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BRUNNER, JOHN A.

INTERVIEW

4499

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LEGEND & STORY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

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BRUNKER, JOHN E.

INTERVIEW.

4499.

Field worker's name Ethel B. Tackitt.

This report made on (date) June 11, 1937. 193

1. This legend was secured from (name) Mr. John E. Brunker.

Address Route 3, Lone Wolf, Kiowa County, Oklahoma.

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

If Indian, give tribe white; male.

2. Origin and history of legend or story the story has been told by both indians and whites from the early settling of western Oklahoma and traces of the camp of both indian and soldiers were plain to be seen in early times.

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

BRUNKER, JOHN E.

INTERVIEW.

4499.

Ethel B. Mackitt,
Field Worker,
June 11, 1937.

An Interview With John Brunker,
Lone Wolf, Oklahoma.

Soldier Spring and a Soldier's grave.

Mr. John E. Brunker was born in Aberystwyth, Wales, May 28, 1870.

He is an American citizen and has owned the land across which Soldier Spring flows and upon which the grave of the soldier is located, since the year 1907.

The spring rises from a granite boulder on the south side of the Wichita Mountains which bears its name. It

is in the southwest corner of the southwest Quarter

of Section 5, Township 4, Range 19, near the south line of the section and flows southeast across Mr. Brunker's land which is the west half of the northwest Quarter of Section 8, Township 4, Range 19.

The grave and campsite are here on this section. The legend relates that from an unknown time many tribes of Indians among whom were the Kiowa, Comanche, Caddo, Cheyenne and many other of the Plains Indians encamped in this vicinity in great numbers.

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The main camp of the Kiowas was about two miles around the foot of the mountain to the west, while the Comanche, Caddo and other tribes were on the north side of the mountain.

Soldier Spring was an ideal camping spot protected by the mountains from the wind and furnishing an abundance of good water, which flowed away in a small creek full of fish.

When Mr. Bruncker settled this place, signs yet remained of Indian fights among themselves.

Mr. Bruncker has picked up arrowheads, metate-rocks, stones for scraping hides and some things for which he could find no names.

These Indians became so troublesome among themselves and to the more civilized Indians as well as to the white people in Texas, that the Government placed a company of soldiers in camp at Soldier Spring for the protection to all and especially to protect the cowboys as they drove their trail herds through the territory on the western branch of the Chisholm trail which crossed the North Fork of Red River some five miles to the southeast and came around Trail Mountain, passing on toward the northwest across the valley and by way of what is now Harvey's Mountain.

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While these soldiers were camped here, one of their number was drowned in Elk Creek and his body was buried at the spot described on Section 8, where it remained until the soldiers were moved, when they took up his body and moved it to the burial ground of a fort.

The mark of the grave remains to be seen at this time.

A very fierce battle took place between the soldiers and the Indians, starting around the mountain near the mouth of Devil's Canyon and continuing around the foot of the mountain back to this camp. Many soldiers on both sides were killed.

The soldiers were moved but their dead are not buried here.

Marks of the soldiers' camp fires were to be seen when Mr. Brunker settled the place.

This was not the Devil's Canyon battle. It was the Soldier Spring battle.

Soldier Spring is one of the many spots in the Wichita mountains which should be marked while it can be pointed out by persons who know. All marks will soon have passed away.