Form A-(S-149)

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

506

STOUT, J. R. INTERVIEW. 9086.

Field Worker's name Virgil Coursey.

This report made on (date) October 29, 1937. 193

1. Name J. R. Stout.

2. Post Office Address Altus, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) 1501 N. Lee.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month _____ Day _____ Year 1876.

5. Place of birth Johnston County, Texas.

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 3.

Virgil Coursey,
Interviewer.
October 29, 1937.

An Interview With J. R. Stout,
1501 N. Lee, Altus, Okla.

My family came to Oklahoma in 1892, when I was sixteen years old. There were five in our family; the two married girls remained in Texas. We came through in wagons and were on the road about eleven days.

We brought a bunch of horses with us.

My father homesteaded a quarter section of land and purchased an additional quarter for $1.25 per acre. I was too young to file at that time but filed as soon as I became old enough.

My claim cost $300 and was purchased from J. N. Kimberlin, one of the first settlers in this country. I got title to this land in 1905. I have the original charter signed by president Roosevelt.

In the meantime I had married a girl who before moving here had lived near us in Texas. I had to drive five miles in a wagon to see her , but distances were no barrier to young men even in those days. In fact, if one had much social contact it was necessary to travel a considerable distance.

Things have changed since pioneer days. At that time people visited one another and felt free to drop in uninvited

to spend the night.

Harvest days were days of festivity, when farmers exchanged work with one another. All the men in the community would meet and harvest crop for a certain farmer, then move on to another in rotation. Of course they were expected to remain for dinner or even for days until the work was done. The women cooperated in preparing the meals. Real holiday feasts were the usual thing during harvest.

How different from now. Practically everyone owns his own machinery, and there is no longer a necessity for cooperative harvesting of crops.

I remember that at the time the Supreme Court made the decision that old Greer County was not a part of Texas, school teachers had considerable trouble in getting their pay. They had originally received their salary from the state of Texas. Officials reasoned that since this was no longer a part of their state neither were the schools an obligation of the state. Many teachers resigned their position before the end of school.

Pioneer days were days of hardships, but I believe people were happier than they are today. At any rate they

were days of opportunity. A young man could come here, settle down and have a home for practically nothing. All he had to do was to obtain a place and a pair of plug horses and he was ready to farm. Today a young man can hardly rent a place to farm, and it is much harder to obtain operating expenses. Yes, I feel certain that in many lines of endeavor the pioneer days presented more opportunities than the present days.