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ALDRIDGE, C. A.

INTERVIEW

4438

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

4438

Field Worker's name Chester A. LambThis report made on (date) June 15, 19371. Name J.A. Aldridge2. Post Office Address Anadarko Oklahoma3. Residence address (or location) Anadarko Oklahoma4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month February Day 20 Year 18675. Place of birth Kansas6. Name of Father B. A. Aldridge Place of birth Ohio

Other information about father \_\_\_\_\_

7. Name of Mother Emily Gordon Place of birth Virginia

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 \_\_\_\_\_.

Mr. C.A. Aldridge  
Came to Oklahoma in 1888

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I came to the Cheyenne country, March 5, 1888, and stayed there about one year. I farmed there on Ed. Geary's farm. He was one-half Cheyenne Indian, and the town of Geary, Oklahoma, was named after him.

I was 21 years of age when I first came to Oklahoma. The reason I came was because there was a fellow at Augusta, Kansas, who had been down in this country, and he wanted me to go with him. He was coming to Darlington, so we just came on down there.

I hauled Indian freight from Oklahoma City to Darlington in the winter of 1888. There were just five buildings in Oklahoma City at that time; a tool house, depot, section house, a house owned by a man by the name of Captain Summers, and a story and a half house used for a camp house. You could not buy anything in Oklahoma City. Everything you got had to be shipped in. I camped within seventy five yards of the Santa Fe Depot, where California Street is now. I cooked my first meal in Oklahoma City over a camp fire on this same street.

In coming from Kansas into Oklahoma, we drove three days from Hunnewell, Kansas, and saw only three men during the entire three days. We stopped at the George Johnson ranch where the city of Kingfisher now stands,

and that was the first house we had seen on the entire trip.

The home that I first had at Darlington was just a frame building with very little furniture. I just batched in the house. The food we received at Darlington came from Arkansas City and Caldwell, Kansas. It was brought by overland freight to Oklahoma City, and from there was brought down to Darlington by overland freight. This freight was pulled at first by oxen, but later they got rid of the oxen and it was pulled by mules.

After leaving Darlington, I came down to the Chickasaw country below Alex. I hauled corn in 1889 from Alex to Fort Sill. There was hardly any one living in this part of the country at that time. There was just one house between Alex and Fort Sill. I also worked later that same year at Fort Sill, helping them put up hay.

#### Indians:

I did quite a bit of dealing and trading around with the Indians and had several friends among them. The man I leased my farm from was a Cheyenne Indian. While I was at Darlington I saw the government issue

beaves to the Cheyennes and Araphoes. They would issue tickets, and there were fifty-five Indians on each ticket. They would issue the first time 16 head of cattle. They would turn these cattle loose on the prairie, and the Indians would kill the cattle, sometimes with guns and other times with bows and arrows. I have seen them run a cow as far as a mile across the prairie before making a kill. The next time they issued they would issue 32 head, and the next time 64 head, then they would drop back to the original 16 head. They would issue three times a week. If there were groups of less than 50, then they would give these Indians the beef off the block. These cattle were issued to them right west of where the city of El Reno now stands, out in the flat on the prairie. This was kept up the year around. They also issued flour and groceries out of the commissary. I got my sugar through the Indians. Ed Geary, whose lease I was on, and who as I have said was part Indian, would bring me beef three times a week.

There was a fellow who camped on the same farm that I was on, called Kiowa Dutch, and he was at Darlington before I came there. He had been captured by the Kiowa Indians when he was just a small child. He did not know who his parents were or what his name was. Everybody called him Kiowa Dutch because he was a dutchman and had been captured by the Kiowa. Later on Colonel Be...

of Darlington, bought him from the Kiowas. But later he went with the Cheyennes. After that he came down to Anadarko and worked at the Indian Agency here. He took care of the deer that they had here at the Agency at that time. I have heard him talk about the different raids he had been on when he was with the Kiowas. It was fun to make him mad, as he would start talking in Kiowa, English, Dutch and Cheyenne.

Colonel Bent had married a Cheyenne girl, and his boy, George Bent, was the interpreter for the Agency at Darlington while I was there.

#### Trails:

I lived just one and one-half miles east of the Chisholm trail over by Ninneka. I can still find this trail. I also had a lease just east of Rush Springs and this trail ran through the corner of my place. (Since there is so much discussion as to where the Chisholm trail ran, I asked Mr. Aldridge to give me the route as he remembered it. C.A.L.). I believe the Chisholm trail came out of Texas from Wichita Falls. It ran west of Duncan, through Marlow, east of Rush Springs, east of Ninneka, east of Chickasha, east of El Reno and then on to the Kansas line. I know it was the Chisholm trail because it went right by my house, and it was called the Chisholm Trail then, and it was known by

that name before I moved there in 1889. One night Dan Wagoner was driving 1000 head of cattle down this trail, and he camped on my place that night. That night these cattle got on a stampede and tore down much of the timber on my piece. Wagoner had the 3 D brand. The town of Wagoner, Oklahoma, was named after him.

I never heard the trail east of Winneka running to Anadarko called the Chisholm trail. The only trail that I knew by that name ran east of Chickasha.

#### Game:

In the early day when I first came to Oklahoma there was much game, such as deer, quail and prairie chickens.

#### Runs:

I made the run in the Cherokee strip. I didn't stake any land, although I could have. I was also in the Pot country. I registered there but never drew anything.

I was all over this country where Anadarko now is in about 1898. There was nothing here at Anadarko but the trader stores, and the Indian Agency. I came through Anadarko in a wagon, I was on my way to where Carnegie now is. I leased some land right across the



river from where the present city of Carnegie now is. There was no town here at that time. A little later I went to Texas and stayed there three years, but I came back and forth several times while I was there. The last time I brought 1000 head of cattle, shipping them to Mountain View, sold them and then went down in the mountains (Wichita).

Note:

Mr. Aldridge is a retired Anadarko Merchant. He has been in the grocery business here for many years.