

WYATT, MARION G. (DR.) INTERVIEW #12924

1

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

WYATT, MARION G. (DR.) INTERVIEW. #12924.

Field Worker's name Alice J. McDowell

This report made on (date) February 6, 1928

1. Name Mr. Marion G. Wyatt
2. Post Office Address 908 Jennings, Bartlesville, Okla.
3. Residence address (or location) 908 Jennings, Bartlesville
4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month February Day 16 Year 1864
5. Place of birth St. Louis, Missouri

6. Name of Father George Wyatt Place of birth Illinois  
 Other information about father Buried at St. Louis, Mo

7. Name of Mother Amanda M. Douglas Wyatt Place of birth St. Louis, Mo.  
 Other information about mother Buried at St. Louis, Mo.

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 13.

Alene D. McDowell  
Research Field Worker  
Indian-Pioneer History, S-149  
February 5, 1938

3

WYATT, MARION G. (DR.)                      INTERVIEW.                      #12924.

LIFE OF AN EARLY DAY  
DOCTOR OF  
WASHINGTON COUNTY.

Given by  
Mr. Marion G. Wyatt  
908 Jennings  
Bartlesville, Oklahoma

Dr. Marion G. Wyatt was born February 16, 1864,  
at St. Louis, Missouri.

Father - George W. Wyatt was born in 1834 at  
Waterloo, Monroe County, Illinois, and is buried in  
St. Louis, Missouri.

Mother - Amanda M. Douglass-Wyatt was born  
September 21, 1841, at St. Louis, Missouri, and is  
buried at St. Louis.

I received my education in St. Louis and  
attended the Missouri Medical College at the same  
place, where I received my degree.

I came to the Indian Territory, May 5, 1903  
looking for a location to establish an office and  
build up a practice. At that time there were three  
doctors in Bartlesville so I decided to try another  
location. The doctors here at that time were:  
Dr. Ayres, Dr. A.M. Bruce and Dr. G.W. Woodring.

Wann was located about half way between

Coffeyville, Kansas, and Bartlesville and had good prospects of becoming a large city. I bought property there and established an office. At that time there was one house between Coffeyville and Wann. We were disappointed, for our dreams of the city were soon blasted. I sold my property and removed to Ramona to practice my profession but only stayed there for a short time. I then removed to Dewey where I lived for 22 years. In 1927, after the death of my brother, Dr. M.C. Wyatt, at Bartlesville I moved here and took over his practice. I retired from active practice about four years ago.

#### THE STORY OF DEWEY.

Dewey, the second city in population and importance in Washington County, is located four miles North of Bartlesville, at the junction of the Santa Fe and Katy railroads. The site is an ideal one, both for beauty and sanitary reasons, lying high above the river bottoms on a perfectly level prairie, and is the center of one of the richest and most productive agricultural, oil and gas sections of the United States. To the north and east for ~~xxx~~ many miles extends an unbroken

stretch of deep, alluvial soil enormously productive of all the fruits of the temperate zone and has markings of the location of oil and gas wells of the greatest producing district in the world. To the west rise the beautiful blue reaches of the Osage hills, at the base of which winds the silvery threads of the Caney River.

#### EARLY HISTORY.

The city of Dewey was founded in 1898, by J.F. Bartles, the father of Bartlesville. Several potent and logical reasons impelled Mr. Bartles to move his interests from the later city to the new site, and but for the unfortunate chain of circumstances in the early days of its history, it would doubtless have realized fully his expectations, and have now been the metropolis of the county. Mr. Bartles was then the owner of the railway line from Caney to Collinsville, which was under course of construction, and Dewey was to be its principal feeding point.

The superior beauty of the site, its favorable location with respect to the rich agricultural regions, and its unsurpassed sanitary situation, gave reason to believe

that the few settlers of Bartlesville would follow the ~~their~~ example of their leaders, and remove to the new site. But unforeseen difficulties arose and for years retarded the growth of the new town. Mr. Bartles sold the railroad line to the Santa Fe and that company changed its course taking in Bartlesville on its route. Even this would not have militated seriously against the interests of Dewey, had not the question of land titles become involved. The site formed a part of the Cherokee Nation and clear titles could not for several years be given. While waiting for this barrier to develop to be removed, by a slow moving government department, the railroad attracted many new settlers, who, unwilling to invest in lands or homes without receiving an unclouded title, were perforce compelled to locate in Bartlesville. Since these restrictions have been removed, the growth of the city has been steady and rapid. The Santa Fe Company completed the road into Dewey in 1899, and the Katy came in a few years later. The electric line between Dewey and Bartlesville, was completed early in July, 1912.

Mr. Bartles was a real pioneer, settling in the Indian Territory in 1873. He established the first postoffice in this valley in 1877, on the north side of the Janey river and it was the beginning of a small town known as Bartles' town. Thus, Bartlesville got its name.

When Mr. Stewart got the postoffice appointment during Cleveland's administration in 1898 and the postoffice was moved to the south side of the river, <sup>moved</sup> Wake Bartles picked up his town and to the spot four miles north, which he named Dewey, in honor of Admiral George Dewey. It took a year to move all the buildings as the mud was a foot deep and transportation was slow. So Mr. Bartles moved by inches and sold goods from his store while he moved it.

Mr. Bartles, Col. Porter and Earve Truskett of Caney many years before had started a project to build a railroad through to some point in Texas, either Wichita Falls or some good town. They started grading at Caney and had workmen busy for a long time, building the grade through wheat fields and pastures. The grade was practically built from Caney to Ramona, when

Edward Ripley of the Santa Fe bought the whole project. The Santa Fe abandoned the Texas idea and went straight into Tulsa. Mr. Bartles had good contracting outfits working on the railroad for several years.

Thirty-five years ago the country was wild and unsettled and the doctors did not escape the hardships. We were called to the country and it would take hours to make the trip in a buggy, through all kinds of weather and bad roads. Sometimes we were compelled to stay all night and return the next day. In spite of the hardships and inconveniences the doctor's life was thrilling.

One night a man knocked at my door and told me Captain Requa, a cattleman of our vicinity, was seriously ill and had sent for me. It was a bitter night with a cold north wind blowing. The captain was stationed on Ooon Creek with a herd of cattle several miles away. I never kept a team for it was too much trouble to care for them, so I sent the man who had come for me, over to Jonas Swannock's livery barn for a team, while I made preparations for the trip. I wore a heavy overcoat and wrapped in blankets



for I knew we would be several hours on the road. I asked the guide to drive for I did not know where we were going. He said he could not locate the camp, for the prairie had been burned recently and the trail could not be seen. He was riding a white horse and said if I would follow ~~like~~ the horse it would take us to the place. It was so dark I could not see the horse at times and we had to keep calling to keep in contact with each other. By the time we arrived at the place it was sleeting.

The Captain was staying with a family on Coon Creek. They lived in an old two story frame house and his room was on the second floor. There was no fire in his room. The Captain was a very sick man and I could see we had work ahead of us to save him. We moved him downstairs where there was a fire and began the fight for his life. I stayed with him for three days, for two reasons, he needed me and the storm was so bad I couldn't leave. On the third day I sent for John McCallister and he brought the ambulance from Bartlesville and we removed Mr. Regan to the home of his daughter, Mrs. C. W. Booker,

at Dewey, breaking the trail through the snow all the way. This was a hard trip for the sick man for in those days we did not have the modern equipped ambulances that we have today, and the long trip was very slow. The ground was covered with snow and a crust of ice was frozen over the snow making it slick and dangerous. Mr. Requa owed his recovery to the strong constitution that his rough out door life have given him.

His cattle had drifted with the storm and were found several days latter in a corn field a few miles away.

I doctored Mr. Requa through three attacks of this same illness. He was camped on Mission Creek, northwest of Dewey the third time I attended him.

Mr. Pyles came for me one summer night and the roads on the upland were dusty but when we came to the ~~bottom~~ Mission Creek bottom our horses mired down in the mud. We crossed Post Oak Creek at the Fields Crossing, about two miles north of Dewey on what is now United States Highway #75. A man had been buried on the creek banks near the crossing and people were super-

stitious about the crossing. Someone circulated the story that they saw a ghost near the crossing and a strip about one-half mile on each side of the crossing was known as the "ghost country". Mr. Pyles, a man about 25, was one of these superstitious fellows and when we neared the "Ghost Country" he began driving faster and when we arrived at the crossing he hit the water about 40 miles an hour. We heard a hooting noise and he said "there's the ghost" and put whip to the team. I tried to tell him it was only the wind but when it continued he could not be convinced. I felt a little creepy myself. We soon overtook some men who were returning from a political meeting at Copan. One of them had a horn, used for calling hounds, which he blew at intervals. This accounted for the ghost we heard.

The first hospital in Bartlesville was erected in 1906 or '07 at the corner of 12th street and Keeler avenue. Dr. Sutton was the first surgeon in Bartlesville and did all the necessary operating.

Mrs. Jack Daugherty of Dewey is a sister of Oklahoma's noted outlaw, Henry Starr, and it was at

10

her home that. I met the Starr family. I was called there professionally but later knew the family better. He had a small boy named for Theodore Roosevelt, the president who pardoned him. Henry Starr is buried in the Dewey Cemetery, one mile north of town.

Another old time outlaw of Oklahoma who later made his home in Bartlesville and became a good citizen was Earnest Lewis. He lived on a farm north of Dewey prior to his removal to Bartlesville where he operated a beer parlor. I was attending a speaking at the old Oklah Theatre in Bartlesville on the night of statehood, November-16, 1907. Judge Charlton, my brother, Dr. M.C. Wyatt and several other speakers had delivered addresses when we heard shooting. I rushed to the Lewis beer parlor, the scene of the excitement, but could not get close enough to see anything. George Williams, one of the victims of the fray had been taken to John McCallister's undertaking establishment and I went there to offer my assistance. They soon arrived with Lewis' body and Dr. Bruce, my brother, Dr. Sheets and I made an examination of the bodies and cut the bullets

11

out of the bodies. We took two bullets from Williams body and one from Lewis'. He had been shot through the bowels. John McCallister, Bartlesville's first coroner held an inquest the next day. I attended the inquest and heard Fred Keeler, United States Deputy Marshal, who killed Lewis give his testimony. Mr. Keeler's commission as deputy marshal expired at midnight November 16, 1907 as did Williams'. He said there had been trouble between Lewis and the two officers and Lewis had sent word that he was after them. They went to Lewis' bar and ordered beer and faced the mirror, behind the bar, while they drank. Lewis walked from behind the counter and said, "Everybody drop for the fireworks is going to start." He then fired at Williams, two shots taking effect. When Williams fell Lewis turned and fired at Keeler, the bullet going through Fred's coat sleeve. Keeler kept in motion until he was at the end of the counter for he only had one shell left in his pistol, and he knew if that shot went wild he had met his fate. He dropped on his knee at the end of the counter and shot at Lewis behind

the bar. The shot took effect and Lewis fell.

Keeler then went across the street to the hardware store for more ammunition, not knowing that Lewis had been fatally wounded. Keeler was acquitted for it was a plain case of self defence. John Lewis, brother of Earnest, lives west of Bartlesville in Osage County.

After Emmett Dalton was pardoned from the penitentiary at Lansing, Kansas, he came to Bartlesville. Shortly after his arrival here he married Mrs. Julia Lewis, widow of Earnest Lewis, and they built a home at 421 South Cheyenne where they resided for several years. This place is still known as the Dalton house.

Al Spencer, an outlaw of later years, worked for Sherman Moore on the Moore's Ranch east of Dewey. I have prescribed for him many times.

On September 28, 1910 I was united in marriage to Miss Myrtle Elam of Dewey, who was born near the old Carr farm west of Dewey. Mrs. Sarah Carr cared for and dressed her at her birth. We have two children, Georgia Ruth who is a stenographer

in Oklahoma City and Marion G. Jr., who works for the Reda Pump at Bartlesville.

Dr. Tann, a Negro, was the first doctor in Bartlesville and was located in a small building at the south side of the Bartles store on the north side of the river. He was not an educated man but had the fundamentals of medicine and was a successful doctor in those days. He left here when the country became settled with white people.

One of our greatest handicaps in the early days was the lack of nurses. There were no trained nurses then and we had to depend ~~wholly upon~~ the unskilled housewives to care for the patients. However, most women had some knowledge of caring for the sick, and we got along very nicely considering these handicaps.