

CHIGLEY, BELLE

INTERVIEW

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BIOGRAPHY FORM  
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION  
Indian-Pioneer History Project for OklahomaField Worker's name John F. DaughertyThis report made on (date) July 22, 1937. Name Mrs. Belle Chigley. Post Office Address Davis, Oklahoma.

. Residence address (or location) \_\_\_\_\_

. DATE OF BIRTH: Month May Day 7 Year 1981. Place of birth Young's ranch near Berwyn, Indian Territory, Chick-  
asaw Nation.. Name of Father Bud Young Place of birth KentuckyOther information about father Farmer Stockman. Name of Mother Adeline Johnson Place of birth Indian TerritoryOther information about mother Chickasaw Indian.

Notes or complete narrative by the field worker dealing with the life and history 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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John F. Daugherty, Interviewer  
Indian-Pioneer History  
July 22, 1937

My father was Bud Young, born in Kentucky, August 27, 1856. He was a farmer and stockman.

Mother was Adeline Johnson Young, born June 30, 1863 in Indian Territory. She was a Chickasaw Indian. The exact place of her birth is unknown. There were ten children in our family. I was born May 7, 1881 on Father's ranch near Berwyn, Indian Territory in a log house with a puncheon floor and a rock fireplace in each end. The house had one window. We drank water from a dug well. Mother cooked in a skillet and lid on the fireplace. I used to help round the calves up each spring to be branded. I enjoyed riding the wildest horses we had on the ranch. I always rode to Berwyn after supplies needed for the ranch. I had to cross the Washita River, and my horse always had to swim. One day while I was in Berwyn the river rose and was almost bank full when I returned. My horse plunged into the water and swam safely to the opposite shore. That was great fun. I didn't know the meaning of fear

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I always rode on a sidesaddle; wearing a long riding skirt which almost touched the ground. Mother rode also. She always took us children with her. One rode in front and two behind her.

One day when I was a small girl, the Indian Police Squad, of about fifty men, rode up to our gate. Papa had seen them coming and had hidden himself. All the men were gone and mother sent me to the door to talk to these policemen. We had a large peach orchard, and when they found out that Papa was not there, they asked if they might have some peaches. I went to the orchard with them, and they ate all they wanted and rode away.

Father went to Denison once a year with several wagon loads of cotton. He returned with a year's supply of sugar, salt, coffee and clothes. The sugar and coffee were in barrels. The coffee was green, and we parched and ground it at home. We bought flavoring in sticks instead of by the bottle. Mother could hardly keep these. I liked them as well as candy and ate them as if they were candy. I also drank the baby's soothing syrup.

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I wore red-top boots with brass toes. I got one pair of these a year, and when they wore out I went barefooted. Mother knitted yarn socks to wear under the boots, and my feet certainly kept warm.

Our house was headquarters for the preachers. It was my job to keep the flies away from the table while they ate. I did this with a bush. Finally Mother made a "fly scarer" out of paper. A string was stretched from one wall to the other and newspapers cut into strips were hung across this string, over the table. It was my task to stand at one end of this string and pull it to keep it swinging so the flies would keep moving. I didn't enjoy this part of the day at all, I wished many times there were no preachers.

I went to school in a small frame building near our ranch. Jack Briston was my first teacher. We used Harvey's Grammar, the blue-backed speller and McGuffey's Reader. I later attended Bloomfield Academy for Indian girls at Kemp. I made enough dresses each summer before going to school to last

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the nine months I was there. We didn't have fine clothes. Just cotton dresses and cotton underwear.

Father always came for me at Christmas in a surrey. It was always cold, and he kept a lighted lantern under the blankets in the botton of the surrey to keep our feet warm. We drove the one hundred miles in a day and a night. But I didn't mind the cold. It was so much fun to get home after staying away for several months. At the end of the Christmas vacation we made the trip back to the Academy in the surrey. Douglas H. Johnson was the Superintendent when I was at the academy and Elihu Henshaw was the Principal.

After I was graduated from the Academy, I taught an Indian School in Pauls Valley for a year, then I came to Davis and taught an Indian school for a year. The Indians were very easily managed. The discipline was much easier than in a white school. Indian children would "sull" when they became angry instead of plotting little mean things to do as the white children did. I was paid by the Chickasaw

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Government, instead of being paid each month, I received my salary in one check for the entire nine months after the term was finished. I married Wyatt Chigley in 1903 at Father's ranch near Berwyn. We have two daughters and we have reared two orphan Indian girls, also.

Father and Mother are buried at Young's graveyard near Berwyn.