

TUSSEY; HENRY

INTERVIEW

421

Field worker: Warren Morse

Date: March 2, 1937

BIOGRAPHY OF Henry Tussey  
Tussey, Oklahoma

BORN 1856 in Kentucky

\*\*\*\*\*

I came into this country in 1874 when few white men were here. There were no settlements then. We were all cowboys driving cattle over the Chisholm Trail. About the first that I saw go over the trail was a bunch of mules and horses. An old cattle man in Decatur sent these through here to Caldwell, Kansas. We white men tried to settle here but everything was owned by Indians and the federal militia would not let us think of settling. We tried to settle and did build houses and fenced some land for grazing. They called us "nesters". The militia cut the wires and drove our cattle back across Red River. We came back and finally some of us married Indians so we could stay here.

There is talk of the Chisholm Trail as a freight trail, all I ever saw or knew to go over this trail was cattle and horses. It must have been made in the 1860s because they were using the trail when I came here.

Mr. John Daily built the first house in this country; it was made of raw hide cotton wood logs, about one mile east and one-half mile north of Velma. Jim Doak came in here and built a house and store combined on Wildhorse Creek and that started the settlement. We had to watch our stock very close because there

were many thieves here then.

The Arbuckle stage ran pretty close to Velma. They had a stop there called Ft. Worth, Indian Territory. That trail and the Chisholm trail crossed about 100 yds. north of the base line near Cow Creek.

Jim Fitzpatrick started a ranch just east of what is now Duncan. The Suggs ran cattle through here and it was a big outfit.

Indians had an encampment four miles south and two west of where I live now. It was only their hunting camp, they came a certain time of the year and stayed about three months. We never had much trouble with the Indians, Oh, they might steal a horse or beef now and then but no battles.

(End)