

LOCKRIDGE, WILLIAM A. INTERVIEW

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

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#13769

LOCHRIDGE, WILLIAM A.

INTERVIEW.

Field Worker's name Hazel B. Greene

This report made on (date) April 30, 1938

1. Name William A. Lochridge

2. Post Office Address Boswell, Oklahoma.

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

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year 1861

5. Place of birth Murray County, Tennessee.

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

7. Name of Mother \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Other information about mother \_\_\_\_\_

Notes of 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 William A. Lochridge, Boswell, Oklahoma.  
By - Hazel B. Greene, Journalist.  
April 30, 1938.

I was born in Murray County, Tennessee, in February, 1861, but I was raised around Paris, Texas, and Honey Grove, Texas. I spent a lot of time around Arthur City with an uncle who ran the ferry for Cap'n Arthur, for a long time. I was there when my uncle once put the James brothers, Frank and Jesse, across into the Indian Territory. They were as nice people as I ever saw. If my mother and sisters had been mistreated as theirs were, I guess I would have been an outlaw, too, if that is what made them so, still a lot of the stuff people heard about them were lies. I saw Frank James after he was pardoned and when I went up to him, he had me covered with a pistol before I could bat an eye. I told him right quick that I was only the kid who helped to ferry him across Red River years ago, and just wanted to speak to him again. At that time they charged four bits to carry a saddle horse across and two bits for each led horse.

I made the run into the Cherokee Strip, September 16, 1893. I got a claim adjoining Horton, which was later named Perry. I ran my horse twelve miles and side by side with

Madge Mulhall for five or six miles on the Stillwater road. The whole Mulhall gang were there. I thought she was a boy at first, then I saw that she was a little old girl. She had on calico pants and a Stetson hat. I jumped into Cow Creek and lost my horse for a few minutes as he drifted down the creek, but I was the first man to cross Cow Creek, for as my horse clambered out on the bank I got on him again and ran on. Some were on race horses, some were on cow ponies, some were in "gigs". An Irishman in a gig was half drunk and when crossing the creek he turned over. He had on some kind of a long coat and it was a wonder it did not tangle around his feet and drown him. However, he got out some way and pulled his bottle of liquor out of a pocket in that long coat and passed it around to anybody who would stop long enough to take a drink.

A lot of folks attempted to "Sooner" in. Old Belle Starr did sooner in. I saw soldiers go out into the Strip before the run and drag people out of holes in the ground they had hidden in, waiting for the signal so that they would be ahead of others. Soldiers took them to Guthrie and put them in jail. I had a twelve foot cow whip and when somebody's horse

was just about to get ahead of me I'd flick him on the nose with that cow whip and that would slow him down. When I got off of my horse to stake my claim I just dropped the reins as usual and my horse ran off. Ordinarily he would have stood wherever I dropped the reins, but I guess he was just frightened with all that noise and crowd. I hunted him for six weeks and finally the soldiers found him. I staked my claim in the creek bottom and that evening I was offered \$800.00 for it. I refused that and stayed on it two months, then took \$400.00 for it. I had \$900.00 in the waistband of my pants when I got the first offer, so I didn't need to sell it, but I soon spent that and was glad to get the \$400.00 for it.

Old "Rattlesnake Pete", an outlaw, was there. He had long hair, long whiskers and wore a buckskin suit and a bullet proof shield back and front. He carried two sixshooters and a Winchester. There was a young fellow with him who looked just like him. Two young deputy sheriffs attempted to arrest the young fellow and he made them drop their guns too quick to talk about. He was an outlaw and lived in the mountains and when these two deputies recognized him they thought it a good

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idea to arrest him. The young fellow just laughed at them as he rode off from them. Everybody ran, men, women and children, and the women screaming. I ran behind a tent myself. There were a hundred deputy marshals there and not one dared to arrest Rattlesnake Pete. I guess there were 35,000 people there; men, women and girls all wore guns. Perry was the biggest "rag-town" I ever saw.

After that run I returned to Texas and stayed awhile, then I came back to the Indian Territory. I liked it over here, there was so much fine range for cattle and that was what interested me most. I settled at Roberta, eight miles southeast of Durant and started raising cattle and farming but went broke.

After I went broke farming and raising cattle I went to buying cattle for others all over the Indian Territory, and what I mean all over the Indian Territory. I have swum cattle across the Canadian River when it was a mile wide. Once when the bridge was washed away at Purcell a lot of us were crossing and I saw two wagons and teams washed down the river from Lexington a mile before they finally landed on the other side. The railroad bridge was washed away and a whole

bunch of people collected there waiting for the water to go down. A fellow with some mules 17 $\frac{1}{2}$  hands high hitched to a wagon charged people \$2.00 each to haul them across and lead their horses behind his wagon. He was busy too, and before it was low enough for his wagon he would charge \$5.00 to swim his horse across and lead another with a man on it. You see he lived at Lexington and knew the river, so some people would rather pay that than chance missing the proper way across. We arranged to go across Thursday morning, thinking the river would be low enough, but Thursday when we got up a six foot rise had come down in the night so we waited another three days.

The first time I shipped cattle to Chicago was in 1893 and I attended the World's Fair. I have attended eight World Fairs and I have been from ocean to ocean and never bummed my way a mile. I have never married or asked a woman to marry me. I was crazy about a girl when I was twenty years old, but she was rich and I was poor, so could not afford to propose marriage to her.