

DAVIS, VIRGINIA

INTERVIEW

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BIOGRAPHY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name John F. Daugherty

This report made on (date) July 31, 1937

Name Mrs. Virginia Davis,

2. Post Office Address Davis, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month January Day 13 Year 1868

5. Place of birth Texas

Name of Father Charlie Judkins Place of birth Virginia

Other information about father Ship builder mechanic

Name of Mother Katherine Gage Place of birth Texas

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 _____

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Field Worker, John F. Daugherty,
Sulphur, Oklahoma.

Interview with Mrs. Virginia Davis,
Davis, Oklahoma.

My father was Charlie Judkins, born in Richmond, Virginia, August 13, 1813. Mother was Katherine Gage Judkins, born in Texas, May 10, 1832. Father was a mechanic and ship builder.

I was born in Texas, January 13, 1868, and was married in Texas, April 20, 1885. My husband, three children and I came to the Territory in a covered wagon, November 1, 1893. It took us sixteen days to come, and such a trip! We had a map to guide us, but the roads were just cow trails much of the way. Sometimes the road on which we were traveling would end abruptly in a large ravine and we would have to retrace our route, perhaps losing a half day.

We had three fine mares, two of which we drove and we led the third. One of these mares had left a colt at the place where we had been living, and about the time we reached Red River the mare broke loose from the rear of the wagon and away she went toward our old home. My husband got on one of the other mares and started after her. He chased her for half a day and she finally looked around and

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saw him and he called her back.

We had a coop on the back of the wagon in which we had twelve hens. Late each evening we would let these hens out, feed and water them and let them remain outside their coop until roosting time. We never traveled on Sunday; we always camped on Saturday night and stayed in this same place until Monday morning.

We crossed Red River on a ferryboat, pulled by a cable, at South Bend Ferry near Thackerville. We had been having trouble to find feed for our horses and when we got across the river, found grass waist high and it was a relief to find something for our horses to graze on.

We settled at Silo on the edge of Twelve Mile Prairie in the Chickasaw Nation. My husband found a house to build soon after we stopped here and we were all happy to be in this land of plenty. We had plenty of sorghum molasses, corn bread and meat of wild animals. There were many wild hogs here, but they were not fat. My husband used to say if we killed a hog he had to get out and run a rabbit down to get grease to fry the hog.

Quails came through our yard and ate with the chickens.

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Wolves chased our dog into the house many times. One night a terrible rain storm came and washed our stick and dirt chimney into the room where we were sleeping. It fell in a heap and we could see outdoors through the hole where the chimney had been. It rained so hard that the creek got "up" and water was deep enough for our cows to swim in. Our food was all washed away and we had nothing to eat for two days.

My husband became ill during our first year here and we were without food again. In those days people were very thoughtful and a neighbor came one evening, bringing a good supply of food. In a few days his wife became ill and then I returned his kindness by taking care of her.

The first Spring we were here the wild strawberries were plentiful. I liked them so much and we went berry hunting one day and found about a gallon, and when we were about a mile from home we found some large wild strawberries in a thicket. We couldn't get those and we went home. That night I got up while I was asleep, went to the thicket, ate all the berries there and returned to my bed without waking.

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The next morning my feet were full of briars and I had strawberry juice all over my face. I didn't remember about my trip to the berry patch but when I went to look at it, the berries had all been picked.

When we wanted to milk a cow we ran her into our horse-lot, roped her, and I got in the shed and held the rope through the cracks while my husband milked her. We kept about three cows all the time. They belonged to a ranch near us and the ranch-man gave us permission to milk as many as we wanted. The cows were not hard to train and when they went dry, we turned them back on the range and drove in some fresh ones.

One night one of our horses disappeared and we looked for her everywhere but she could not be found. One day my husband found her, plowing in a nearby field. He claimed her and the man who was plowing admitted that he had stolen her.

We moved to Tishomingo and lived in a cellar, dug in a bank. It was covered with ducking, soaked in linseed oil, to keep it from leaking when it rained. The walls were canvassed and this made it a very warm place in

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which to live.

We greatly enjoyed watching the full blood Indians during the period of enrollment each year. The town was full of Indians during this time. The period lasted about ten days or two weeks. All children born since the last enrollment period were brought to town and put on the Indian rolls. This entitled each child to draw money when the payments were made to that tribe. Of course, the parents of these children were eager for them to be placed on the rolls for it meant that the parents would receive more money when the payments were made, so the town was always crowded with Indians at this time. Those little papooses sat on their mother's backs and I never saw one cry. They were the best behaved children I ever saw. This enrollment ceased March 4, 1906.

When the Dawes Commission was appointed about 1900 to make the rolls for the allotment of land to the Five Civilized Tribes, they used these enrollments to make their rolls.

One day a tent show came to town and some drunken Indians rode up and down the street, shooting, and splashing mud. The manager decided that this was no place for his

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show and they moved before time for their performance to start.

There were no schools near us when we first came here, and I was determined that my children should not grow up in ignorance so I organized a school and taught in one room of my house for two years so that my children could go to school. I had about twenty pupils and they paid tuition. It was not always paid in money. I took whatever the children had to offer.

I had one pupil whose father was a dry goods peddler. He refused to pay for his child's education. One day I went to his house to collect. He was not at home but his wife gave me goods for the tuition he owed. I took the goods and went home. The next day the peddler came after the goods. I persuaded him to pay what he owed me and I returned his goods. That was the only trouble I had collecting.

I am the mother of ten children and have reared eight orphan children, also.