

LOGSDON, ANDY W.

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

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Field Worker's name Ida B. Lankford.

This report made on (date) December 28, 1937.

1. Name Andy W. Logsdon.

2. Post Office Address Cordell, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) 308 South Linwood.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month February. Day 18 Year 1869.

5. Place of birth Hart County, Kentucky.

6. Name of Father Charles Logsdon. Place of birth Kentucky.

Other information about father Farmer.

7. Name of Mother Nancy Crump. Place of birth Kentucky.

Other information about mother Housewife.

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 15.

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Ida B. Lankford,
Investigator,
Dec. 28, 1937.

An Interview With Andy W. Logsdon,
Cordell, Oklahoma.

My father and mother were born and raised in Hart County, Kentucky and were never outside the county until I was seven months old. They got a yoke of oxen and an old time lynch pin wagon. This was the only wagon of that day. They started out slowly with their ox team. They got to Howell County in southern Missouri. Running out of money and provisions, they were forced to stop and work, staying there about one year.

They journeyed on to Southern Kansas where they homesteaded a claim. They went through many hardships as pioneers. I have heard them both say Father often went to the woods to make rails. It was too far to walk home for dinner, so he would take his lunch; only a piece of corn bread. He ate his corn bread, went to the creek and got a drink, then maulled rails until night. Mother's dinner was about the same.

They struggled on, gaining slowly. They finally proved their claim, and by that time they had horse teams, plenty of cows and hogs, and were doing pretty well but Father,

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like many others, became dissatisfied, and wanted to make money faster. He began trading in land, mortgaging and buying more land and with a little other bad luck, lost his land. After rambling a few years, he came to Oklahoma to what was then H County and is now Washita County. Here my parents homesteaded another claim, eight miles north of Seger Colony. They began life anew on a claim in a new country with a yoke of oxen, as they had done in Kansas in 1871. On this claim they lived twenty-three years and made good and selling out their claim, they bought a farm two miles north of Cordell and a home in town, where they lived until their death. Mother died June 1, 1932, at the age of eighty-eight. Father died August 16, 1936, lacking one month of being ninety-one years old.

In the spring of 1892, I was living with my father and mother, as I had never left home. The Cheyenne and Arapaho Reservation was to be declared open for settlement on April 19, 1892.

A neighbor, Charley Seymour, and I spliced teams and started out to the opening. We got to Rainy Mountain Creek, where we found a large crowd camped. We camped there for

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several days. The evening before the grand opening, we decided to get away from the big crowd, so we went on farther west. When the appointed hour twelve o'clock came, we were somewhere near where the town of Rocky is now located. The soldier said, "Boys, I wish you all good luck", and pointed his six-shooter upward. "Boom" it went and away went the crowd. We got to Cavalry Creek and stopped after looking around. We flagged claims. A surveyor soon arrived on the scene with the field notes of the country, for the purpose of locating the settlers and making some easy money. We gave him \$5.00 to give the numbers of our claims to us.

We had brought a plow with us, so early the next morning we got busy plowing a few furrows, made our improvements, established our claim, then went on the Cloud Chief, then the county seat of Washita County. We stayed at Cloud Chief all night.

As we were in a hurry to file, we pulled out for Oklahoma City and went to the land office, driving hard all day and part of the night. We got there on the third day, late in the evening. We got ready for the line the next morning at eight o'clock. This was the 27th of September, 1893. We

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were away down the line, but about four o'clock P. M., we reached the office and got filed. It cost \$14.80 to file. I had to borrow a part of it.

I was as proud as a little boy with a new pair of red top boots for I was sole owner of a hundred and sixty acres of fine land. My land was two miles south of the place where Cordell is now located.

On arriving at my parents' farm several of my neighbors who thought they knew the country tried hard to discourage me and begged me never to go back to that Cheyenne country. They said it seldom ever rained in the Cheyenne country and the hot winds blew every summer, burning up the grass, and I supposed that about July, it would get so dry and the wind would be so hot, that the hair on a long horned steer would curl up like he had been to a beauty shop and gotten a permanent.

I told them maybe they were right but I would have to be shown. I had bought a bushel of corn that was raised by an Indian with a blanket on, twenty-five miles away from my claim, which was good corn. I told them that if that Indian could raise corn like that I believed that I could. So I came back and I raised corn too.

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The homestead law required me to be on my claim on or before six months and make final settlement. So my sister came with me, and we were here on time and began making my dugout. The dugout was a very crude structure, but filled the requirements. It was 9' x 11' inside, three feet deep, three logs high with a big cottonwood log for a ridge pole, as it was called and we used cottonwood and willow poles for rafters, and put some brush on top of them.

Then I left for that time. It was not necessary to stay longer. We visited several of the neighbors as I wanted to make sure that they all knew I was here. We were on the claim ten days.

On getting back off this trip (my family was living about nine miles west of Pauls Valley) the people would say, "Well, Walker, how is the Cheyenne country?" Of course I was a booster and I would answer, "Just fine. Looks better every time I see it. It's the coming country".

Looking forward to going on the claim next spring, I had only one horse and a wagon and I was alone. My wagon was new, and I traded it for an old one and a pony. I thought I was a pretty good horse trader, so after making

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several horse trades and working, too, by the first of January, I had a pretty good team, but what about money? It would take money to get to the claim. I would have to have something to live on and to make a little improvement.

Father said, "Do as you like, but why not trade one of your horses and harness for a yoke of oxen, as I did? Then sell the other horse for money". What would I do with a yoke of oxen? I did not know how to drive them. Father said he would teach me how in a little while and that looked fair enough, so I heard of a man who had the oxen and wanted to make just that trade so in a few days, I let Father go to see the oxen. Father said the oxen looked all right and believed he could make the trade. That looked to me like the only thing to do, so he took my team, went back, made the trade and came home driving the oxen to the wagon leading the other horse. They were pretty for oxen, but now came the task of learning to drive the oxen, so I sold the other horse and now I had a team and a little money. Father was a pretty good teacher and in a week I could drive them.

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I had been keeping company with a girl named Nancy Jaynes for about two years. I had been telling her all along about what a beautiful country the Cheyenne country was and what a fine claim I had with a creek running along side with fish in it, and some nice shade trees where she could sit under and fish while I broke sod nearby. I told her the water was a little "gyppy" and the wind blew pretty hot on summer days but that we would soon get used to that. I told her that we would have to live in a dugout for a few years, but then we would build a nice house and paint it white. Then, of course we would be Mr. and Mrs. Logsdon.

Nancy was a poor girl, working to help support her widowed mother, so on the 5th day of February, 1893, Nancy Jaynes and I were married at the little town of White Head Hill, five miles up the Ashita river from Pauls Valley, by a Methodist preacher named James Florence and after a few more days practice with our new team, we started out on our honeymoon, to a place which was then spoken of by most everyone as away out west in the Cheyenne country.

We were in company with Father, Lotner, a sister and her husband until we all got about ten miles north of

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Anadarko, on Sugar Creek, where they had land rented to farm that year. So the remainder of the way, about fifty miles, Nancy and I were alone. We made that trip from Pauls Valley to Anadarko in three days which was pretty good driving for an ox team.

When we were within a half mile of our destination, we stopped to visit a few minutes with our neighbors, Mr. and Mrs. Dave Smith and their three small girls, Beulah, Monte, and Ora. Beulah is now Mrs. Ben Young, living a mile and a quarter east of Cordell. When we reached our claim, we drove down on the creek, unyoked the oxen, fed them, gathered up a fire and got supper. It wasn't much of a supper, but being our first meal on the claim made it a great supper, long to be remembered.

We finished our dugout and moved into it--it was a very crude little affair with dirt top and a dirt floor. We had not a stove, table, or bedstead. We had one chair. Our bed was a bed-tick filled with hay put down in one corner of the dugout on the ground. After several weeks, Nancy began to complain about her quilts being so dirty. I told her one

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evening that I would make a bedstead the next day. She wanted to know how I would make a bedstead as there was not a board on the place. I told that there were plenty of poles on the creek so the next morning, I went to the creek, got the poles, made the bedstead.

We had plenty of dishes. Our kitchen cabinet was a box about three feet high, eighteen inches wide, twelve inches deep, with a curtain over it. We had the lid to this box, so one morning Nancy said, "Walker, I wish you would put that lid on the cupboard". That was easy, I used my old boot straps for hinges, but what about nails. There was not a nail on the place, and there wasn't a nickle either. Nails were a nickle a pound at H. D. Young's store about three miles away. I asked Nancy how many eggs she had. She looked and said there were only nine. So, I waited until three more hens laid eggs. They were a nickle a dozen. I took the eggs, and walked three miles and back, put the door on the kitchen cupboard.

Our cook vessels were a dutch oven to bake bread in and potatoes, too, an iron pot, iron tea kettle, frying pan, a tin can with a wire bale for a coffee pot. We didn't have a

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radio, but the prairie dogs made music in the day time, for they were all around our dugout. In fact, all over the country. The coyotes and owls make music at night. We had lots of snakes, all kinds. They would get in the brush and hay in the top of our dugout. We would punch them out and kill them. They would often crawl across our bed at night. We soon got used to that. We just gave a kick, and they would hurry on somewhere else. I broke sod with the oxen, planted a sod crop of corn and cane, and made pretty good. I worked some for the neighbors and got by until the last of June. Then we starved out and went back to ^{the} Chickasaw ^{country} and worked there throughout harvest and thrashing. We got a little grub stake and came back, but before we left Chickasaw, I traded my oxen and got a good pony team, which was a great improvement.

How did we cook? Well, I will tell you. I took my shovel and ax and cut out a hole in the dugout wall, and called it a fireplace. I got it shaped up pretty good, then I got a posthole digger and dug a hole down on the outside to the fireplace. I broke some sod nearby, laid up a sod chimney, so that job was complete and it worked all right. Little things would happen that were not so

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pleasant. Nancy would be frying eggs for breakfast and a stick of wood would burn in two and upset the frying pan and eggs in the fire. It took lots of patience and endeavor to get over the rough places, for there were many of them. Time rocked on until it was about the last of February and we had no work, no money. It was just root hog or die, paddle your own canoe. Something had to be done. A wife and little baby in the dugout, a big snow on the ground and they had to be fed. The only thing I knew to do was to go to Mr. H. D. Young and asked him for a little flour on credit. I remember well his reply. "Well, Walker, the will is good, but the way is against you". He owed a lot on his goods, and I was one among many. He could not help all, so he treated us all alike. So I walked home empty handed. After resting a few minutes, I went to a neighbor. They had several sacks of flour, so they loaned me fifty pounds. That made Nancy and me feel pretty good to know we had bread for thirty days. Then came something else to think about. When and how can we pay it back? In about two weeks, a merchant at Cloud Chief let me haul a load of freight from Minco, six days hard driving, feeding myself and team. I made over

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\$7.00 and I got two sacks of flour, a sack of meal, a few other groceries and a calico dress for Nancy. I paid back the sack of flour, and was square with the world, owing no man.

That gave me a start to freighting. I hauled most of the freight from El Reno until the railroad got to Weatherford, then hauled freight from Weatherford until the railroad got to Cordell. By that time I could get by, for we were making good crops then.

I often left home for El Reno to be gone from six to eight days with less than \$1.00 in money, but always took feed for my team on the round trip and also for myself. Nancy would cook about three dozen biscuits, for the trip. Two biscuits at a meal was all I could afford to eat. This was a new deal for me, because I had had all I could eat.

I had as my goal a good home sometime and my dream finally came true. That nice white house became a reality, I say nice house - it was nice for that day. It is still on the farm, but somewhat dilapidated with age.

We finally got about rid of the prairie dogs and that got rid of the fleas. Then came bed bugs. We had them to

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fight as I suppose they were in the lumber. We would scald the bedstead, set the post in cans of water, then they would climb the wall and jump down on us. They were hard to beat.

After about six years on the claim, Nancy's health began to fail. For eighteen years she was under the doctor's care most of the time. I think I tried every doctor who practiced medicine in Cordell that time and besides she used patent medicine of nearly every kind. I took her to Mineral Wells, Texas, and stayed about seven months. She would only get temporary relief and then she was worse again. The last thing and it looked like the only thing was an operation. So we took her to the Florence hospital, in Florence, Grant County. There the doctors found the main trouble, a cancer of the liver had been eating her life away. Eight days after the operation, November 19, 1917, she died.

I had six children; the oldest, Annie, was married. I told the other children at home that I would stay with them as long as they would stay with me; I made my word good, but naturally and rightly in a few years, they began to marry and leave home to make a home for themselves, until

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they were all gone except the youngest, hazel. That summer my health gave way. I was not able to work and had to give up, so I rented the farm and Hazel and I moved to town. We lived together seven years then she married, leaving me alone. I "batched" for awhile.

Father and Mother were getting old and needed someone with them. They wanted me to come to live with them. I had a good house well furnished. I rented it and went back to Father and Mother, the place I used to call home, but it did not seem the same as when I was young. In a way I was broken up and no place seemed like home. I lived with Father and Mother as long as they lived, except the last year Father lived, I moved one block away.

For almost seventeen long years, I lived a widower. ~~They were long to me. No home and not satisfied anywhere.~~ I did not think I wanted to marry any more and often said I never would, but finally, I met up with a widow four weeks older than myself, Mrs. Louvenia Hamrack, who was very sympathetic and good natured. We rode around in my V-8 coupe and talked the matter over. So we were fixed up. On Sunday, August 19, 1934, we went over to Brother Vaughn

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and he tied the knot making us one. We went to Sulphur Springs that evening and stayed a week on our honeymoon. Then we moved home and are living happily together.

It has been almost forty-six years since I flagged the claim. I still own it and never have had to mortgage it.