

OLDHAM, LINZY. INTERVIEW

10645

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

OLDHAM, LINZY

INTERVIEW

#10645

Field Worker's name Bessie L. Thomas

This report made on (date) April 29 1938

Name Linzy Oldham

Post Office Address Cache, Oklahoma

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

DATE OF BIRTH: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Father \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Other information about father \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Mother \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

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

Notes or complete narrative by the field worker dealing with the life and history 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 5.

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Bessie L. Thomas  
Investigator  
April 29, 1938.

Interview with Linzy Oldham  
Cache, Oklahoma.

I was born in Moore County, North Carolina, in 1850. My parents were poor tenant farmers and I received very little education.

A man by the name of Hand, a "guerilla" fighter in the Civil War, conscripted me in 1863, when I was only thirteen years old. Later they got after him so strong, he joined the regular army under General Forrest. I served all during the conflict and after the close of the war, I went back to my parents home and lived with them two years.

When still a small boy, my parents moved to Weakly County, Tennessee, and lived there until I was about grown.

As a young man, I wanted to move to what I thought was a better country, and begged my parents to move to the Indian Territory, and finally persuaded them to do so the second year after the close of the War.

We moved in covered wagons with horses, the trip taking over a month. We settled where Pauls Valley is today,

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nothing there then, but wild prairie country, and Indians. Our first home in the new country was a dugout which my father and I built. On the trip from Tennessee we traveled for days and would never see a living human. All kinds of wild game were plentiful and we never lacked for meat, having it on our table every meal. The creeks and rivers were full of fish, and many a time we camped for several days just to fish.

We lived at Pauls Valley, for several years, then moved to Grayson County, Texas, where we lived two years. Next we moved to White County, Arkansas, where I married and from there to Fayetteville, Arkansas, then to Montague County, Texas.

We had a neighbor here, by the name of McGrady, who one day started his little boy and a neighbor boy named Bound to the mill two miles away to have some corn ground into meal. Each boy rode a horse and they were not gone long when the McGrady boy came back on the dead run, saying the Indians had killed the Bound boy. There was great fear in the neighborhood after this as the white people were

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afraid the Indians would come and attack the community. Everyone went armed, every time they stepped out of the house for weeks, but there was no trouble.

We moved from Texas back to Indian Territory where Ardmore is today, and lived there ten years, farming and raising stock. While we were living here, the Indians made lots of raids on the white people and murdered, and scalped some. One day we went to visit a neighbor named Davenport <sup>and</sup> nothing would do but we must stay all night. The next day we found our home had been pillaged, and a lot of our stock gone. One of our neighbors on the south had been wiped out, everyone in the family killed, and one white scalp left hanging on the door knob.

One day two boys and I went to the Yellow Hills in Kansas to gather pecans, and get cotton basket timber as cotton was picked in baskets in those days. While making this trip, two men and their wives passed our camp the first night. The next day, we met the two women afoot, who said their husbands had each been killed by the Indians, and their wagons and horses stolen. They got away by running and hid-

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ing in the brush. We made our trip in safety and returned with lots of pecans, and timber for making baskets.

Again we moved back to Montague, County, Texas, and on this trip when passing through where Indianahoma is today, we saw where some big trees had been leveled by a great wind. The storm had blown down so many of the trees it took us days to get through, having to weave in and out, of the fallen trees and sometimes moving a tree to go on. There were no roads, we traveled by guess, and by the sun.

We moved to the same community where we were before but did not find many of our old friends. One neighbor, named Brady was still living there. He was well to do, had built a fine home with portholes all around in the walls, and a high picket-fence, around the yard, with an immense iron gate, which was locked every night. He was a good violinist and one day while playing on his porch he happened to look up, and saw several Indians staring at him through the picket fence. He thought they had come to scalp him, but they were only listening to him play.

While we were here this time, General Sheridan came to Oklahoma, rounded up all the Indians and took them to Fort Sill,

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putting "nigger" soldiers to guard them. This made the Indians mad, they said they were not going to be guarded by "Buffalo" soldiers.

He soon moved back to where Ardmore is today and lived there another four years. I was attending a picnic close to Duncan one time, and Geronimo was there camped in a tent. Word got out that he was going to wear his coat of "white men's scalps". A lot of white men had winchesters and were just waiting for him to come out with this coat on, but he did not wear it where the white people could see it. A friend and I sneaked into his tent and saw this coat, which has so many times been disputed, being "white men's scalps".

Juanah Parker was at this picnic and made a nice talk to everyone.