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June 22, 1937

Interview with Rachel Lane.

GRANDMOTHER'S STORY:

My great grandfather Landrum, a Cherokee of Georgia, when he knew that they must leave their homes there, did not wait to be driven but loaded his large family in an ox wagon and set out with them for the Indian Territory across an unsettled, roadless country to the new home promised in the West. They were a long time on the road. My grandmother, Dorcas Landrum, was born in Georgia. She was very small when they came to Oklahoma and she said that the only thing she remembered of the trip was when they crossed the Mississippi River she was scared of so much water. Her parents settled on what is now known as the old Sam Fields Place on Spavinaw.

~~The first thing to do was to provide a house for his~~  
family and, of course, this was a long one. As all the preparation of materials had to be made by him and his children, it was a crude one with wooden doors and wooden shutters for windows. Fields and truck patches had to be cleared and ready to plant beans, corn etc. The

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soil, a virgin one, responded richly; the stock could exist in the valleys on the grasses; good water was plentiful and even the winter days were busy ones, getting ready for the next year. I have heard grandmother say that she had three sisters and four brothers and here she lived till she married Elijah Butler and they moved in the edge of the Rose Ridge Prairie, three miles northeast of Spavinaw, where their home was a double log house with an entry between. They had a smoke-house, log sheds for barns, and their fields were fenced with home-made rails. Here they lived till their home was burned during the Civil War.

Grandmother had a loom and wove the cloth needed for clothing and household uses, spun the yarns for the stockings, socks, gloves, etc.

In the summer the corn was to hoe as well as the truck patches. The different berries and fruits were to be gathered and dried for winter uses, for in those days they did not have jars and cans to can and preserve.

## Civil War Period.

There was a large family of them-they had six girls and five boys, and Grandmother raised two orphan children, making a houseful. Grandfather was in the War and never at home, so Grandmother kept the children and provided for them as best she could, but their cattle, hogs and poultry were stolen or destroyed, their smoke-house ransacked and whatever the soldiers found that they wanted was either taken or destroyed. For lack of feed, the hogs and cattle were turned loose. When meat was needed the women would chase a drove of the range hogs till they could drive them to their barns. This was two log buildings with a covered driveway between the buildings and some of the women would place themselves on the joists that connected the two buildings and with a rope try till they got a rope around a hog's head and then they would draw this rope and fasten it and kill the animal, either cutting its throat, hitting it with a heavy instrument or beating it to death.

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Grandmother's oxen were taken and a neighbor woman named Jane Muskrat, later Tau-Wea-Cie, would bring her oxen over and plough the ground in the spring for grandmother and then she and the children would plant and tend the land by hand. Not being able to go to the mill, they pounded their corn meal. Skinned corn was the whole grain. They would beat hominy in a mortar with a pestle.

When they had lights, it was a pine torch.

We went everywhere afoot. We had to go to Salina for salt though this was not so far. Once Aunt Eliza Welch went, when small, with a neighbor woman horseback to Salina for salt and they were caught in a storm on **their** way home, so the woman got down and placed her shawl around my aunt and sat all through the night holding her horse for after the storm ceased it was too dark and the trees had blown down so badly that it was unsafe to try to follow the trail. The next morning they met my grandmother who had grown uneasy and started to find them.

LANE, RACHEL.

INTERVIEW.

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Most of the women and children had been sent at the beginning of the War to Fort Gibson but Grandmother did not go. They also had to go to Fort Gibson for any supplies that they got, which in their case were not many. A few men scouted around in the hills to keep from going to the War and they had to have food and no doubt helped some with the stealing but most of it was laid to the bushwhackers. Grandmother became scared when every night she would see three or four men around her place at night and so hid some covers and a few things in a cave so she could take the children there to sleep. One day when she had noticed more men around than usual, a neighbor came to stay all night with her. And on becoming alarmed, they aroused the children and started to the woods and when they got outside of the gate they saw four men standing near. They did not say anything or move. They counted the children and Grandmother found that one of them was missing, so she went back to the house and when she reached the house there was a man standing on either side of the door. She went in and woke the child and took it with her. That night they were afraid

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to go to the cave and spent the night in the woods. The next morning Grandmother started back to the house and she was met by a man she did not know, who told her that it was of no use to go home for there was no house there to go back to. She found only a pile of ashes and in the smoke-house, all that would not burn, had been destroyed. The covers that had been hid in the cave were cut up to make the children clothes.

Grandmother and the children lived with a neighboring family till the close of the war when grandfather returned. Not having a home and everything having been destroyed, the fields were laying out without crops, the hogs and cattle, that had escaped, had gone wild and the young had no brands to establish their ownership, so each man took what he could of the stock on the range and got together what he could find to work with and started again. Grandfather was a full-blood and a Keetoowah but Grandmother was half Cherokee.

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## The New Home.

Grandfather, on his return, moved with his family to Honey Creek not far from the present Butler School. Here they had a double log house with an entry. The house was tall and really a two story house. The original house was southeast of the log school and while the house has been torn down the old cedar trees still mark the old site. Uncle Jim Butler has some of the joists in his house which house is a quarter southeast of the old house. There is only a hole where the cellar was.

When Grandfather traded for this place, the people who had lived there left some half gallon stone jars when they moved and this was Grandmother's first canning, as everything had been dried for preservation before that.

My mother was the oldest child and so did not have the opportunity to go to school much. She married Pete Woodall and he died soon after, so Grandmother kept me when Mother married Old Joe Fox. I



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have always lived with her and while mother lived a mile or two from us on Honey Creek and I sometimes spent a week with them, when some of them were sick or mother needed some help, I was always glad to return home and mother's home and my half brother, Walter, and three half sisters living, Lucy, Callie, and Dorcas, never seemed a part of my home life.

#### Life at Grandmother's.

Being so much younger than my aunts and uncles, when small I played alone around the old home, climbing every tree, my playhouse was under an old post oak which is still standing. Another tree, a black jack, had a large grape vine in it. The last time I was there the tree was still standing though dead. The winter time when the snow was on the ground was a pleasant time for me. I would spend whole days in the woods when the snow was on the ground trying to catch the birds. I was never lonely. Then, too, I had many little things to do around the home. I

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started to school when I was eight or ten years old at the Butler School and later attended the Cherokee Nation<sup>al</sup> Female Seminary two terms. Each evening two or three buckets of water had to be carried from the old Butler Spring a quarter of a mile from the house. In the spring and summer the corn and truck patches were to be hoed. On warm days we would stop and go swimming in Honey Creek. I never liked whitewater. I think it is the coldest stream in Oklahoma. Grandmother was the herb doctor and gathered her own herbs and roots. I always went along and helped gather them and dig the roots. I still use them. I get a supply when I go back visiting. When anyone got sick, they would come to her for miles around.

Uncle Jim was the fisherman. He used a hook and line. Occasionally the folks would have a fish fry. The day before the fullbloods would go to the woods and dig a sack of buckeye roots. Then they would pound these and put them in the stream and this would make the fish crazy and they would come to the top of the water and they would get as many as they wanted.

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Each year we had more things in the garden. We always had beans planted in the corn. A neighbor brought the first tomatoes that I ever saw to the house. I thought that they were pretty but that they smelled bad. She had raised a pea that had a red pod. I have not seen any since my aunt lost the seed of them. She raised and tended her tobacco and smoked a pipe. We dried the corn on the cob. She had a big iron kettle and we washed at the creek. Her soap barrel was an old large sycamore stump which had been cut and was hollow. This was set on boards and covered. Here we used the grease lamp and grandmother made candles. The sewing was done by hand and so nicely. I have seen my aunts sit up most of the night making new calico dresses. I saw my first sewing machine after I was married. I learned to sew on it and wanted to make Grandmother's dresses on it as I thought I could make them prettier for her. At last I won her over and she enjoyed them. She was very lively and after I started to school we would try to teach her. She was so jolly about it and laughed so heartily over it.

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We had our first stove when I was ten years old. Uncle John who taught school said one day to Grandmother, "Mama, I'm going to get you a cook-stove." He did and we younger ones were the ones to enjoy it most. After one experience with it we learned to be more careful. My aunt and I, who were going to school, decided we would build a fire and fry some eggs for our lunch, so we got a lot of chips and soon had a big fire. The sparks caught fire on the roof. Uncle Jim managed to get to the roof and put out the fire. I don't remember how he got there as the roof was so high, but this did teach us to be more careful and the difference from cooking on the fire.

Some of the dishes that we enjoyed were Dog-heads; to make it you gritted the corn on the home-made gritter, add cooked brown beans with a pinch of salt, wrapped in green corn blades and boiled in a closed vessel. Unwrap when it is to be eaten. Chicken dumplings, stew the chicken and take the broth and mix this with flour adding a pinch of salt and a little

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soda. Hominy was pounded in a mortar with a pestle. Our wheat and oats were cut with a cradle and horses pulled the engine. They would drive them around and around in a ring and after they were gone, we children would play around the ring. I liked the crawly brown sugar as well as the children of today do their candy.

We never had any windows with glass till they built the new house and then grandmother said she would rather still have the old one.

Another memory is of our places at the table.

Each had his place. Grandmother at the head, my

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aunt next and I next to her, on the other side was

Uncle Jim and Uncle John. Uncle Jim still has some of the old things, among them are an old cedar safe, the old table, some hickory chairs with the legs worn off to the first round, and an old skillet that had legs which are worn off.

The men's shirts of that day were called "hunting shirts" and they really were coats. They were made of wool and had stripes of all colors, but most people seemed partial to red. These stripes ran up and down.

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Another thing that I remember so well was when Old Joe Fox got drunk, he would always sing: "We will hang Old Jeff Davis on the Sour Apple Tree." All that I remember of it is: "We will hang Old Jeff Davis on the sour apple tree, as we go marching through Glory, Hallelujah."

#### Marriage.

On January 11, 1891, I married Lafayette Lane, a white man, who had lived near us and with whom I had always gone to school. We had to get twelve signers and we went horseback to the home of T. J. ~~Clerk~~ McGhee, at Dodge, to be married. We want to live at

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the home of his brother near. He had a two-room log house and between the rooms was a double log chimney which carried off the smoke for the two rooms. On either side of this chimney was an entry which had an outside door. We had wooden shutters. We have lived at different places but we took our allotments northwest of Vinita and lived there a while but we did not like it there.

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We had five children: Alfred, Delora, Lenora, Rose, and my single son, William, with whom I have made my home since my husband's death, October 7, 1908. Since then, William and I have lived different places, for a while in Colorado Springs and also in Kansas City and we came to Miami last October.