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LEGEND & STORY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field worker's name Alson J. Chase

This report made on (date) May 10 1937

1. This legend was secured from (name) Alson J. Chase.
Address Woodward, Okla

This person is (male ~~or female~~) White, ~~born~~, ~~English~~,

If Indian, give tribe _____

2. Origin and history of legend or story _____
Pioneer History of John Oscar Chase.

3. Write out the legend or story as completely as possible. Use blank sheets and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached 5

INTERVIEW WITH JOHN OSCAR CHASE.

FIELD WORKER ALSON J. CHASE.

May 10, 1937

My grandfather, Emerio F. Chase, was born in 1826 in Meggs County, Ohio. My grandmother, Nancy Winn Chase, was born in Meggs County, Ohio, in 1828, and they moved to Leroy, Kansas, in Woodson County, in 1859. My grandfather enlisted in the Civil war from Humboldt, Kansas, with the 9th Kansas Cavalry K. He died November 7th, 1864, while in the Civil War service, and was buried at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri. My grandmother died in February, 1864, and after her death my father returned with his father to war, and stayed in camp with him until his death. After his father's death he and his brother, Samuel, started out in life trying to make their own way, working here and there, wherever they could find a job. They drifted into the Cherokee Strip, and worked on cattle ranches long before the Cherokee Strip was opened for settlement. My father finally drifted into eastern Kansas in Woodson County, and married Jane Collette, and he lived there and in Colorado until 1893, when the Cherokee Strip was opened for settlement. As he had been in the Cherokee Strip before the opening and knew the possibility there for a poor

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man to get a home, he decided to make the run.

So in the summer of 1893 he and two brothers went from Woodson County, Kansas, to Hennessey, Oklahoma, and made the run on horse back. They left the line near Hennessey, Okla, and rode northwest and staked a claim about 25 miles north and west of Enid, Oklahoma, in the Cherokee Strip. He went to the town of Alva, the County seat of Woods County, and filed. Alva is 25 miles west and 25 miles north of where he staked his claim. He then returned to his claim, and built a two room house. It was built in the side of a bank, with about half of it extending out of the bank. The extended part was built of 12 inch boards standing on end, and the roof was made of 12 inch boards supported by what was called a ridge pole. There was one door and two small windows, and a dirt floor. As soon as this house was completed, he went back to Kansas to make arrangements for moving his family, livestock, and equipment to his new home. So in the spring of 1894, on March 5th, he landed on his claim. It took him 14 days to make the trip from his Woodson County, Kansas, home, to his home in Woods County, Oklahoma. At the end of the first day's travel he was still in sight of the home he

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had just left.

When he landed on his claim he had a wife and 10 children, 21 head of cattle, 13 head of horses, about 150 chickens and two brood sows and some furniture which was mostly home-made. His farm equipment consisted of two sod plows, two cultivators and a corn planter, and they were all about worn out. It took four wagons to haul his family and equipment. He dug a well in the bottom of a canyon; it was about 20 feet deep, and furnished sufficient water for the family and stock. He drew the water with a rope and bucket. His first water trough was made out of the trunk of a cotton wood tree, which was about 12 feet long and about three feet thick. The side of the log was hewed out so it would hold water. He had sufficient stove wood on the farm for the use of his family. His first crop was Kafir and Indian corn, which thrived well on his newly broke land. In later years wheat became the principal grain crop, and it is at the present time. His first garden was planted in the spring of 1894. He broke the sod and worked the soil the best he could and planted the garden seed such as onions, peas, radishes, potatoes, tomatoes, beans and melons and he raised a good

garden. He sold butter for 10¢ a pound and eggs for 5¢ a dozen, and in the spring of 1895 he sold 11 head of good yearling calves for \$7.00 per head, and in the same spring he sold a team of good geldings for \$75.00.

In the fall of 1895 he bought his seed wheat in Hennessey, Oklahoma, for 35¢ per bushel. He seeded 100 acres to wheat, and the next year he harvested 76 bushel of wheat. In 1896 he seeded this same 100 acres to wheat and the next year he harvested 367 bushel of wheat. In 1897 he seeded this same 100 acres to wheat and he harvested 3800 bushel of wheat, and that fall and winter he hauled it to Enid and sold part of it as high as \$1.25 per bushel.

The first country school opened in the fall of 1894, in a one room sod school house, with about 60 enrolled, under the direction of one teacher. We only had a 3 months school term.

Snakes, such as bull snakes and prairie rattlers besides all other kinds, were large in size and number. The prairie dogs about took the country.

Mr. Chase was instrumental in having his community served with a rural telephone line, and a rural mail route. His first post office and trading post was at Lahoma, Oklahoma, which was

about 12 miles southeast, and he hauled his grain to Enid, Oklahoma, which was about 25 miles southeast of his claim. It would take one day to haul a load of wheat to Enid and one day to make the return trip home. His main source of living came from his cows and chickens until he began to raise grain crops.

The only wild game in the early day settlement of this community were prairie chicken and quail, which were plentiful. Fishing was not of any consequence as we lived out on the plains, where there were no lakes or streams.

In March, 1905, he moved overland with his family to Woodward County and located 2 miles southwest of Supply, Oklahoma, on a farm. There he built a 5 room frame home, with porches, and a barn 32 by 32 feet square. His principal crops were kafir corn and wheat, but as time passed on wheat became the principal crop. He brought with him work horses, cattle, furniture and farm machinery.

John Oscar Chase lived on his Woodward County farm until his death, December 17th, 1917. His widow lives in the town of Woodward Oklahoma.