

WELCH, JAMES F.

INTERVIEW

10364

210

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

WELCH, JAMES F. - INTERVIEW.

10384

Field Worker's name Robert W. Small

This report made on (date) March 23, 8
193

1. Name James F. Welch

2. Post Office Address Newkirk, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) Same

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month April Day 14 Year 1860

5. Place of birth North Carolina

6. Name of Father Jonathan Welch Place of birth North Carolina.

7. Name of Mother Carlotte Wiley Welch Place of birth North Carolina.

Other information about mother _____

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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Small, Robert W. - Investigator.
Indian Pioneer History-S-149.
March 23, 1938.

Interview with James F. Welch
Newkirk, Oklahoma

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I was born in North Carolina on April 14th, 1860:

I came to Kansas in 1880. On September 16th, 1893, I made
the Run from ^{the} Kansas state line on Bitter Creek, east of
Hunnewell. With three other men and myself in a wagon, we
hurried over the freshly burned prairies as fast as we
could go. The ground was very bumpy and rough and we bounced
around over the wagon like pop corn in a skillet but we never
stopped. Although the men on horseback didn't outrun us so
bad, yet we were slow enough not to get any claims that day,
but I secured a relinquishment and filed on the northwest
quarter of Section 22, Township 28 N. Range 2 West, on Oc-
tober 7th, 1893.

I set to work on a dugout which I soon had completed.
It was 12 x 16 feet, with lath and plastered walls, shingle
roof, a plank floor, one window in each side and a double
door. It was one of the best dugouts in the country and by
no means a bad place to live in those days. In less than two
months I had moved my family down on the claim and I built

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some sheds for stock. I had three horses, a cow and about a dozen chickens. We used a small monkey stove with a drum in the stove pipe for an oven and cooked our food on that stove.

I went to work breaking sod at every opportunity and in the Spring of 1894 I planted 40 acres to wheat which made about 250 bushels from the 40 acres, all of which I kept and sowed in the Fall of '94. I rented land outside of my own to sow in wheat, and the following year I harvested about 10 bushels per acre and I held my wheat till Winter and sold it for 80 cents per bushel.

I bought lumber and built a new house and barn. I paid \$11.00 per thousand feet for dimension lumber and \$13.00 per thousand feet for finished lumber or the better grade.

Hunnewell, Kansas, was my trading point. I lived on the south side of the Chikaskia River and had to ford the river when I went to Hunnewell, as there was no bridge on the river near me.

We raised a fairly good garden most of the early years, which was a great help in getting along.

I was one of the school trustees in my district and

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in 1895 we built a school house and named it Battle Axe. We held Sunday School in the school house, but most people of our neighborhood went to Antioch to church.

I was also the first Trustee of Rock Falls Township.

In the Summer of 1894, another man and myself bought a threshing machine which we operated for a few years.

In the Summer and Fall of 1897 we threshed 107,000 bushels of wheat in just 100 days work and made profit enough that season to pay for the entire cost of the machine.

A few years later, I sold my place and bought another farm a few miles north of Bremen, Oklahoma, where I put in the first Ford Automobile Agency in Kay County. In 1910 I sold my agency and moved to Newkirk, Oklahoma, where I have resided since.

I have in my possession, and in a good state of preservation, a Railroad Ticket issued to my father on March 1st, 1862, which bears the following:

"This ticket is issued by agreement between the road issuing it and the Quartermaster General of the Confederate States and each road is to render its own account to the Department and this coupon is to be received as a sufficient voucher. Issued by the Montgomery & West Point Railroad Co."

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Signature of "A. Lafoe, Agt. for Southwestern Railroad.

Butler to Maton."