



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

GILBERT, H. F. (REV.) SECOND INTERVIEW 9680

Field Worker's name Ophelia D. Vestal

This report made on (date) January 14 1938

1. Name Reverend H. F. Gilbert
2. Post Office Address Walters, Oklahoma
3. Residence address (or location) \_\_\_\_\_
4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month November Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year 1884
5. Place of birth Illinois
6. Name of Father \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_  
Other information about father \_\_\_\_\_
7. Name of Mother \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_  
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 5

Ophelia D. Vestal,  
Investigator,  
January 14, 1938.

An Interview with Reverend H. F. Gilbert,  
Walters, Oklahoma.

On July 1, 1869, an agency of the Comanche, Kiowa and Apache tribes was established adjacent to Fort Sill near the city of Lawton. This agency was placed in charge of a member of the Society of Friends, named Lawrie Tatum. The Society of Friends was a group of the early Quakers. The Fort Sill boarding school was opened on February 20, 1871, by Reverend Joshua Butler. Reverend Butler and his wife were invited by the Executive Committee of Indian Affairs to work among the Comanches and Kiowas. They, too, were members of the Society of Friends. This Indian school was first established about a mile north of its present where it remained location/until about 1900 when it was moved to the present location where a laundry, dormitories and club buildings were added. The Superintendent was Mr. W. J. Hoddon.

From the beginning days up to the present time, agriculture and homemaking have been of the utmost importance, and more work has been done in these times than in any others. This school operates probably thirteen hundred acres

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of farm land where there are a large dairy herd, several hogs, beef cattle, poultry and truck gardening, and a laundry, dining room, kitchen, ice plant, sewing room and bake shop are operated for the needs of the school which are all sources of vocational training.

At the beginning of this school only a few of the lower grades were taught; then grades were added until in 1930, eight grades were taught and the ninth added making it a Junior High School. In 1936 and '37 the school was changed to a Vocational Agricultural and Homemaking Senior High School. The work now offered at this school is of such a nature as to train the younger boys and girls in the arts of home-making and farming, thus helping to turn out students who can take their places in life and know how to be self-supporting. Extra classrooms have been provided. These are to help interest the students. They are Hi-Y, Four H Club, Girls Reserve, Boy Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, Brownie and Cub Scouts, Glee Clubs, and Athletics for both boys and girls.

The students in lower grades are taught the two main subjects of this school, farming and home-making, so when they reach the higher grades they have a broader view on

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these subject then, too, if they shouldn't finish their education they still will have ~~received~~ benefit from their schooling. Accrediting standards are maintained so that the graduates may attend colleges if they desire to.

Tuesday evening of each week is set aside for religious instruction.

#### LOCATION

The Fort Sill Boarding School is located on Highways 277 and 62 at the Northeast edge of Lawton. Lawton is one of the leading towns of Oklahoma and probably the best town in Southwest Oklahoma. The area from which the school draws its pupils, largely Comanches, is of a diversified agricultural nature. Many beef cattle, sheep, hogs, dairy cattle, and poultry are raised in this area. There is also much wheat, cotton, oats, barley, broom-corn, watermelon, fruit, sorghums, and other farm crops grown. The Indian Hospital which serves this entire locality as well as others all over the state, is located within a quarter of a mile of the school. A tubercular annex has recently been added. The school is fortunate in having the United States Agricultural Experiment Station for a neighbor on the West. This

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station furnishes much valuable information and employment for the boys taking agriculture. Fort Sill is of interest and is the home for the school of Fire where many West Point graduates spend a year in training.

Practically every phase of military work is carried out at the Fort. The Wichita Mountains to the northwest furnish much entertainment and pleasure. Here we find the Holy City where annually is held the Easter Pageant, attracting thousands of visitors. The mountains furnish much for hikes, swimming, and picnics, there being a large number of lakes and **reservoirs** which have recently been constructed. The Forest Reserve and Game Preserve which are a part of United States Biological Survey are maintained in the Wichita Mountains and are quite interesting to the many who visit them annually.

The Cameron State Agricultural College, a Junior College and High School, is maintained by the State of Oklahoma, and is located two miles west of Lawton. Many of the Indian youths of southwestern Oklahoma have received the first two years of their college training at this institution.

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( The water used by the school and surrounding institutions is derived from Lake Latonka. This lake is located in the Wichita Mountains and furnishes the best water to be had anywhere.