

HANNAH, HUGH

INTERVIEW

#8290

216

HANNAH, HUGH

INTERVIEW

BIOGRAPHY FORM

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Mildred B. McFarland

This report made on (date) August 19 1937

1. Name Hugh Hannah

2. Post Office Address Edmond, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) 223 West first

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month May Day 9 Year 1880

5. Place of birth Missouri

6. Name of Father David Hannah Place of birth Edinburgh, Scotland

Other information about father 1833

7. Name of Mother Jane Evans Hannah Place of birth Amwich Wales

Other information about mother 1831

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.

HANNAH, HUGH

INTERVIEW

8290

Mildred B. Mc Farland,
Interviewer,
August 19, 1937.

An Interview with Mr. Hugh Hannah,
Edmond, Oklahoma.

I was sent to Oklahoma from St. Louis, Missouri, in 1889, by the Frisco Railroad Company. I had worked for that company for several years, and as a railroad was being built from Oklahoma City to Averd and I was sent to help.

The road was to cover a distance of one hundred and eighty miles. It required fifteen months to complete the line. The crew lived on the work train. We had a Comanche Indian for a cook. There were quite a few Comanche, Apache, Caddo and Seminole Indians who would come from miles around to watch us work, but they never attempted to bother us. At that time Geronimo, the Apache Chief, was brought from Georgia by the government to Lawton. He was always heavily guarded by the soldiers at Fort Sill.

HANNAM, HUGH

INTERVIEW

8290.

- 2 -

Quanah Parker, Chief of the Comanche tribe, used to come and watch us. He would sit and ask questions about the "Great fire wagon". In the hot summer months he always wore a white sheet wrapped around him and in winter a bright colored blanket. On his feet he wore beaded moccasins and his hair was always twisted in two long rolls down his back. He was very friendly.

Lawton was considered the liveliest frontier town then. Indianona, Cache and Snyder were typical frontier towns also, but much smaller.

The Indian Police were stationed at Anadarko then and if the "Government Man" happened to be away, the Indians would not let a white man stay over night.

About a mile south of Anadarko there were three missions, the Catholic, Methodist and Baptist. They cared for quite a few orphans, I think all three missions are still there.

Several men on our crew were taken suddenly sick and as we were working on the railroad close by, the

HANNAH, HUGH

INTERVIEW

8290.

- 3 -

sisters from the Catholic Mission heard about it. They came down and took care of the sick men.

In 1890, Crazy Snake, the Chief of the Creek Tribe, and his followers started an uprising in the vicinity of what is now Seminole. The Federal Troops were all out after Crazy Snake. He hid in the woods around where we were working, but he was subdued before he caused us much trouble.

In 1900, I was working for the Kansas City, Pittsburgh and Gulf Railroad Company. We were working in the Indian Territory at a small town called Spiro. We were laying a track about one half mile north of that town when we dug up a great trench of Indian skeletons, pottery, knives and arrow heads. There must have been a battle there at quite an early date for we found some arrow-heads embedded in the skulls which we dug up. The skeletons were folded up, feet to the head. We sent word to the president of the company and he brought a mineralogist down to try and find out to

HANNAH, HUGH,

INTERVIEW

8290.

- 4 -

what tribe they belonged. They never could decide. These skeletons were those of very large people for the smallest skeleton measured a little over six feet. We gathered up all the pottery, arrow-heads and knives and the mineralogist took them to Chicago.

I knew John Stink, an Osage Indian, very well. He is the oldest living Indian of that tribe.

Some time in the early part of 1900 he was seriously ill. He was supposed to have died and he was buried according to the usual Osage custom. That is, his body was placed in an upright position and a small enclosure of stones was built around it to represent a house. However, John Stink was not dead and when he became conscious he tore down the enclosure and walked out. The Indians were all afraid of him from then on and to this day his own tribe will have nothing to do with him. He keeps a few dogs around him all the time and they are his only friends.

My wife's family always did all their own spinning and weaving. They made counterpanes, blankets, carpets,

HANNAH, HUGH

INTERVIEW

8290

- 5 -

and cloth for clothing for all the neighborhood.

They raised sheep and cotton for this purpose.

They made their own dyes.

I settled in Edmond in 1918.

We never homesteaded for I was always connected with the railroads.