

FITE, AUSTIN

INTERVIEW

#4477

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FITE, AUSTIN.

INTERVIEW.
BIOGRAPHY FORM

Form A-(S-149) #4477

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

103

Field Worker's name Velma Hance

This report made on (date) June 16, 1937

1. Name Austin Fite

2. Post Office Address Sayre, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) North Third Street

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month September Day 15 Year 1871

5. Place of birth Hopkins County, Texas

6. Name of Father Will Fite Place of birth Tennessee

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Mary Miner Place of birth Red River

County Texas

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 4.

Interview with Austin Fite
Sayre, Oklahoma

Interviewer - Velma Hance
Indian-Pioneer History, S-149
June 16, 1937

Austin Fite was born in Hopkins County, Texas,
in 1871.

He was married to Miss Ara Nolls in Texas, April
5, 1894; she died in 1932.

Austin Fite came to Coalgate, which is in Coal
County, in 1900 and settled among the Choctaw Tribe of
Indians.

His first home in Oklahoma was a hewed log house
made of logs from the woods hewed down. They had to
daub the large cracks with clay to keep the rain out
as they didn't have any flooring but just used the
dirt floor. They made their furniture out of logs.

Austin Fite hauled the lumber to make the first
school-house in Coal County, in 1902, and the people
used it for church and school.

His first employment was farming in Oklahoma,
in 1902, and he used double shovels and stock plows
and planted seeds by hand.

2

Austin Fite had many dealings with the Choctaw Tribe such as buying and trading. The Choctaw Tribe could not talk English so the white people had an old Indian chief who did most of the answering of the questions of the white people. The name of the chief was Sye Larence and he is now dead and is buried in Coalgate.

The homes of the Indians were log huts and some had dugouts and some had what they called "doby" houses made of straw daubed with clay.

They took meat and other foods and made what they called Tom Fuller, which was meat, corn, pepper and meal, all cooked together in large pots.

The Indians went to the woods and got their medicine; made it from white snake grass and roots which they mixed with water and cooked down to a syrup.

When the Indians were taken sick if they thought they were going to die they would hang their feet on the floor because they did not want to die unless their feet were touching the floor.

3

The Indians wore shawls, blankets and the skins of animals for their clothing and their hats were made of animals skins with large feathers in them.