, each fighting his own battles. I finally went to Lincoln, Nebraska, to stay with my sister who was married.

About 1891, word was passed along that the Strip was to be opened for homesteaders, so the people began to prepare to come to the new country, but they had not heard whether or not Hoke Smith had really signed the bill so the rumor was not verified until two years later.

Tom Cox, my brother-in-law, suggested that we try our hand at it so he asked for a few days off from his job, he was a stone-cutter, and bought a new spring wagon, I had the horses. We prepared to come, bringing with us baled hay, enough food and two large milk cans to put water in. When

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we arrived in Caldwell there were all kinds of people, as far as a person could see people were camped waiting for the day of the Opening. There were all classes of people and it was a sight never to be forgotten by those who saw the town of Caldwell and the boundary line of Kansas and Oklahoma, even along the line extending east of Caldwell and west. A person simply can't explain or begin to tell the sight unless they have seen something like it.

When we arrived it was the 9th day of September and before we really got where it was even beginning to look like we could get to register we had to stay in line night and day. It was miserable, the dust where people stood was ankle deep and we had to pay five and ten cents for a cup of muddy water until they registered the 12th day of September, at 9 o'clock.

In the afternoon of the 12th we went ten miles west of Caldwell to make the Run, we came across a farmer that was letting the people who would pay a dollar each in on his place. We went in and told him we were from Nebraska. The old farmer told us that there were some other fellows camped on his place who were from Nebraska. We went on down

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where the other campers were and when I got out of my wagon and walked over to the other campers to see if I knew any of them, when to my surprise there stood my brother, Jim Krause, Chrise Larson and Jake Bertrum; we really had a wonderful get together. The other boys were on horseback, so they asked Tom and me if they all got new spades would we carry them on the wagon. The spades were then purchased, five new ones.

When the day arrived where the Opening was to take place we boys were all eager to be on our way. At 10:15, we had dinner together and got things all in shape so we could be there early enough to get in the front ranks, but when we reached our starting point we found that it was sixteen deep, that threw us away to the back but as the hour approached people began to fall back, thus pushing us forward until we were right in front. So many people began to fear that they would be in danger of being hurt. As the hour approached the people began to settle down with a grim determination that each was going to stake a homestead.

I was driving when the signal was given, the spotted coach dog that I owned was sitting on the seat beside me, Tom Cox was sitting on the hay in the back and when each of

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the boys stopped to stake his claim Tom would throw a spade out to him. When I came to a small creek I tried to slow the horses down but that was impossible, so when the front wheels hit the embankment it almost upset the wagon. Tom was thrown clear over my head, landing between the horses but luck was with us, the horses were well trained or Tom might have been seriously hurt. Tom got up right quick and climbed into the wagon and we went on our way. I finally stopped the wagon, grabbed a spade, ran about thirty rods and began to spade up the earth but it was so terribly dry, as the last rain had been in June. Tom went the opposite direction doing the same thing, spading up the earth.

Just as I had turned around to see who was locating on west of me, a rider jumped off of his horse, while riding at a good rate of speed, knelt down by the side of the mound of earth I had dug up, picked up a hand full and said to me, "Say, fellow you got some good wheat land." Then he jumped on his horse and was gone on his way to his goal.

It was twenty-two minutes after twelve o'clock when I staked my claim, then Tom and I began to look for the corner stones. On the south side of my place I found a

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woman had staked and told her she was on my place. She told me she would like to stay and see for sure and if she was on my place she would give up. Tom and I resumed our search and found the corner stones, my place being the NW 6-12-28 and Tom's the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  1-12-28.

The food supplies were ver. low, so Tom said I could go back to Caldwell to get more supplies and he would wait for the other boys. I went to get my supplies and started back but by the time I was pretty well on my way back it had gotten pretty dark and I lost my direction. In other words I was lost, so I camped for the night. The next morning I heard three shots in succession then three more. I began to follow the shots and soon joined the others. We had previously agreed that when any of us thought that one of the others was lost, they would shoot three shots in succession. Jake Bertrum, Jim Krause, Chrise Larson spaded some sod on my place the rest of the day.

The next day we all started for Enid to file, but when we finally reached there and secured a number Tom's number was 7335 and mine was 7336, that meant we had a long wait ahead of us. We were pretty low on money for we had just brought so much and knew it was up to us to earn some

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money somehow. I said to Tom, "Why don't we put another seat on this wagon and run a hack? And that is what we did. How I came to think of this was that South Enid was a Government town and North Enid was a railroad town and the two places were having some pretty stiff spots. The third day after we were in Enid we began to haul passengers from one place to another, charging each person 50¢.

About a week later we made a trip down into Old Oklahoma, looking the country over but soon returned to Enid because we were afraid we might lose out. It was not very long until we got to file, but we did not go right back to our homesteads, we continued hauling for a while, then after about a couple of weeks went back to our homesteads. The 20th day of October, Tom and I started for Lincoln, Nebraska, so we could be ready to come down in the spring on our homesteads.

The following spring, Tom decided he would try to buy a farm south of Enid so he made a trip ahead of me down in south of Enid. He finally bought a farm thirteen miles south of Enid, and two carloads of stock and machinery were sent to Hennessey. I also had some things, two head of horses, a plow, harrow, and cultivator. After the car was shipped to



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Hennessey I set out for my homestead. It took me nearly six days to make the trip and I walked the fifth day in a snowstorm and was nearly frozen when I ran across one of my neighbors who took me home and kept me all night. The following day, March 16, I continued on my way to my homestead. That very same day a young fellow came to me and told me that he would work for me if I would give him a place to sleep and eat. I had no house or anything but I had to go to Hennessey to get my things so the young fellow told me if I would get enough lumber he would build me a place cheap. I borrowed a team and wagon and got enough lumber for a lean-to shed, roof, doors and window frames, which cost me approximately \$12.00.

I started out for Hennessey, leaving the young fellow to build the house with a borrowed team and plow. The young fellow had nothing to do but build the house, he dug out a place 12x14 up against an embankment, eight feet to the east four feet to the west. He dug out around a small piece of earth in the center of the place, then he also left enough of the earth for a bench on the south side which was the table and left enough earth for a bed. The wall was twelve

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inches wide, the sod had to be broken out so that we could lay the sod in blocks. When I came home I found the house well put up and the young fellow told me to go in and see my house, it was all furnished. When I went in this is what I saw - two half windows, one door to the east. I went to Medford and bought a Topsy stove. The young fellow and I began to break sod, breaking twenty-three acres and also made a garden. The twenty-three acres were put into wheat.

The year of 1895 was a good wheat year which helped me quite a bit. The two of us broke out forty acres that year and planted it in wheat and made another large garden. The reason the farm land was so rich, especially the garden, the Corzines, the ranch owners, before the Strip was opened had that part as a corral and the stable also joined it so the ground was very fertile.

For two years I lived in this sod dugout with the earth made bed, chair and table, then finally bought a bed, springs and mattress. The earth bed was the first thing I dug out, then the bench was replaced by two chairs which I picked up at a sale, then the table was replaced by one I built.

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In the Spring of 1897, I built a 14x18 frame house; the crops had been fair enough to afford better living quarters, and December 11, 1897 I was married to Mable T. Lowery. My neighbors seemed to be very generous and helpful in many ways, visiting by the hours with one another. There was one neighbor, Saul Temple, who was always good to his neighbors and not a kinder-hearted fellow could be found, always willing to lend a helping hand to all who asked. He was later accused of being a thief for stealing railroad ties and tools. He was arrested and the Judge would not pass sentence because that winter had been a real hard winter and he said he would not sentence Saul. But the railroad company kept after him and finally Saul skipped the country but later came back to see his brother, Ed. The sheriff, J. D. Butts, borrowed a high powered rifle from McFerrin, the hardware owner, and they went out to Ed's and asked if Saul was there. Ed said, "No", but Butts told Ed he was going to search the house. They went in and looked in behind the first door but did not look behind the second door and Saul asked them kindly to hold up their hands and to drop their guns. He took them all to the cellar and locked them in and escaped.

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I later went into business, running a livery stable and in later years became very active in the political world. Later, I went into business as a watchmaker in Renfrow where I work at the watch business today.