

DAVISON, WILLIAM HENRY.

INTERVIEW

7316

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BIOGRAPHIC FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project Oklahoma

DAVISON, WILLIAM HENRY

INTERVIEW

#7316.

Field Worker's name Charline M. Culbertson

This report made on (date) August 21, 1937.

1. Name William Henry Davison.

2. Post Office Address Kiowa, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) Two miles west.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month _____ Day _____ Year 1879.

5. Place of birth Tennessee.

6. Name of Father James S. Davison Place of birth _____

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Mary C. Davison Place of birth _____

Other information about mother _____

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 Three sheets.

Charline M. Culbertson,
Field Worker.
August 21, 1937.

Interview with William Henry Davison,
Kiowa, Oklahoma.

I was born in Tennessee in 1879. I came from Texas with my parents, James S. and Mary C. Davison, to Pauls Valley, Indian Territory, in 1884, when I was five years old. We came in a covered wagon; yet I rode horseback some.

We had no reason for coming to this region but after we got to Pauls Valley my father just liked the country. He rented a place from Sam Paul. Father farmed about one-half mile northeast of where Pauls Valley is today. Farming was done on the banks of the Washita River. Grass was very high on the prairie. In Pauls Valley at this time there was one store and post office combined. Calvin Grant was postmaster and operated the store. Father did the freighting for the store from Caddo.

It was a custom among the Chickasaw Indians to trade wives, and often Sam Paul our landlord wanted to trade wives with Father, because he thought Mother was such a good cook. The Chickasaws never thought any more about trading wives than trading horses.

I rode on the first train across the Washita River in 1886. It was the Santa Fe railway train. Our school was two miles from

Pauls Valley, and was a building of cottonwood lumber and had cracks big enough for a dog to get through. We had splitlog benches; and the only book we used was the Blue Back Speller. We were taught reading, writing and arithmetic and both Indians and whites attended. It was a subscription school, parents paying \$1.00 a month for each pupil. A teacher would make around \$15.00 or \$20.00 a month. The pupils did not get certificates, but just learned to read and write.

This was a cattle country, except on the river banks where farming was done. Father raised eighty bushels of corn to the acre there and sold it for 10 cents a bushel. We would stack the corn ricks along the river banks. Cattle were driven into Kansas up the Santa Fe Trail, which went west of Pauls Valley.

Our home furnishings were homemade, and we used the water from the river.

My father and brother made the Run into old Oklahoma in 1889. Father went from Purcell to Norman and staked a town lot there. He later built a restaurant on it and was in that business for several years.

Heck Thomas, a United States Marshal, was a good friend

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of my father's, and often came to our house. Father helped him in locating whiskey peddlers. A man would come to our house and father said this man was the one the United States Marshal was after. Later this man ^{was} captured and served some time and then was pardoned; he reformed and became a United States Marshal.

The only entertainment the young people had was dancing. There was three outlaws who would always come and break the party up by shooting out the lights.

In 1897 we moved to Limestone Gap where we made ties. At the age of seventeen I came to Kiowa, where my mother ^{is} was buried. My father is buried at Weatherford.

W. H. Davison *Interviewed Aug. 1943.*
Died May 19, 1945. Buried at Weatherford.