



LACY, CHARLES.

-INTERVIEW.

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Form A-(S-149)

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

Field Worker's name Nannie Lee Burns

This report made on (date) January 24, 1938

1. Name Charles Lacy

2. Post Office Address 325 B. Southeast, Miami, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) \_\_\_\_\_

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month July Day 18 Year 1869

5. Place of birth East of Saint Joe, Missouri

6. Name of Father George Lacy Place of birth St. Louis, Missouri

Other information about father Born November, 1846.

7. Name of Mother Missouri Caroline Gordon Lacy Place of birth Carolinas

Other information about mother Born April 1, 1850.

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 12.

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Nannie Lee Burns  
Investigator  
January 24, 1938.

Interview with Charles Lacy,  
323 B- Southeast, Miami, Oklahoma.

My father, George Lacy, was born in Saint Louis, Missouri, November, 1846 and my mother, Missouri Caroline Gordon Lacy, was born in the Carolinas, April 1, 1850.

Mother's people came first to Missouri, where the Missouri was added to her name. Later they returned to the Carolinas during the Civil War but after the War they returned to their former home, near Saint Joe, Missouri.

Father, when a young man, joined the Southern Army and was with Stonewall Jackson at New Orleans and elsewhere in the old South. After the War he returned to Saint Louis and from there he drifted to Saint Joe, Missouri, where he met my mother and where they were married and there nineteen miles east of Saint Joe I was born July 18, 1869.

#### The Indian Country

In the year of 1881, my parents first came to this country when we reached the Territory line south of Baxter Springs, Kansas, we were stopped by the United States soldiers and asked

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for our passes to enter the Indian country but Father, having been told by friends who lived here how to get by, replied that we were coming here to visit friends who lived in the Ottawa Nation, so we were allowed to enter.

Before the end of the year we returned to our Missouri home and it was not until the year of 1883 that we returned to the Ottawa Nation to live. Here Father settled on what was called Government Row, a little over a quarter of a mile east of the present village of Ottawa, then a part of the site of the old Ottawa Mission School.

#### The Military Road.

The old Military Road between Baxter Springs, Kansas, and Fort Gibson, passed about a quarter north and west of us through what is now called the old Baldwin Grove. This road in the early days was the only road through this present county and besides being used as a highway of travel was used by the Government to transport their supplies from Baxter Springs to Fort Gibson. Over this road also marched the Government soldiers.

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Leaving Baxter Springs coming south, they came almost due south to the now Abram's Hill, passing on the east side of the hill to the south at a little point of timber and continuing southward to Rock Creek, at a point almost a quarter due south and a very little east of the present Lincolnville. Here at the Rock Creek Spring they crossed Rock Creek and the worn crossing in the banks still shows, though the spring has ceased flowing since the dewatering of the mining region near. Still south they came to the old Baldwin Grove which is one-half a mile north and west of Ottawa. Here the soldiers would camp for the night and I have picked up many bullets here.

From here they continued south and east to the Pooler's Ferry across the Neosho River south and bearing westward to the present site of Fairland, through that town still south and westward to the Trott Stand on Horse Creek and still south and westward across the Ottawa County line.

#### Pooler's Ferry

I worked off and on for Mose Pooler who owned the Pooler Ferry for about twenty years and much of the time stayed with the family.

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Before the Ottawas came to this country from Kansas, this was a part of the Cherokee Nation and this ferry at that time was owned and operated by the Cherokees. An old Cherokee, Colonel Joe Martin, owned one-half interest and the rest was owned by two Shawnees, Jack McClain and Tom Stand. The place that Mose Pooler bought when he came to this country before the main body of the Ottawas came was the home of Tom Stand.

Mose Pooler, Joe King and a few other Ottawas came to the present Ottawa Nation before 1870 to prepare for the coming of the main part of the tribe, which came in 1870. So, of course they selected their home sites and looked after the removal of others who had settled on the lands purchased by the Ottawas and Mose Pooler bought the claim of Tom Stand and the rights to the ferry and the old buildings that were here then.

Stand's home was an old two-room log house surrounded by cedars and the old stage room was a weatherboarded building one and a half stories high and about twenty foot square. Then, too, there was a log horse barn where the stage teams were kept as the drivers of the stage going each way changed horses or mules here each day and the ones left behind had to be kept

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until their driver's return the next day. Mose soon erected better buildings and he sheathed the old stage-room on each side and made a barn of it and erected a two-story frame house for his family.

There was an old burying ground near the house and his son, Albert, one day when ploughing, ploughed up a skeleton which for a long time hung in the barn.

Once I asked Mose what was the most money that he ever made and he said that once when the Government was moving some soldiers and supplies over this road that the Government paid him a \$100.00 a day for ten days for ferrying the soldiers and the supplies.

I began to work for Pooler in 1883, worked at the ferry part of the time and worked for him off and on for twenty years. Much of the time when I was not needed at the ferry I was herding cattle. Occasionally I would get a job of helping drive a bunch of cattle from the big pastures here as far as Fort Scott, Kansas, etc.

Pooler ran the ferry until after the ferry was established at Miami and Noel Dagenette put in one east of him on Spring

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River. Later, Dagenette, with the help of Tom Griffith, built a toll bridge there which is now the present bridge structure over Spring River on the highway between Miami and Seneca, Missouri.

In those days there were two factions struggling for leadership among the Ottawas. Mose Pooler headed the faction that seemed to be the more successful from a financial view and John Early headed the other faction that was always trying to get somewhere. Early was chosen to the council but never realized his desire of being chosen chief. Early's and Pooler's first wives were sisters. I have known Pooler to kill twenty-five hogs at one time and have seen Early rustle for his meat.

East of the present Friend's Church at Ottawa about eighty yards are the markings of an old mound in the middle of which an old stump has been cut off. It looks more like where you have seen people bank up around a house when the foundation is bad. This was here when we came in 1883.

East of Ottawa near Spring River, there was a big circle of rock about a hundred feet across and at the old Tom King place near were the markings of an old field.



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### The Big Pasture

Soon after we came here, H. R. Crowell, who was a banker at Baxter Springs, Kansas, leased a large acreage from the Ottawas, including where the city of Miami now is, and in consideration he gave the Ottawas a three hundred foot seine and a shotgun. John Early got the shotgun and the seine was used by anyone who wanted to go fishing. Often a party would get together and go fishing with this seine and sometimes get a thousand pounds of fish in a days time.

Mr. Crowell furnished the sharpened posts and the wire delivered along the line of the fence of the Big Pasture and my father and Mose Pooler took the contract to set the posts and stretch the wire around the pasture for \$25.00 per mile; I helped to stretch the wire. The northwest corner of the fence commenced at the Neosho River on the north bank at the old George Finley place just northwest of Miami and ran east following the tribal line between the Ieorias and the Ottawas to the Bill Merriss place which is about five miles, then south to the Military Road which it followed on the west side of the road to the Neosho River. The river was the south fence.

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Here Crowell ran his cattle until the settlement of the Ottawas inside of the pasture forced him to abandon the pasture. The Government had surveyed the tribal line south of the Peoria and Miami Nation from the eastern boundary of the state, west to the Neosho River and had marked the survey at regular intervals with large limestone rocks set in the ground. These rocks had a P chiseled on the north side of the rock and an O for Ottawa on the south side. The fence was a post and three barbed wire one.

Besides the cattle that Crowell pastured here he would allow others to graze in this pasture and at one time I was looking after a bunch of 150 horses for Hunter and Huff. We did not herd them all the time but we had a salt trough east of Miami at the now Guy Jennison farm and would salt them occasionally and round them up, but we lost some of them and some time after the herd had been sold I saw a prominent man driving a team of those horses; I knew them by their brand. We had the horses here in 1888. Tom Griffith also pastured in the Big Pasture.

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## Other Cattlemen.

The Quapaws had no stock of their own and few of the Peorias owned any, nor did the Ottawas have many as they came here in 1870. So all north of the Neosho was grazing country in the early days.

Al Dively from Baxter Springs pastured here and Yates and McBoy of Baxter Springs owned cattle that they grazed one mile south of Ottawa. John Yates was the boss and Ike Williams and I worked for him until the Indian Agent came one day and took Ike back to the Quapaw Mission to school, where he stayed until he went to Carlisle.

Three Goodner brothers from Baxter Springs, Lew and Clide and I do not remember the name of the other brother, had <sup>a</sup> cattle ranch northeast of Miami.

The Bakers of Baxter Springs had ranches near the Peoria schoolhouse and northwest of Miami in the old Milt Drake neighborhood.

The Nailors of Baxter also had ranches in the northwest part of the county and south of the State Line. They supplied much fresh meat for the captive Indians held at different times in this county.

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Erickson, who had a ranch east of the present city of Commerce, handled mostly horses which he brought from Texas.

Knight, not far away, furnished meat to the miners at Weir City, Kansas.

It was noticeable in those days that we had more horses on this side of the Neosho than <sup>were</sup> on the other side and more horses in the east half on this side of the Neosho than in the west half. Most of the big cattle drives went west of this county to Chetopa, Kansas, and even farther west and more horses were driven along the Military Road than along the trails west.

#### Rural Life.

One year we rented from Wat Jennison near Ottawa and he reserved a room in our house for the Quaker preacher. They had a Friend's Church at Ottawa when we came here which was built in 1880, I think.

A pastor by the name of Quiggins was staying at our place when Susan Utter, an Indian woman, brought a white man to the house and told the parson that they wanted to get married. He married them and later she came back and

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told him that he had married them and she did not like him and now she wanted him to unmarry them.

In those days some Indians had two wives but the Government stopped this as rapidly as possible. The last man I knew to have two wives was Preacher Fields.

Even then there were two distinct classes of Indian citizens. There were those who had good homes and plenty of stock around them, had good driving horses and carriages and sent their sons and daughters away to be educated and then there were the less fortunate Indians who never owned a horse and never went very far from home and who knew little about the country around them.

The contour of the country has changed as much as the people of those days. Jones Lake was southeast of Miami near the packing plant, today this is a part of the land occupied by the packing plant and Horseshoe Lake, just northwest of Miami, was in those days too deep to seine in but today is a muddy morass less than waist deep. Even the Neosho River has changed much. It used to have to be ferried most of the time and now it can be forded most of the year at the shallow fords.

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We had few churches, in fact, the one at Ottawa and services at Peoria and Wyandotte were about all. Our amusements were what we made them. One Fourth of July I remember not having anywhere to go, a bunch of us gathered together and decided that we would take the hounds and have a wolf chase. We started something near the Neosho River and after running the wolf until the middle of the afternoon, our hounds ran down a red fox.

#### Marriage.

My parents moved to Baxter in the Spring of 1887 but moved back in 1889 but I continued to work in this part of the country and December 6, 1904, I was married to Lula Jones, a cousin to the wife of Moses Pooler.

We continued to live in the vicinity of Ottawa for many years and there our son was born and we adopted our daughter who is now a Senior at Haskell. Only a few years before my wife's death did we move to Miami and to the home where I now live.