

DUNCAN, CHARLIE

INTERVIEW

4769

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

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DUNCAN, CHARLIE

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Field Worker's name Ruby Wolfenbarger

This report made on (date) July 9 1937

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1. Name Charlie Duncan
  2. Post Office Address Sentinel, Oklahoma
  3. Residence address (or location) Sentinel
  4. DATE OF BIRTH:      nth March      Day 22      Year 1871
  5. Place of birth Kentucky

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6. Name of Father Robert Duncan      Place of birth Kentucky  
Other information about father Farmer

7. Name of Mother Fannie Strait      Place of birth Kentucky  
Other information about mother housewife

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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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Ruby Wolfenbarger,  
Field Worker,  
July 9, 1937.

An Interview with Mr. Charlie Duncan,  
Sentinel, Oklahoma.

I came to Oklahoma in 1898, from Clay County, Texas. I came through in a wagon and brought a well digger through with me. A friend, Tom Barnett, came with me. We thought that we could make some easy money digging wells in this new country.

We were on the road five days. We camped out at nights. One night a big frost came. The next morning when we opened our eyes we thought that it had snowed. We had to watch our horses at night to keep them from being stolen.

My pal and I both decided to file on a place after we got here. I located at Port, nine miles from Sentinel. I got 15.36 acres of land. My claim was just a little short, I wanted 160 acres.

There was a small dugout on the place, I built a shack out of logs and mud. I dug a well, put out a small orchard. I had a little wood, and some coal but burned mostly cow chips.

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I had to go to Foss or Weatherford for my supplies.

El Reno was the nearest railroad town.

Lots of times I have cut out across the country on horseback to El Reno after a few groceries. The roads were just cow trails. You would have to pick your way as you went along. I would be gone for several days.

This country was just a big prairie covered in Blue Grass. It was an ideal place to graze cattle.

There were lots of creeks in this part of the country.

There were lots of wolves, prairie chickens, turkeys and a few antelope. The rattlesnakes were so thick that I had to take my gun to the field with me. The prairie chickens were so tame they would follow behind the plow.

I would always try to raise a garden in the spring. One time I remember I raised a big patch of turnips. Times were hard then, more so than they are now. I ran out of money and was also out of chewing tobacco so I went out and pulled up some of my turnips and took them to Fort and exchanged them for tobacco.

I had lots of chickens, but didn't have many cows. I had a team of horses and a team of mules.

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I lived two miles of the Western Trail which came up from Vernon, Texas. Some say that this is the old Chisholm trail, but I think that it was just a trail that the cattlemen used to take their cattle to market or to some shipping point in the western part of the state.

The Indians were located at Lone Wolf, Hobart, east of Gordell, at Colony and Cloud Chief. They were very peaceable, they didn't bother anyone. They very seldom if ever worked; they were lazy and always on the move. They liked to hunt and fish.

There were several good springs in the western part of Oklanoma. There was one at Spring Creek; here the water was very good and just as cold as ice. There were lots of fish in the creek that flowed near the spring. There was another good spring about seven miles from my place; this was on the Western Trail. The cattlemen would come here and camp when they brought their cattle through to take them to market.

There was a small frame one roomed house with a glass

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window in it near us and we called it the fine house. It was the best house in this country at that time.

I filed on my land in the Cheyenne country in April 1899, and I proved up my rights in May 1904, just five years after I filed. You could pay \$1.25 per acre and get a title in fourteen months or you could homestead as I did. You had to live on the place and work the land for five years before you could get a title.