

INDEX CARDS

Journey to Oklahoma

Dixie

Houses--Chickasaw Nation

Tassey

Era

Postoffices--Era

Water--Indian Territory

Immigration--Chickasaw Nation

Field Worker: Warren D. Morse
April 9, 1937

BIOGRAPHY OF Mr. W. T. Humphries (White)
907 North 11th Street
Duncan, Oklahoma

BORN Kentucky
December 8, 1855.

We moved from Kentucky and settled in Wise County, Texas

I came to this country by my self I crossed Red River at Burlington station, I think they called it Yellow bank, then.

I thought I was in a real wild country and came near turning back. There were no roads, nothing but cow trails. I kept coming on until I could find some kind of settlement. I landed at a little place called "Dixie". Oh, there was a store and drug store and a kind of mill. I went a mile north of this place and rented a place. Then had to build my own house which was a "hatching out fit." It was a half dug out, part of which was made of cotton wood logs. I just stayed at this place a year. Decided to move on and see if I could not find a place with better land. I came out on what was known as Sandy Bear; now why they gave this creek such a name I do not know. I tried to find out. Some told me because it had had bears on it; others told me it was from the condition of the soil.

I came up on a small settlement and decided I would try my luck here. That was real pioneering for me, my nearest store was Tussey back over toward Ardmore.

I started building my house out of logs of which there were plenty of Cottonwood. These trees were first cut, then the limbs were all trimmed off. Then I cut them in lengths of a certain size. I

hewed these logs down like cross ties. And let them season, ⁴¹⁹ then I stacked one on another up as high as I wanted the walls. I fixed a lap over each crack and poured this full of a clay like mud; when it dried, it stayed as good as cement. I used rawhide cotton wood boards that were sawed at the old saw mill in the flat. I had a warm but small house.

It was one hard ship after another. As we all were new, we did not take time or have time to dig deep wells. That shallow water made us all sick. Then one morning I was up early and looked over toward my neighbors and saw his home all a fire. The family got burned up; well they did not die just then, but did die three or four days later. The man said he had lined the house with an oiled wagon sheet and when he started a fire the whole inside of the house caught and all were burned trying to put the fire out.

Three years after I came here a Mr. Hollman from Leca came and talked up a petition for a postoffice. We searched for a name. There was a widow lady who lived up on the hill west by the name of Era Ervin. It was decided to name the place after her, so Era was given the name.

This store and postoffice was in a half dug out. When Hollman left, Mr. Kennedy came and took over the place. He moved the store and postoffice out of the dug out and built a wooden house. A Mr. Kennimere, ran the place for him.

Some folks like to have those days again but I don't believe I do.