

HODGES, SAM.

INTERVIEW

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

HODGES, SAM

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Field Worker's name Ophelia D. Vestal

This report made on (date) January 4 1938

1. Name Mr. Sam Hodges

2. Post Office Address Lawton, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) Route

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month March Day 25 Year 1881

5. Place of birth Abilene, Texas

6. Name of Father _____ Place of birth _____

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 4

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Ophelia D. Vestal,
Investigator,
January 4, 1938.

An Interview with Mr. Sam Hodges,
Lawton, Oklahoma.

While living in Texas near Abilene, my parents decided to move to the Indian Territory. This was in the year 1885. We located near Pauls Valley and White Bead Hill. My school days were spent in a little one-room log schoolhouse where the Indians and white children all went to school together. Our church services were held with the Indians attending. On each Saturday the Indians would hold some kind of a sacred meeting.

A band of people was hired to drive the white people out of this settlement. After we had started our homes, many times we were driven away, southward across Red River. Then these men would return to drive more white people away and the ones who had been driven away would return. This was very confusing.

We became acquainted with an Indian man named Dick Gipson. He owned a lot of land. He tried to get my father to homestead on some land by saying we were relatives of his. Father would not claim kin with any Indians, so we did not

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get any land. When white people began to settle a law was passed that each person had to pay \$5.00 for a permit to live here.

There was a large family of settlers named Paul. Their home was located in a valley. Smith Paul was the father's name. This is the way the town of Pauls Valley got its name. We got our mail about once a month from White Bear Hill, a small place about twenty-six miles from our home. Noah Foster was the founder of the little town of Foster. He started a blacksmith shop there and later a post office.

I started to work very early. Mr. Foster hired me to help him as soon as he became trader. We used to go from Foster to the west edge of Oklahoma, sometimes over into Texas, and buy horses, then drive them to Arkansas and trade these horses for cattle, bringing them back, driving them or later shipping these cattle to Kansas City, Missouri.

When I was seventeen or eighteen years old my cousin named Bob James hired me to work for him. He was well acquainted with Quanah Parker. Bob and a fellow named Lon Hunt found steady work for me. Lon lived in the Cheyenne and Arapaho country. Once I was helping to drive a large herd

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of horses for Bob from Lon's home to Arkansas and I had to stay all night at Quanah Parker's house. At the Parker home they had a room built in the north side of the house for the white people to sleep in. No one ever slept in this room but Quanah's white friends. The bed was nice and clean and we had plenty of good food. I never saw but one of Quanah's wives, though I heard there were seven wives. I never saw or heard any children because as I arrived at his home about dark and left early the next day I never learned much of the family.

On and on we traveled with the horses. Some of the horses had kicked a donkey that was in our herd and this caused it to die on the way. We just left it by the roadside and traveled on and soon we noticed several Indians going toward the dead donkey. We went back and put the donkey's carcass in the back of our wagon. The Indians followed us for several miles but we carried the carcass many miles after they quit following us then threw it beside the road. Those Indians were following us to eat that donkey.

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People from the south from down in Texas traveled by way of the Old Chisholm Trail but from east to west across this country they used a drift fence for a guide.

Out toward Cache there was an Indian named "Big Tree". He was a good friend to the white people, always stopping to talk with his white friends. Once I was going through this country when I met him and stopped to talk awhile. He told me that some Indians were mean and told me about a family of white people who had camped to prepare their noon meal, as they were traveling through the country. The children were playing when the Indian man rode up to talk. A little white boy sasssed this Indian man and he roped the child, then dragged him to death.

Mountain View was a trading post of the early days. The Indians were paid here, too. Many times I have driven large herds of horses and cattle to Mountain View about the time we expected the Indians to get their money. I was always pretty shy of all Indians as I had heard so much of their mean ways. But some Indians were good. They couldn't talk; about all an Indian would say was "Hello John" and he would expect you to answer by calling him "John".