

HENRY, B. I.

INTERVIEW

9746

178

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

HENRY, B. B .

INTERVIEW

9746

Field Worker's name Ida B. Leakford

This report made on (date) January 21, 1938

1. Name B. B. Henry

2. Post Office Address Cordell, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) 520 N Grant St.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month April Day 7 Year 1892

5. Place of birth Wetley, County, Texas

6. Name of Father Kais Nelson Henry Place of birth Tennessee

Other information about father Farmer

7. Name of Mother Neta Webster Place of birth Tennessee

Other information about mother Housewife

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.

HENRY, B. B.

INTERVIEW

9746

Ida B. Lankford,
Investigator,
January 21, 1938.

An Interview with Mr. B. B. Henry,
520 N. Grant St., Cordell, Oklahoma.

I was born in Motley County, Texas, and in 1892, my parents, with six children, came to Washita County, Cloud Chief then being the county seat.

In 1903, my father homesteaded one mile north of Cordell and we lived in a half dugout covered with brush and dirt; we broke out some sod, then went to the Chickasaw Nation to pick cotton. We got enough corn and money to live on during the spring of 1904.

In the spring 1904, we broke out all our land and planted every third furrow by hand with Red Top cane and kaffir corn and planted corn in the bottom land. We were not able to fence our farm and as I was too young to ride, and my father and brother had gone to Texas to work through the harvest, that forced my two sisters to be cowgirls; they rode day and night to keep the other settlers' stock from eating our crops.

There was so much sickness here, I saw the first

HENRY, B. B.

INTERVIEW

9746

- 2 -

body that was laid away in the Sod Cemetery, it was G. C. Mobley. The first person to be buried in Lawn-view Cemetery was a lady of the name of Maples, of a pioneer family.

Those times were pretty hard but not as they are today; you could go elsewhere and get work; we didn't have a sort of a dictator or a case worker and everyone was friendly.

We had church and school in the same building; it was a sod half-dugout and we could sit in the schoolhouse and see centipedes from three to five at a time; they have fallen in my lap from the ceiling which was of brush and dirt.

It was nine miles north of Cordell, where the Cheyenne Indians killed a man of the name of Bill Breeding; the squaws stuffed straw in his clothes and burned him to a charcoal before the settlers could reach him, the settlers would have killed the Cheyennes the next morning but the Fort Sill soldiers came on double-quick and took charge of the Indians; this happened in 1895.

As this country developed a few land sharks came from the East and loaned money on farms; the farmers built

HENRY, B. B.

INTERVIEW

9746

- 3 -

houses and lost their farms. There are only three old pioneers that I know of today who own their original homesteads in this county. These are Walker Lodgston, three miles south and one-half mile east of Cordell, Joe Darrah, four miles north and one and one-half miles east of Cordell, and Joe Gilliland, five miles north and one mile east of Cordell.

In the old days there was lots of game such as turkey quail, prairie chickens, deer. The coyotes and rattlesnakes were bad, now we have neither, and our land is worn out, it needs rain and a good fertilizer bad. I wish that there was another chance for the young folks growing up who desire a home, like there was for us; we stayed here through the hardships of the early settler days.

My oldest sister died in 1896 and was buried in the Sod Cemetery; that leaves three sisters and one brother living and my mother and father are still living, they are both eighty-nine years of age.

I will have to give Washita County credit for being an all around farming belt, give it water and the farmers will do their part. I am almost blind, and don't get out much, but how I would love to go the old days over again!