

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

Field Worker's name Linnaeus B. Ranck

This report made on (date) November 2, 1937

1. Name Sam Manning

2. Post Office Address Niggins, Texas

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month X Day X Year 1855

5. Place of birth Chautauque County, New York

6. Name of Father X Place of birth X

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother X Place of birth X

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.

Linnaeus B. Ranck
Investigator
November 3, 1937

Interview with Sam Manning
Higgins, Texas.

Sam Manning is a native of Chautauque County, New York, and now past 82 years of age. His faculties are failing and his interview was very rambling. He really helped tame the West, however.

The outbreak of general Indian warfare over the Southwest the summer of 1874 brought Manning from Kansas to old Camp Supply that year. He came with General Custer and a contingent of United States Troops, Manning serving as an enlisted civilian in the capacity of blacksmith and mechanic for the military concourse. In this connection it is to be remembered that Custer established old Camp Supply the fall of 1868 incident to his memorable campaign against the hostile Cheyennes and other warring Plains Indians and the battle with the Cheyennes which followed the early morning of November 27, 1868, on the Washita River, a short distance north of where the town of Cheyenne was later founded. Camp Supply, established at the confluence of Beaver and Wolf Creeks was to serve as a rendezvous of supplies for the troops and a secondary base of operations for the

military forces in this section of the frontier to suppress the hostile Plains Indians.

Anyway, Manning says that when he with Custer and his force arrived at Camp Supply in 1874 there was nothing there; that is in the way of buildings of any description. Upon their arrival, however, the soldiers set about immediately cutting cedar trees in the hill country north of the camp and used them in putting up picket style, a number of log buildings.

Mr. Manning was not at Camp Supply long after his first arrival in '74, but he went on northwest with a detachment of troops for service in western Nebraska, the Dakotas, Montana, etc. At some time or other he was at practically every military outpost of the west during the '70's and '80's and took an active part in establishing a number of them. He knows by personal observation every foot of the country and battlefield where Custer and his entire command were annihilated in 1876.

When Manning came to Camp Supply in 1874 he says many buffalo still ranged in the hill country and over the plains near the post. The woods along the streams abounded with turkey and quail. Over the higher lands away from the streams

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swarmed prairie chickens in countless myriads; and deer and antelope were more than plentiful. The subsistence of the soldiers consisted of this variation of wild game in such part as their appetites suggested.

Manning was well acquainted with Amos Chapman, the famous scout. He says that Amos in company with others had a sharp skirmish with a band of hostile Cheyennes in the hills north of old Camp Supply and that Chapman sustained a critical wound in the engagement. He thinks Chapman and a small detachment of troops had a clash, too, with a band of Cheyenne warriors on 25 Mile Creek northwest of Dodge, the present site of the town. Because it was more or less the practice those days in cases of a few Indians being killed in a brush with troops to leave them where they fell, "for the wolves and buzzards," as he calmly explained, he doubts whether the Indian graves found on the west bank of 25 Mile Creek were those of Indians killed by Chapman and his troop in this skirmish.

During those early days when the western Indians were giving constant trouble the Government finally adopted the general use of heavy metal pipe for poles in the network of military telegraph and telephone lines connecting the frontier

Army Posts, Wooden poles were first used but the Indians would cut these down and burn them. Mr. Manning says they seemed never to discover how easy it would have been to have pulled the metal poles out of the ground.

In the light of the many years Manning spent in actual participation in the Government's long and bloody struggle to conquer the hostile Plains Indians, in retrospect he proclaims, alike with all the real old timers, that the major part of the trouble with the Indians and the occasional sanguinary plundering they did was chargeable directly or indirectly to white men. While he was in the Northwest with a contingent of United States troops the outfit rounded up and took as prisoners at one time about 300 white laws, the majority of whom were squawmen, and, as he said further, nearly every nationality on the globe was represented in their number.

Manning returned to Camp Supply and served a number of years as custodian of the old post until it was abandoned as a military station.

He is a rare living old frontiersman.