

SPOON, J. P. (MRS.) INTERVIEW 13613 216

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

SPORN, J. P. (MRS.)

INTERVIEW

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Field Worker's name Kenneth C. Black

This report made on (date) April 16, 1938

1. Name Mrs. J. P. Sporn

2. Post Office Address Heavener, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) Heavener, Oklahoma

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month March Day 5 Year 1878

5. Place of birth _____

6. Name of Father _____ Place of birth _____

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother _____ Place of birth _____

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 _____

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Kenneth C. Black
Investigator
April 16, 1938

Interview With Mrs. J. P. Spoon,
Heavener, Oklahoma.

I was born March 5, 1878, and was reared in Swifton, Arkansas, a town a few miles from Jonesboro. I lived there until I was married. My husband was born in Illinois on September 24, 1861, and lived in this state until manhood, then went to northeast Arkansas where he was employed in the timber business. In a year or two after our marriage we moved to Indian Territory and reared our family here. My husband worked in the forests of the Territory until he retired five years ago.

My husband and I came from Arkansas to the Indian Territory just as the Frisco Railroad was being laid in Poteau and Poteau was the trading post for miles around. The business section there consisted of one hotel, one restaurant and two stores. We stayed in the hotel which was owned by a Mr. Austin and leased to Mrs. Alexander; this hotel was

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known as the Gulf Frisco. Mr. Flenner owned the restaurant.

There was a Choctaw Indian Court at Poteau at this time. The judge was Judge Dake and in this court if the Indian criminals were bad enough they were condemned to be shot, then were allowed freedom until the execution date but the court knew they would come back on the day they were to be shot. The Choctaw Laws were very different from State laws of today.

At this time there was an Indian school one and one-half miles from Skullyville known as New Hope School. The students were Indians exclusively.

When we first came to the Indian Territory there was no Heavener. There was one Choctaw Indian living in the eastern part of what is now Heavener. There is an artesian well at this place that is still in use. This Indian's name was Jodie Heavener. Therefore the town was named Heavener. The first store in Heavener was located in the western part where Mr. Peck Hook's residence now

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stands, this is the first street west of Highway 71, south. There was no town or settlement south of Heavener down to the Arkansas line. There were two places which were homes of settlers, the first was five miles south, which is now Hodgen, and the other was Thomasville, where Stapp is now. Two brothers named Thomas had a commissary there to supply the logging and mill camps when my husband worked at a sawmill on Howe Creek south of Heavener and we traded at Mena, Arkansas.

We are still living in Heavener.