

NORRIS, A. G.

INTERVIEW

9835

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

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NORRIS, A. G.

INTERVIEW,

9835.

Field Worker's name Bessie L. Thomas.

This report made on (date) January 30, 1938. 1938

1. Name A. G. Norris.

2. Post Office Address 313 "A" Avenue, Lawton, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) Same.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

5. Place of birth _____

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 3.

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Bessie L. Thomas,
Investigator,
January 20, 1938.

Interview With A. G. Norris,
313 "A" Avenue, Lawton, Okla.

I have been in the Indian camps and visited their tepees. They always wanted me to dance with them but I did not. However, many times I have watched them in the Sun and other dances and in their worship.

I have observed the conduct of the Indian braves when under the influence of mescal and peyote and have seen them play Indian poker. They seldom let the squaws or young Indians taste of either the mescal or peyote. Most all the older bucks are very fond of strong liquor.

For a drum they would take a hollow log about the height of an ordinary bucket and stretch a cowhide across it, just as tight as it could be stretched, soak this drum-head in water and then beat it. It would give off a most mournful sound when beaten while wet. The Indians would have many drums at their pow-wows and they always chanted a weird song.

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When the braves would eat mescal and peyote they would form half-circles around each drum and the first Indian would beat the drum for awhile, then eat mescal, pass the drumstick and mescal to the Indian next to him, who would do just as his leader had done and so on one after the other, until all had eaten. This usually took the entire night and one after another they would keel over from the effects of the mescal or peyote, then when they would wake up they would be cross and warlike and it was time for the white visitor to make his get away, no matter how well he was liked by the Indians.

I have never known of the Indians committing atrocious crimes while peace was in the land for they do not commonly plunder or steal as so often reported.

I saw at times in a certain Indian tepee, the scalps of several white women and in the cabin of chief Geronimo were a number of human scalps, supposed to have been taken by him in warfare.

There was, in the early days, a family by the name of Daily who had been here many years before I came. The

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young lady of the family, Miss Emsy, was an Indian interpreter. She taught many white people to understand the Indian and learn his language. She also helped the Indian in his effort to please the Governor and obey the laws of the white man and accept his religion. She was finally adopted ^{by} the Comanches and given a choice allotment northeast of Lawton.

To my mind she could scarcely be repaid for her good influence on the Indians and early day white settler.