

SELBY, J. H.

INTERVIEW

9817

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

SELBY, J. H.

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Field Worker's name Robert H. Boatman;

This report made on (date) January 24, 1938. 1938

1. Name J. H. Selby.

2. Post Office Address Route #4, Lindsay, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) Male-white.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

5. Place of birth _____

6. Name of Father _____ Place of birth _____

7. 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 _____

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Robert H. Boatman,
Investigator,
Jan. 24, 1938.

An Interview With J. H. Selby,
Lindsay, Oklahoma.
Route #4.

I was born July 14, 1870, in Indiana. I came to the Indian Territory in the year of 1888 when I was eighteen years old. When I first came to the Territory there was nothing in the way of improved conditions as of today.

The country was a very rugged place. Many thousands of head of cattle roamed the plains. All kinds of wild game such as turkey, deer, panthers, bears and wildcats were in existence and prairie chickens were in abundance. The creeks and rivers were filled with all kinds of fish.

The move from Indiana to the Indian Territory was made in the usual way that most all pioneers traveled, by covered wagons, generally pulled by ox teams and progress was slow, ranging from ten to twenty miles per day. This was considered good traveling. I finally located in the Chickasaw Nation near the Washita River, at exactly where

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the town of Chickasha is now. This place was then very low and several lakes of water were scattered around. There were very few buildings then throughout the entire country.

There were many Indians in this vicinity and their customs were very peculiar to the people coming here from the states who had never seen the Red Men. As I had traveled several hundred miles to the new country and was determined to find my fortune and home here, I settled at Chickasha and in earnest staked down and began work looking to the development of something which yet was to come. Came others soon and a town was being talked. My first employment was quarrying of rocks used in some of the first buildings of Chickasha and I continued at this employment for several months. I have the honor of doing more toward the establishment and building of the town of Chickasha than any other man in the state.

Later, came talk of the opening of the Kiowa and Comanche country and I registered for the opening at old Fort Sill and was given number 1900. At the time of the

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opening, which was in 1901, my number was called and I was given 210 acres of land which lay a few miles southwest of where the town of Lawton now is.

I moved there and entered largely into the business of wheat farming and stock-raising; however, many unusual experiences happened such as raids of Indians, stealing of cattle and many other things that constitute the life of a pioneer settler. I stayed for several years there, striving in the full development of the country; then I traded my place for a tract of land in what is now McClain County, some six and one-half miles north of the town of Lindsay, and in remembrance of the early pioneer days I expect to spend the rest of my life at my home here.