

ISOM, R. A.

INTERVIEW

10082

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LEGEND & STORY 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) February 21, 1938

1. This legend was secured from (name) Mr. R. A. Isom,

Address Lexington, Oklahoma.

This person is (male or ~~female~~) White, ~~Negro~~ ~~Indian~~

If Indian, give tribe _____

2. Origin and history of legend or story _____

As an early day pioneer in Lexington.

3. Write out the legend or story as completely as possible. Use blank sheets and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached 3

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Robert H. Boatman,
Investigator,
February 21, 1938.

An Interview with Mr. R. A. Isom,
Lexington, Oklahoma.

I first came to what is now Oklahoma in the year 1891, at the age of seventeen years. I was born March 28, 1874, in the state of Georgia. I came here with my parents from Georgia. As we entered what was then Indian Territory, it looked everything but inviting to us. There were no roads, no bridges, and only a few scattered homes.

Stock raising was the order of the day and was a very profitable business, since the range was one of the best I have ever known. Many cattle have been killed right off the range of this country that were plenty fat enough for beef. However, in 1891 farming was beginning to take shape in this country; so after some time and travel over a good section of the country I, with my parents, settled one mile east of Purcell on the east side of the South Canadian River at old Lexington known as a border town of the Territory and old Oklahoma. The town of Lexington consisted of some three to four stores and thirteen saloons and in this day would be considered a very rough place,

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though it wasn't as bad as many towns of today.

Of course, many times a bunch of fellows would ride in, get "tead up" and would shoot up the town but only for sport. My father began his career in the Territory at old Lexington and put in a hardware store and as my first employment, I worked for my father in the store and here I continued to work for several years.

We had many times great difficulty in getting our supplies to the store since no roads or bridges existed and before a bridge was put across Canadian River it was a very difficult task for people from the west side to cross over to our town. After some years of being employed by my father I put in a hardware store of my own. For several years our sister town, Purcell, grew very slowly; it was known as a town of tents and an old cowtown. After the building of the railroad in 1887,

a few wooden structures began to be built and now we are proud of our neighbors across the river, though after forty -seven years of successful operation as a booster for my home town and the upbuilding of conditions

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in general it is here I will remain. I have the honor of being the oldest established citizen in the town of Lexington. I have lost my parents and both are buried at Konawa.