

IND A LRY:

Negro  
Freedman  
Cherokee Nation  
Fort Gibson  
Indian Food  
Grand River  
Old Military Road

James R. Carseloway  
Field Worker  
July 10, 1937

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Interview with Charley Lynch  
South Second Street, Vinita, Oklahoma  
Father-Simon Lynch  
Mother-Nancy Beck

My name is Charley Lynch. I live on South Second street, Vinita, Oklahoma. I was born in slavery near Hildebrands Mill, on Long Prairie. This was near the town of Mayesville, Arkansas, Saline district, Indian Territory.

My father's name was Simon Lynch. He first belonged to Robert Daniel, who at one time was Assistant Chief of the Cherokees. He lived in the Delaware District, on the south side of the river, near Spavinaw. Robert Daniel traded my father to Joe Lynch, a neighbor, for Tobe Lynch, who was a blacksmith and a fiddler. Joe Lynch kept my father until he was set free. Then father ran off and went to Kansas and stayed all during the war.

My mother's name was Nancy Beck. She belonged to Charlotte Beck, a sister of Ellis Beck, and an aunt of Sut Beck. The Becks lived on Long Prairie where my sister, two years older than I, and myself were born.

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I was born January 3, 1861, the same year the war started. My father and mother lived about forty miles apart, and he did not get to come to see us but once or twice a year as the trip was so hard to make.

Mother to Fort Gibson.

My mother stayed with the Becks until the slaves were set free. Then she took my sister, three years old, and myself and started on foot from Long Prairie to Fort Gibson, where the government soldiers were stationed. She carried me on her back, and led the little girl. It was a hard old trip on her, and it took her several days to make it, as it was about seventy-five miles right through the woods. When she reached Fort Gibson she had to stop to eat. She told me afterwards that she followed the government corn wagons, that were hauling corn on long distances, and picked up the corn that would scatter out on the ground to make food for us to eat. She would start out in the morning and be gone all day, and

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would come back with only an apron full of corn. Sometimes she would be so tired out that she wouldn't get back until way in the night.

#### "Our-Whish-e-ter"

My mother took the corn she picked up and made what the Indians called: "our-whish-e-ter". It was made by picking the corn, putting it in a ear of beating it up, adding a little bit of lasses.

#### Hard Tack Bread

My mother got bread once in a while from the soldiers, called "hard-tack" bread. It was hard all right but she would pour water on it, and it would swell up big enough to last us several days. She told us it would swell up in us and make us fat.

#### Father Joins the Soldiers

When the slaves were set free by the northern soldiers, my father ran off from Joe Lynch and went to Kansas with the northern soldiers and stayed until

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the war was over. Joe Lynch had lots of slaves and they all went, when my father did, to Kansas. Times before, they came back as over.

#### Back to Old Master

Every one of Joe Lynch's slaves came back to him after the war. He gave them houses on his Grand River farm, where they had lived before the war. Joe Lynch was a rich Cherokee Indian, and had forty or fifty slaves before they left him. His farm was located on the south side of Grand River, between the Island Ford and the Tanyard Ford, and contained several hundred acres of land. When we got back he put all his former slaves back in the houses they had previously occupied and let them farm on the shares. He would come once a year and have us haul off his share with ox teams, which he furnished us. There was a government commissary on Cabin Creek, near the old Military Ford, where the Cabin Creek Battle was fought. This commissary

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bought most of his corn, but we hauled some of it twenty-five or thirty miles to Mayesville, Arkansas. We also took a lot of it to Van Buren, Arkansas, and had it ground into meal and feed. Joe Lynch bought all of his groceries from Mayesville, but when he wanted drygoods or clothing and shoes he sent his teams to Van Buren. Sometimes they went as far away as St. Louis, but always taking a load and bringing back a load. We drove four and five yoke of oxen to each wagon.

#### Grandfather Belonged to Daniels.

My grandparents both belonged to Robert Daniels. He owned a plantation and a store on the Old Military trail located at the White Sulphur Springs. This is the Delaware district, about five miles west of the present town of Ketchum. My grandfather and other slaves would make regular trips for him to St. Louis, after goods for his store. He or some of his sons would go with them on the trip which was made with ox teams.

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### George Carselovey Killed.

George Carselovey, a Frenchman, had just married Mary Daniels, a sister of Robert Daniels. He had started on one of these trips to St. Louis after goods, but he was waylaid, robbed, and killed. Two of her brothers were also along when he was killed, and as they didn't like Carselovey, she always thought they might have had something to do with his death.

### When I Was a Man.

While I was living at Fort Gibson with my mother, she came to me one day and said, "Son, you are three years old today, and you are a man." It preyed very heavily on my mind; so in the afternoon, I thought, being I was a man, I could go up town, see the soldiers and get some candy. I started out and got quite a ways up the road, when she tried to call me back, but I wouldn't come. She followed me and whipped me all the way back to the house, and then asked me why I had tried to run off. I told her that she told me that I was a

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man that day, and I thought all men were allowed to go to town, and stay as long as they wanted to. Besides that, I wanted to see the soldiers and get some candy.