

MALSTEAD, JOHN C.

INTERVIEW

10387

335

HALSTEAD, JOHN C.

INTERVIEW

Form A-(S-149)

#10387

BIOGRAPHY FORM

336

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Robert E. Boatman

This report made on (date) March 28 1938

1. Name John C. Halstead

2. Post Office Address Route #2, Blanchard, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) 5 Mi. S E Blanchard

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month December Day 11 Year 1877

5. Place of birth Texas

6. Name of Father S. T. Halstead Place of birth New York

7. Name of Mother Martha Carter 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 3 sheets.

HALSTEAD, JOHN C.

INTERVIEW.

10387.

Robert H. Boatman  
Investigator.  
March 28, 1938.

Interview with John C. Halstead  
Blanchard, Oklahoma.

My father was born in New York State and my mother in Virginia. They were married in the state of Missouri, and they settled in Texas where I was born December 11, 1877.

I lived in Texas until I was seventeen years old at which time, with a herd of horses, I left Texas to drive these horses into Arkansas. I traded them for a bunch of cattle and drove the cattle into the Indian Territory in 1894 and settled in the Chickasaw Nation near old Mill Creek, a country store owned and operated by Jim Davidson. I settled at this particular place because there was plenty of grass and water.

There were no roads nor bridges; all streams were forded except when they were up in which case we just waited for them to go down. There were a few ferry boats on the Red and Washita Rivers, one of which was at Yellow Bank Crossing on Red River.

The country was full of game such as turkey, deer and all kinds of small game and there was an abundance of fish in almost all the streams.

HALSTREAD, JOHN G.

INTERVIEW

#10387

-2-

The roads more nearly held to the ridges or mountain tops because the lower lands were nearly always wet and soggy and a man traveling with a team was constantly in danger of getting bogged down.

The following year after I came to the Indian Territory, in 1835, the Dalton Gang came through our section of the country and at Old Mill Creek they staged a holdup of the merchant, Jim Davidson, who was a very old man. He had secured a small safe in which he kept his savings and when the Daltons stuck him up he had all his money locked in this safe. They nearly scared him to death, and of course, he set in to open the safe for them, but was so scared he couldn't open it. However, the gang did not harm the old fellow physically, all that they wanted was his money which was \$800.00. After several vain attempts to open the safe the gang got on their horses and rode away, leaving the old man none the worse off except for the scare which he said was sufficient punishment for any man to receive.

I happened to be an eye witness to the capture of old Chief Geronimo who was Chief of the Apache Indians and who, I guess, caused more trouble than any man ever to rule a tribe of Indians. After a very hard skirmish he was captured and then after some few

HAELESTAD, JOHN C.

INTERVIEW

#19387

-3-

hours it was decided that the Apache Indians were to be transported to other parts. Geronimo was bound in chains, loaded into a box car and locked to the wall and the rest of his gang were sent along too; they were shipped to Florida.

Not long after that an epidemic of Yellow fever broke out in the Geronimo outfit and nearly all of them died, after which Chief Geronimo was returned to the Indian Territory and located some fifteen miles south of Fort Sill. A small town was built near Geronimo's camp and was given the name of the old chief who was never quite so hostile after being returned to the Territory and not many years later he died at Fort Sill. The town which took its name from the old chief, still remains at the same place where first established.

Since I came to the Territory I have been engaged in farming and stock raising. I lived for several years at old Whitehead, an old trading post of early days, but for the past twenty years I have lived at my home five miles southeast of Blanchard. I am still actively engaged in the business of better livestock and better farming.