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RICHARD (DICK) MORGAN.
Durant, Okla.
(An intermarried Choctaw Citizen)
An Interview.

Mrs. Lula Austin---Research Worker.
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Date of Birth--April 25, 1854.

Place of Birth---Virginia

Father---W. E. Morgan

Place of Birth---Virginia

Mother--Sallie Morgan

Place of Birth--Virginia

INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD (DICK) MORGAN

DURANT, OKLAHOMA.

INTERMARRIED CHOCTAW CITIZEN.

I left Virginia when a boy and came west, finally locating in Wolf City, Texas where I remained until 1893. During my stay there Mr. George, for whom I worked, and who had become attached to me, suggested that I join him in a cattle feed adventure. We entered this business, which proved profitable to me, giving me a start in the business which was to be afterwards the business I would follow throughout my later years.

In the month of March, 1893, with the profits I had made, a team and covered wagon, I moved north to Indian Territory, finally landing in the town of Durant, a small place on the Katy railroad, but in the heart of the finest grazing country I had ever seen, with good pens and yards for shipping cattle.

Durant at this time had no more than three hundred people. The town consisted of four stores- Drug store, Barber, two Grocery stores. Water was secured by wells. The principal industry was Cotton, Corn and cattle.

Enough was seen to assure me that I had found the place to locate, which I did.

I had enough money to start buying cattle, and it was during one of my cattle buying trips that I met my future wife who was Loerna Nail, a Choctaw, daughter of

Catherine Harkins and Edward Neil. I was married under the Choctaw law, I was required to have ten signers before I could obtain a license and the fee was \$100.00--that gave me all the rights and privileges of a fullblood Indian.

As the town grew, I was the one to help build the first church in Durant, which was the Methodist. Later the building was sold. We built the second one, which afterward burned. R. L. Williams came and asked me for a donation to build another one. I wrote him a check for \$100.00. I subscribed to build the first college in Durant, for girls. Helped to establish First National Bank, which was first bank under charter. I was Vice*President for twenty-six years.

The first bank was operated by Jones and Ledbetter without a charter. Capital was \$5000.00. I borrowed all the money and bought cattle. I had gone to Wolf City on business and on arriving there had word to return to Durant immediately as the depositors had made a run on the bank. The bankers had locked the doors and were hiding, as the depositors threatened to kill them if the money was not returned. I went to the depositors and told them I had borrowed the money and would give them my note for the amount. That satisfied them. I

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shipped the cattle and cleared \$3000,00, paid the bank and the depositors were paid, The bank closed. This ended the first bank in Durant.

I help to organize the Democratic party before statehood. I was one of the first Aldermen of Durant; was elected April 9, 1900.

I was connected with the Wilson-Jones faction. The Wilson-Jones and Locke factions went to war over the election. Both had an army and several men were killed. The fighting was in the vicinity of Antlers and around the capital at Talihina. Jones won. Then came another faction over election. Green McCurtain and Tom Hunter. The Hunter faction held an election and took the ballot boxes to Talihina and the McCurtain faction guarded the capital. Calling on the United States for troops, a company of Negro soldiers were sent and took charge of ballot boxes and McCurtain won 3 to 1 and was elected Chief. My wife's grandfather, Robert Nail, was chairman of Rabbit Creek Colony and an interpreter for the Indians.

It was the custom for the Indians to hold cattle for the white men, Will Durant (Present Chief of Choctaws) held cattle for the Doogans. Their brand was

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the bar X 4.

A white man was charged \$500. a year, permit to live in the Territory. They would put in claims for the Indians and live there for the improvements. The Indians would fence as much as 640 acres, no one could locate within a $\frac{1}{4}$ a mile of each other.

Before statehood Indians were all self-sustaining, had plenty stock, chickens and nice gardens. There were no beggers. We had good schools. Never had people lived in such a country as we had then.

We had many outlaws here, one bunch composed of Lon Gardner, Tandy Folsom, Ed Bohanan, and Dave Bohanan, who were all nearly full-blood Indians. Many times I have seen them all drinking and riding their horses in the store and shooting, not caring whom they killed.

The United States made a treaty of peace with Tandy Folsom, which is a matter of record in the Fort Smith Courts, wiped out everything against him and made him an officer of the United States.

Alec Robinson, another outlaw, stole a poor Dutchman's oxen at night while he was in camp and hid them. I gave Ed. Bohanan \$5.00 to go to Muskogee to get a warrant to arrest him. He went to arrest Alec and was

shot in the back by Alee, who was hidden in a dug-out. They never proved Alee shot him.

The Choctaws had no jails. They punished you by whipping you at the whipping post and, if you committed a third offense, shot you. I recall a man who was convicted of murder and sentenced to die. He was turned loose and told when to come back to be shot. Some of the men tried to get him to ride horseback into Texas and escape, "No", he said, "me come back". He did. They had him sit under a tree and put a cross over his heart and a Mr. Posey shot him.

I was a close friend of Wilson N. Jones, Choctaw full-blood, who was called Chief among his people. He was the biggest cattle man in the country. I bought cattle from him for ten years and unless you shipped them out he wouldn't sell to you, and one day I was grazing cattle around old Ft. Washita and often heard the story about the Fort being haunted. It was said that a man and woman were hanged there for being traitors. Each night they were seen riding around and around the house. But in all my nights spent there, I was not fortunate enough to see them. There was an
There was an old Irishman who volunteered to spend the

night there and watch for the riders. While sitting before the fire, a voice apparently coming from a cat that was lying on the hearth said, "Nobody here but you and me, Pat, is there?" The Irishman said, "What?" and the voice spoke again and Pat said, "and by _____ no one will be here but you in a minute."

When the Indians began to register at the County Court House at Caddo for their allotments, the following were in charge of the register. McKee Robinson, Joe Bryant, Jude Hampton, Jude Byington and Turner Turnbull, all Choctaws. The day I registered the men who had charge of the register were all drinking a little and feeling good. As I approached one of them said, "Here comes Jack Morgan, let him register, but don't let Mr. Woodward". Woodward was with me and intermarried like myself, and they wouldn't let him register, but later he went back and registered.

Negro slaves of Choctaws received forty acres. The government paid the Choctaws for land given the negro.

My wife was a very attractive Indian and had many admirers when a young girl.

In my courting days I had two good friends whose houses I would pass on my way to my girl's-a Mrs. Crowder and Mrs. Case. They would see children carrying notes to my girl from her other beaux and would persuade them to sell them for ten cents. They would destroy them and tell me about them.

On my first visit with my wife to my old home in Carville, Virginia, in 1898, nearly every one in town met the train, even an old negro slave who had belonged to the family. They thought I was bringing back an Indian wearing a blanket and feathers. They were much surprised to see a beautiful, well-educated woman.

My wife died May 7, 1920, leaving six children, and myself to mourn the loss of a sweet christian wife and mother.

My father and mother, W. E. Morgan and Sallie Morgan, are both dead. I have three sisters and two brothers living.

EXPERIENCES IN CATTLE BUSINESS

Atwood Risner bought 120 head of horses from Abner Willis, who was administrator for Mrs. Durant. He gave \$10.00 a head. He shipped 1 car, along with some cattle I was shipping to Pumroy and Handley, St. Louis, Mo. Two weeks later we went up there and the market had been flooded with mules, fillies, mares, and colts. We asked Mr. Handley, (who was a Dutchman,) what the horses brought. He took us to his

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books and said "well, the freight was \$17.00, feed so much, care so much"; so I just asked him what the theatre tickets and street car fare was, as he had everything but that charged against them. Mr. Risner lost heavily on his horses. When we returned home he sold those he didn't ship to me. I made money on them, sold 1 span for \$250.00.

I later went broke; owed the Sherman bank \$25,000. I went to Jim Nail, who was President of the bank, and offered to turn what cattle I had over, he said "no".

Mr. M. H. Turner, of Wolf City, Texas, heard of my hard luck and sent for me. Said he had \$65,000 he would let me have to buy cattle if I would pay him 6% on money and half the profit, I agreed and in two weeks I was back for more money. He let me have \$25,000 more. I bought more cattle and after I had fed them 60 days I sold them to Mr. Dumas, doubling my money.

In 1906 during a money panic I bought 600 steers, near where Boswell is now, and gave my due bill to Willie W. Wilson, payable on demand. Then I shipped the cattle to Durant and couldn't get the money to pay freight. I stood the Frisco R. R. off for 30 days.

On one trip to the market at St. Louis with 250 steers during a Pullman strike, we shipped, at our own risk, and were unloaded at Parsons Kansas, for three days. When we finally arrived in St. Louis, the pens were empty and the packing houses were clamoring for cattle. I sold to the St. Louis Packing Company for \$70.00 and I had only paid \$22.00. around.

Dixon Durant had his claim where Durant is located. He sold lots for homes, but when allotments came up, the townsites were all reserved by the government and you had to pay the approved price. All who had purchased from Dixon Durant had the privilege to buy the lot they occupied.