

CARSELOWEY, JAMES R.

FRANK L. BURCKHALTER.

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BIOGRAPHY FORM

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WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name James R. CarseloweyThis report made on (date) April 13, 1938 19381. Name Frank L. Burckhalter.2. Post Office Address North Wilson Street, Vinita, Oklahoma.3. Residence address (or location) Same4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month May Day 23 Year 18725. Place of birth Aiken, South Carolina.6. Name of Father Unknown Place of birth UnknownOther information about father none7. Name of Mother Unknown Place of birth UnknownOther information about mother None.

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 4

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FRANK L. BURCKHALTER

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James R. Carselowey,
Journalist,
April 13, 1938.

FRANK L. BURCKHALTER.

Frank L. Burkhalter was born in Aiken, North Carolina, May 23, 1872. He died in Vinita of a sudden heart attack on the morning of Sunday, April 10, 1938, and was laid to rest in the Fairview Cemetery, Vinita, Oklahoma, following the funeral services which were held at his own funeral home on North Wilson Street, Vinita.

Burckhalter received his education in the town where he was born, and after working a short time as a railroad employee in Barnwell, South Carolina, he came to the Indian Territory on October 23, 1895. His brother, J. B. Burkhalter, had already preceded him to the Indian country, and when he arrived here he went to work as a clerk in his brother's law office where he remained until 1899.

In the year of 1899 he married Tommy Cannon, a Cherokee girl, who had been raised by her aunt, Mrs. W. L. Trott, in Vinita. After his marriage he purchased the insurance business of J. P. Scott who was well established and had the larger end of the insurance business of the town. He formed a partnership with A. L. Churchill in the insurance

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business, and both men became civic leaders in the life of Vinita, which was kept up until the death of both men.

Burckhalter and Churchill later sold the insurance business to Butler and Bonfoy, after which Burckhalter bought out the Vinita Plow and Buggy Company from F. M. Lewis and was joined by Sam Motley in conducting that business.

FARMING A SIDE ISSUE.

In the meantime, allotment of land had come to the Indians and Mrs. Burckhalter drew her pro-rata of land, and they built a fine residence on the place which was located just outside the city of Vinita one mile. He was always interested in dairying and livestock, and built a fine large stock barn on his wife's allotment and branched out into the raising of fine dairy cattle, all of which was a side line to him, as he continued to operate his business up town, driving each day from his farm to conduct his business.

He had not yet found the business that just suited him. After a few years he sold his interest in the Vinita Plow

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Company and bought the Jackson Furniture Company located on West Illinois in Vinita. He took in Homer Hubbard, an undertaker, and together they conducted a funeral home with their furniture store. Burckhalter seemed to like the undertaking business better than anything he had ever tried, and in 1927 he sold his furniture store and bought out the Klengel-Rogers Undertaking business and for several years conducted the only undertaking business in Vinita.

About 1930 his large stock barn caught fire and burned to the ground, taking with it all of his farm machinery, wagons, harness and a fine dairy bull. The fire spread to his fine residence and completely destroyed it as well, with all that was in it.

This was a severe blow to him, but he never gave up.

He kept on buying more farm land, until at one time he had over a thousand acres of some of the best farm land in Craig County, including many old settled places. At the time of his death he still owned the old Dave Landrum homestead which was settled by Dave Landrum in 1866. The land was allotted by ex-State Senator Mack Landrum and his wife.

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Burckhalter spent much money on his funeral home in Vinita, supplying one of the largest funeral chapels in Vinita, with all modern equipment. He was ably assisted in his undertaking business by his two sons, Tom and Charles, both of whom are graduated morticians. His daughter, Mrs. Frank Bailey, is also a graduate of the Williamson College of Embalming, Kansas City, Missouri, and for the past several years has assisted her father with the ladies' work. Her husband is Vinita's postmaster, and they live up-stairs over the undertaking parlors with the Burckhalters.

This fine undertaking business established by the father will be continued by the two sons and Mrs. Bailey.

Tom Burckhalter was married to Louise Clinkscales in 1938, and Charles is still single.

Tom Burckhalter, like his father, has been a civic leader in Vinita ever since he finished school. He served during the year of 1937 as president of the Oklahoma Embalming Association.

Frank L. Burckhalter was one of the oldest charter members of the Hillcrest Country Club, a member of the Baptist

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church, a Mason, a leader in Vinita's building program for the past several years, which included an active hand in the building of Vinita's fine hotel, the Vinita Hospital, the City Hall, and last the proposed erection of a new 250,000 post office and Federal Building, which is to start building during the year of 1938.

Burkhalter is survived by his widow, Mrs. Tommy Burkhalter, three daughters, Adelyne of the home address, Mrs. Frank Bailey, Vinita, and Mrs. J. M. Parker of Dallas, Texas, two sons, Tom and Charles of the home address, and one brother, C. M. Burkhalter of Barnwell, South Carolina.

OTHER COMMENTS BY O. R. CALPURN
By Editor Vinita Daily Journal.

One by one the pioneer settlers find their work done and silently steal away unto that great unknown. Another whose life was closely interwoven with the development of this section passed away Sunday morning in the death of Frank L. Burkhalter. Death removes these old timers from our midst but it does not take from us a memory of them and of the spirit that they possessed, and that is best, for each of us left behind needs that dauntless spirit,

CARSELOWEY, JAMES H. FRAS. L. BURKHALTER. 13503

courage and vision of the past and the future of the

well to do and the other side of the mountain

heritage of the generation that has been

measured and found to be the same

respect to the past and the future

