

PALMER, W. B.

INTERVIEW

9469

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

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Field Worker's name Robert H. Boatman,

This report made on (date) December 16, 1937

1. Name W. B. Palmer

2. Post Office Address Blanchard, Oklahoma, Route #3.

3. Residence address (or location) Twelve miles northeast of
Blanchard.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month September Day 14. Year 1879

5. Place of birth Arkansas.

6. Name of Father Wiley Palmer (Doctor) Place of birth Tennessee.

7. Name of Mother Emma Wagster. Place of birth Tennessee.

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 sheets.

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Robert H. Boatman,
Investigator,
December 16, 1937

Interview with W. B. Palmer,
Blanchard, Oklahoma.

I came to the Territory in the early '90's moving here from Arkansas in which state I was born September 14, 1897.

When first I settled in the Territory it was in the Chickasaw Nation, not far from where Newcastle now is. I began work as a cowpuncher on what was then the old Bear Ranch.

There were no roads or section lines and no schools except a few of the primitive log structures that were run by subscription.

Many days of my life were spent in riding range, rounding up of cattle, branding and in general the cowboy's life was a task to be remembered.

It was soon to be seen that the Indian Territory was to be developed for purposes other than for some ranchman to run his herds over so I threw myself into the fray with all the vim and vigor I could gather for the

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purpose of the betterment of the school system. The people seemed so unconcerned in regard to the school system, and seemed to be fully satisfied with the old system whereby if some so-called school teacher needed some pocket change all he needed to do was take up some subscriptions and begin teaching school. After a term of some one to three months the professor most generally went drifting along in his usual way.

I renewed my fight to establish some permanent system for the advancement of our schools and also for the building of roads. so it was that after much hard work, much persuasion, and many fist fights I claim the honor of being one of the leading citizens in the development of the school system from the one-room subscription type till today in our community we have now a system of consolidation covering an area of forty-three square miles with a faculty of fourteen teachers.

Next came the establishment and building of roads.

Most always when a man was approached on the subject of permanent construction and building of roads a fist fight took place. However, I kept up the fight, and have

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fought nearly every man in this country over the construction of roads and I have had many hard knocks and lots of black eyes.

I continued my fight each time with renewed energy until today with our System of Schools ranking first among the leading states in education and with the construction of modern highways, I feel that I have given my life's work to a cause that is to be honored and remembered among the people of our community.

I now live at my home some twelve miles northeast of Blanchard where I have lived for many years.