



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

JONES, EADSLEY D.

FOURTH INTERVIEW

#13066

Field Worker's name Effie S. Jackson

This report made on (date) February 23 1938

1. Name Endsley D. Jones

2. Post Office Address Tulsa, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) 2240 East 10th Street

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year 1880

5. Place of birth Cheyenne and Arapaho region

6. Name of Father Daniel W. Jones Place of birth Randolph County, Indiana

Other information about father A farmer and Quaker

7. Name of Mother Jennie McDonald Place of birth New Orleans

Other information about mother She was Catholic

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 7 sheets.

JONES, EMSLEY D.      FOURTH    INTERVIEW

#13066

Effie S. Jackson  
Journalist,  
February 23, 1938.

Interview with Emsley D. Jones  
2240 East 10th Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma

My Boyhood on Old Red Fork Ranch.

Colonel J. B. Queen, 4151 East First Street, Tulsa, who spent his early days on the Chisholm Trail- told me of Mr. Emsley D. Jones. Colonel Queen had spent many days at Red Fork Ranch in the 80's. I found Mr. Jones very co-operative and interested in helping clear up mistaken impressions of early day trail life. Mr. Jones' story follows:

My father, Daniel W. Jones, a Quaker, was born in Randolph County, Indiana in 1845 - parents-farmers. My mother, Jennie McDonald born in New Orleans 1849 - a Catholic. The spirit of adventure and "go west young man" caused my father to go to Kansas in 1866. He lived in the vicinity of Wichita, acted as a deputy sheriff. He was always interested in law enforcement. He was instrumental in organizing a state militia in 1873. He became interested in the stage line that ran through Caldwell, Kansas, to Wichita. This stage line extended from Caldwell, Kansas; it was known as the Reno Road and paralleled the Chisholm Trail.

This stage route was from Wichita to Caldwell, from there

JONES, EMDSLEY D.

FOURTH INTERVIEW

#13066

-2-

to Skeleton Ranch north of where Enid is today. On through the present location of Hennessey (marked only by the grave of Pat Hennessey), east of the present city of Dover, down the Cimarron, east three miles, crossed the river and passed one mile east of present location of Kingfisher, on to Fort Reno. That is as far as I knew it in my boyhood days, though the line went on to Fort Worth, Texas. This stage line years later became known as the Cannon Ball Stage Line and became a subsidiary of the Rock Island railroad.

As I said, my father began working for the stage line in 1873. On this line he became interested in the stage commissary, known as Red Fork Ranch (location of present Dover). He bought this Ranch from Lee and Reynolds in 1875. Now this was not a ranch in the true sense of the word - it was a large commissary for the stage line. The stage line had the land grant; my father purchased the buildings. I have heard the Indians (Cheyennes) tell about the appearance of this ranch before the Civil War. They said the buildings were substantial, though not large, of the stockade type of construction and that the outer area of buildings (ranch house and barns) was surrounded by a high protective stockade fence. The buildings and fence had been burned down by the Indians during the War.

JONES, EMDSLEY D.

FOURTH INTERVIEW

#13066

-3-

Lee and Reynolds, who had taken possession after the war, had rebuilt the buildings and had the place in good condition when my father purchased it in 1875. I am loaning you a photostatic picture of Red Fork Ranch as it was when my father purchased it and as I knew it when a boy. The original of this photostat - a pen and ink sketch, was drawn by a government engineer in 1878. I loaned the original to Frank Greer when he was newspaper editor of "The Oklahoma State Capitol" - in Guthrie. His office burned about 1901 so this is the only copy in existence. I thought a photostat could be made of this for the use of the State Historical Society and also to clarify my description of this ranch.

My father's purpose in owning this ranch was purely commercial. This commissary was not only a stage relay and passenger inn but it was a base of supplies for cattlemen, cowboys, sheep herders, Indian traders and all travelers up and down the Chisholm Trail. The cowboys and herders had their chuck wagons and replenished their stock at our storehouse. Army officers were frequent visitors, meals were served them and buffalo robes served as their beds. We kept only staple supplies on hand - canned goods, especially tomatoes, coffee, tobacco, flour, sugar, and salt-meat. You would be surprised to know the two articles

JONES, EMDLEY D.

FOURTH INTERVIEW

#13066

-4-

most in demand - luxuries to them - pickles and stick-candy. They consumed pickles by the barrel and buckets of that old fashioned hard stick candy. There was a great demand for blankets and fish-brand slickers (yellow). We got our supplies from Caldwell by freighters.

Too much cannot be said about the importance of this major way station on the Chisholm Trail, eighty-two miles from the closest white settlement, Caldwell, on the Kansas line. Lying just north of the Cimarron river, cowboys bringing their herds up the trail made it a point of getting their cattle across the river by nightfall so that the men could break the monotony of the long trip northward by a few hours visit at the ranch - also make a necessary replenishment of the "chuck wagon". As a government licensed commissary the ranch carried on a heavy trade with the Indians, soldiers and government officials residing in the unallotted lands. The Red Fork Ranch became a land mark to the southwest.

I shall give you a description of the buildings. You may check it with the picture I loaned you (Photostat). The large commissary faced the east; the room was seventy-five feet long and about thirty feet deep - attached to it on the west was our living quarters, 25 x 30. The building was made of logs,

JONES, EMDSLEY D.

FOURTH INTERVIEW

#13066

-5-

stockade fashion, clapboard roof and puncheon floor. The barns in the rear were similar in construction. These were used for the mule relays for the stage. There was also a yoke of oxen kept for an emergency because of the quicksands of the Cimarron river. Army officers and travelers (sight-seers, we had some of them once in a while) were fed and lodged.

My mother, born in New Orleans, of good parentage, had received a good education (she was my only boyhood teacher out where the West began). She was a Catholic, had married a Protestant, and lived in Caldwell, Kansas. Here she was deserted by a worthless husband - and because of their religion, deserted also by her own people. She established an eating-place in Caldwell. My father had found that his commissary and lodging proposition needed the guiding hand of a woman overseer, and sent one of his friends to Caldwell to find a woman capable of occupying the place. This friend brought back the woman who became my mother. My father soon realized that she was the type for a wife. They were married at Pole Cat Ranch in 1879 by Reverend W. M. Neal, a Methodist minister from Caldwell, Kansas. Senator P. B. Plumb of Kansas was one of the witnesses.

JONES, EMDSLEY D.

FOURTH INTERVIEW

#13066

-6-

I was born in 1880, and my brother, Benijah, (deceased) in 1884. I believe I was the first white child born in this Cheyenne and Arapaho region. The Cheyenne called me "Scoo-oonce" meaning "white baby". Years later, when I grew to manhood and had occasion to be in that region, I was greeted by the old cry "scoo-oonce". I grew up with the Cheyenne Indians boys for companions - I never saw a white child except my brother until I was eight years old.

In 1883 my father sold the ranch to Ralph Collins but continued to make it his headquarters. He went into the cattle business. He would buy up cattle from the drag herd. These were cattle too sick or poor to keep up with the main herds. He wintered them and fattened them and sold them to the cattlemen with spring herds as they came through. My father's ranch was on Preacher Creek six miles northwest of Red Fork Ranch. He established a cow camp there. By that I mean a tent and a wagonbox with sheet over the wagon bows. There was plenty of wild game but my father wanted to make his camp a sort of sanctuary for wild game so there was an absolute rule that no game was to be killed within a mile of his camp.

I remember there were deer, antelope, prairie chickens, squirrels by the thousands and wild turkeys. There were few quail in that part of the country. I saw three mountain lions and a few

-7-

wild cats. We lived in this region until 1887 - then word of the proclamation of the Government to open the unallotted land went out. Anyone who wished to make the run (1889) must show that he had been out of the Territory for two years. So in 1887 our family moved to Caldwell to live until time for the Run in 1889. My father still retained his interest with the stage line.

JONES, EMDLEY D.

FIFTH INTERVIEW

15067

78