

RAY, W. J.

INTERVIEW

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Form A-(S-149)

RICHARD L. BERRY  
SOCIAL PROGRAMS ADMINISTRATION  
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Ophelia D. Vestal

This report made on (date) October 28, 1937

1. Name Mr. W. J. Ray

2. Post office Address 303 Lee Boulevard, Lawton, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) \_\_\_\_\_

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month January Day 10 Year 1867

5. Place of birth Arkansas

6. Name of Father \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Other info. re father \_\_\_\_\_

7. Name of Mother \_\_\_\_\_ 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 \_\_\_\_\_

An Interview with Mr. W. J. Fay, Lawton, Oklahoma.  
By - Ophelia D. Vestal - Field Worker.  
October 28, 1937.

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I moved to this country in the year of 1891, coming here from Falls County, Texas, in a wagon.

We crossed Red River at Belcher, just a small trading post. Our route here was the old Chisholm Trail. This trail crossed the Indian Territory to El Reno, leading on north to Wichita, Kansas.

We started our new home in the vicinity of Tucker's store (near Marlow). Not many people here but a few cowboys. Stockmen had put up a four wire fence and leased this land for their cattle from the Government. This fence was located a few miles west of Marlow and Duncan. The east side, where I lived, was called the Comanche Nation.

The first time I came to Fort Sill was for a July 3rd and 4th celebration, 1892. A few neighbors decided we would go there for sight seeing. We passed one ranch house between our home and Fort Sill, a distance of about forty miles. The Apache Indians were

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being held as prisoners of war on the Reservation.

The way the Indians and soldiers celebrated the 4th was by horse racing, foot racing and games. There never was a thought of fire works. To see the Indians meant a great sight to us all.

When this country was opened, I came here and rented some Indian land through the Indian sub-agent, Walter Silcott. I paid ninety dollars a year and improved the land. Sometimes I had to work away from home to help meet my payments. By working out, I helped build the first house in Comanche.

I used to butcher and sell the Indians fat cattle for their celebrations. I sold them horses and corn, too, and in all my dealings with the Indians I have found them to be honest people.

I think the Indians have been pretty good citizens; they never bother anything unless they are bothered. This was their home and they were driven away. The worst of their habits nowadays, they learned from the white people.

The Indians were paid semi-annually a sum of

fifty dollars a head, young and old.

I only knew of one trading post here, and that was the Three Red Stores. The next trading center was Apache, where the Indian Agency was located.