

PATTON, J. A.

INTERVIEW

1389

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

PATTON J. A.

INTERVIEW

#1389

Field Worker's name Robert W. SmallThis report made on (date) November 19, 1937

1. Name J. A. Patton
2. Post office Address Blackwell, Oklahoma
3. Residence address (or location) 404 S. 1st, St.
4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month October Day 14 Year 1852
5. Place of birth Ohio

6. Name of Father John Patton Place of birth Ohio

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Katherine Wait Patton Place of birth Ohio

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 four sheets.

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Robert W. Small,
Field Worker
November 19, 1937.

J. A. Patton was born on October 14, 1852, in the State of Ohio, where his parents were born. In 1879, he moved to Saline County, Kansas; from there he went into the Oklahoma Country in 1889, with a herd of horses, which he took to graze on the grasslands of the Cherokee Outlet. In 1890, he moved on to the R. A. Houghton Ranch and lived in a tent and one room built of rough lumber. In the spring and summer of 1890 he planted and grew some corn and feed stuff on the ranch, but in the fall the cattle broke into the field and ate up the principal part of the corn, which had made only a fair yield. His principal object in living there was to be where he could look after his horses, which were grazing on the ranch lands.

In 1890, Mr. Patton and a Mr. Leonard Studey were hired by the Government to survey or re-survey enough of the lands in the Tonkawa Indian Reservation to enable each member of the Tonkawa Tribe to take his allotment. They surveyed out enough land for each of the 70 members of the tribe to take his full allotment.

Just prior to the opening of the Cherokee Outlet in 1893, Mr. Patton was appointed as United States Marshal for the purpose of keeping order along the line of Oklahoma and Kansas when

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the people came to register for the opening of the lands to settlement.

He states that a motley multitude assembled along the line near the registration booths; some were coming to register principally for the thrill and excitement of the race and some for speculative purpose alone, but the majority of them were brawny young men, who were seeking a chance to gain a home in one of the most beautiful and fertile regions of the country.

Mr. Patton's duties did not prevent him from making the "Run", but rather gave him some advantage over others.

He made the race from near Hunnewell, Kansas, and secured the southeast quarter of section 10, township 26 north, Range 2.

He moved a small two-room house from Hunnewell to his claim and also made a dugout, and other minor makeshift improvements.

In the Spring of 1894 he broke out about thirty acres of sod land and in the Fall he planted it to wheat. The wheat had been obtained from an Arkansas City Mill on their customary lending plan, which was one bushel of seed wheat for one and one-half bushels to be repaid when threshed.

Mr. Patton says that he pastured his wheat quite heavily in

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the winter time and, when the dry weather set in next spring, the wheat died out and he never raised any at all. He arranged to make a cash payment to the Milling Company for the seed he had borrowed, and so paid off the obligation later.

He continued to break out more land and the following spring he planted all his land to corn and made about 40 bushels per acre at harvest. Mr. Patton was one of the trustees of his school district and says that they borrowed about \$125.00 to buy lumber and that the people of the district donated their labor to build a school house and that the first teacher received \$20.00 per month salary for teaching. Church was held in the school house until later when a substantial church was built that still is in use today.

Mr. Patton says that the hosts who came at the Opening of the Cherokee Strip purely for speculative purposes or just for the thrill and excitement of the race, had soon departed and the country was left with the truest type of manhood on almost every quarter section.

He says that you could trust your neighbor for anything he promised to do.

No night became so dark or stormy that they would refuse to go anywhere or do anything to help a neighbor in need or distress.

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In 1900, Mr. Patton moved to Blackwell, and in 1904 he moved to Kansas City, Missouri, and lived for eighteen years, then returned to Blackwell again.

He still controls the old homestead, although he lives in a comfortable home at 404 South first Street, Blackwell, Oklahoma, where he and Mrs. Patton are enjoying their advanced years.