

DULANEY, J. B.

INTERVIEW

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Field Worker: Merrill A. Nelson .
 April 24, 1937.
 Interview with Mr. J. B. Dulaney,
 1215 Hales Bldg., Oklahoma City

Born May 28, 1867,
 Moberly, Mo.

Parents J. B. Dulaney, father,
 Madison Co., Ky.
 Degarene Chelton, mother,
 Missouri.

I was born in Moberly, Missouri, in the month of May, 1867. My father, J. B. Dulaney, had moved there from Madison County, Kentucky. Previously his people had lived in Virginia, where for three hundred years my ancestors had made their home. Mark Twain was a second cousin of father's. Chilton Degarine, my mother, was born in Missouri. Her mother was a Jackson. Her mother's father and Andrew Jackson were brothers.

My people built the Dulaney library at Paris, Missouri, in Monroe County, and were interested in the preservation of the Mark Twain home in Hannibal, Missouri.

I made the run with many others into Old Oklahoma, April 22, 1889. I was just out of school from the Kirksville, Missouri, State Normal. I stood the examination

for Annapolis, the same day that General Pershing stood the examination for West Point. I was younger than Pershing. Pershing was in fourth class, I was in the second. He was raised not far from me.

I was on the train coming into Oklahoma. We had come fourteen miles into Old Oklahoma when I gave the conductor of the Santa Fe Train two hundred dollars to slow the train down, so I could jump off and get a claim. The train was slowed up just a little. I jumped off, and was successful. There was no contest to my claim. I did not live on the claim, which is located eighteen miles north of Oklahoma City, but moved to Guthrie.

I had a store building in Guthrie, also bachelor's quarters. Dan Peery, former secretary of the Oklahoma Historical Society, knew my folks in Missouri, so when he was elected to the first legislature I allowed him to room with me in the bachelor's quarters.

One of the outstanding Republicans of the session was Ira Terrel of Payne County. He was responsible for the putting of the Agricultural and Mechanical College at Stillwater. There were twenty-six members in one house of the legislature and thirteen in the other.

Terrill was set on passing a bill, making capital punishment the law, and he was the first man tried under his own bill. He served years in the penitentiary.

The next opening I attended was the Sac and Fox opening held on the race plan, September 22, 1891. However, one had to file on town lots under what is called the Nebraska plan. The filing was held at Tecumseh, which town they were designating as the county seat. It is near Shawnee. The townsite board, Braidwood, Ralph Carlin, and Fowler, appointed by Governor A. J. Seay, would not give a deed; instead the claimant received one direct from the government. There were twenty-three hundred lots in Chandler, but many were arbitrary and would not file on their lots. Judge Hallison was the U. S. Commissioner, and you paid your fee to him.

The night before the filing closed it was announced all lots not filed on would revert to the townsite board to be sold by the board. They were to begin making deeds Monday, so on Sunday, I took eighteen negroes and bought all the wire in town and ran wire around the entire town. I made application for every lot in town, and paid the

filing fee on all lots not filed, making my claim on the basis of the improvement. Naturally I did not own the lots filed on and the owners were entitled to the lots that had been improved; but I made a blanket-claim to secure every lot not so improved, since the law was the lots must be filed and improved.

The next run, the Cheyenne and Arapaho, was made by the race plan on April 19, 1892. The government at all times designated the county seats, so Cordell was selected and the townsite board appointed by Governor A. J. Seay.

I started in a wagon, the only means of travel as there were no roads. I went in company with Frank Greer and H. E. Ardway, but fearing I could not make it in time I decided to walk when we were camping at Mingo. I had no compass, but I walked almost to Rossmore that night. The next morning I met a bunch of Cheyenne Indians on the Washita, but I could talk a little Kickapoo so they understood me and I ate breakfast with them and went with them to Rossmore. The town was closer than I had anticipated and I got there before the time allowed. They thought I was an Indian as I was riding on horseback and rode right on to the land. In fact, without intending to be, I was a Sooner. They arrested the Cheyennes with whom I was

riding, and me. We were put in a bull pen with two thousand others, who had come too early. The soldiers heard me talk Kickapoo to the Cheyennes so were sure I was not a white. They said, "You can't arrest those Indians."

The reservation opened at the shot of a gun, and I made the run just the same. I got the poorest lots in town, however, a strip eighty feet wide and one-half mile long, which was the street. As I had two thousand dollars strapped on me, I did not care to stay and live on my claim.

The next day, Judge Dixon, Decker, Front, Green, and myself hired a man and wagons and teams to go to Arapaho. We had brush in the back of the wagon with which we made a fire on the prairie, and we carried a barrel of water, bacon, bread, and feed for the horses. We reached Arapaho the following day, but as the country did not look any too good to us we started to go back to Chandler. The first person I met there was "Red" Lucas, who was selling overalls from the back of a wagon. Old lady Dobbs, who ran an eating-house, was another interesting character. She smoked her clay pipe and had, as her only protection, two hound dogs.

Going back to El Reno, I encountered a party of six or seven who offered to take me back to El Reno for four dollars, if I would walk half the way. Dave Roy, an attorney of Chandler, was in the wagon and I had to sit by him. He smelled as if he had been drinking, and although it was raining I got out in the rain to avoid sitting by him. Finally we all got back to Chandler where I had business.

September 16, 1893, the Cherokee Strip opened. I went to Perry to make the run. Among those who also made the Run was the father of Gertrude Ryan, my wife. I built a store right next to the site of her father in Chandler when she was six years old. On February 28, 1900, we were married and lived at Perry.

There were many Chandler people in Perry at the time of the run and later, so when the first election was held in Perry, I was elected a member of the city council and served on the council three terms. We stayed in Perry till we moved to Oklahoma City in 1910.

During the race in the Kickapoo Country in 1895 or 1896, I went to McCloud to attempt to secure land. I took part in the drawing at the Big Pasture in 1906, but

my number was too large to get anything. This made a total of six runs I have been in.

I was in the insurance and chattel loan business in Perry in 1905. Henry S. Johnstan, former governor, officed with me for four years. I sold insurance for the Sun Insurance Company in Oklahoma in 1910. Later, I took over Kansas and Arkansas, and I still have charge of the company's interests in these three states.

On the night of the Run into the Cherokee Strip, we thought the cowboys would get the choice sites in Perry, around the square. Harvey, a brother of Congressman Harvey, thought they had the best chance. Marsh, Wright and Tyler built in a bank off to one side and we thought we would build the town around the bank and the postoffice, as the townsite was nothing but brush. We went as close as possible to get our bearings and then all made the run to the point agreed upon. The town did come over our way toward the bank, making the lots around the square not very desirable.

After Dennis Flynn ran and was elected, he secured the passage of the Free Homes Bill; previous to this the

law had required five years occupancy. Now the rule was two years of occupancy or \$1.25 per acres if you preferred. I was a personal friend of Flynn, and his being of a different political faith was the cause of his defeat. I am a Democrat, and I was secretary of the central committee of the party in Noble County, through whose efforts, James B. Davis, attorney, and Bill Colcord brought about a fusion. In this fusion, we elected a populist, J. Y. Callahan.

There was a vacancy in West Point, and Callahan had the control of the appointment. He appointed a young chap from Alva, none other than Hugh Johnson, daddy of the N.R.A., for the position.

My wife and I have two farms in Arkansas. One of these is the best improved place in Little River County, Arkansas, and it is seventeen miles from Texakana and four miles from Ashton. I take a personal interest in operating this farm, with negro labor, when I can be away from my business at 1215 Hales Building, Oklahoma City, on East 13th Street.

Note: Mr. Dolaney and his wife have a beautiful home with a large painting of a crouching Indian over the mantel piece, which shows their taste for art depicting ancient American life.