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

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BONHAM, ALBERT

INTERVIEW.

9926.

Field Worker's name Ida B. Lankford

This report made on (date) February 9, 1932

1. Name Albert Bonham

2. Post Office Address Rocky,

3. Residence address (or location) R. R. 2

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month December Day 2 Year 1863

5. Place of birth Iowa.

6. Name of Father Jasper Bonham Place of birth Illinois

Other information about father Farmer

7. Name of Mother Ellen Schrag Place of birth Illinois

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 3

BONHAM, ALBERT.

INTERVIEW.

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Ida B. Lankford,  
Investigator.  
February 9, 1938.

Interview with Albert Bonham.  
Rocky, Oklahoma.  
Born December 2, 1863.  
Father-Jasper Bonham  
Mother-Ellen Schrag.

I came from Terral to Cordell, landing here September 3, 1892. I filed on one hundred and sixty acres of land three miles south and one half mile west of the place where the present Cordell depot is now. I built a dugout to live in and I brought a yoke of oxen to this country and I sodded my land down working these oxen to an old sod walking plow. Feed crops were all we raised, such as Kaffir corn and corn.

We had to go to Minco, El Reno and Chickasha to sell and buy. We did all of our freighting from these towns. We were usually on the road about twenty days and sometimes longer if we were caught in a rain or snow storm or even a blizzard; we always drove our oxen.

I bought hens for \$2.00 a dozen, I sold eggs for 5 cents a dozen, and when I raised cotton, I had to hire a man to haul it to Duncan where I would get 4 cents a pound for it. I sold corn for 15 cents a bushel and Kaffir corn sold for 1 cent a bundle, and sorghum molasses for about 20 cents a gallon.

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For our fuel, we would go to the creeks and rivers and get green cottonwood to burn and we would also go over the prairie and gather up cow chips and let them dry and then burn them.

We lived with snakes, centipedes and fleas. Our dugout was full of them; one night a snake got in the bed with me; it was so cold to my back that it scared me at first; then I realized what it was, so I got up and killed it.

One winter the prairie chickens were so plentiful that we ate wild chicken and lots of times I would get on horseback and run down wild turkeys, I would kill those large turkey gobblers. We had all kinds of wild meat to eat.

We had one dugout which was used only for schools and churches. We met every Sunday for church, but we didn't have much school. Only a three months school term and sometimes not that much.

When I first came here; I ran a peddling wagon; I would go to El Reno, and buy some calico, oilcloth and a few tin cooking vessels then I would start out, trade my things for chickens, then take the chickens to Vernon, Texas, and sell

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them. The chickens would get so hungry, when I camped at night, that I would turn them out and let them feed; they would eat grasshoppers and one evening a big buck Indian rode up and said, "Get those chickens up," I sure was scared and I had a time catching those chickens before their time to go to roost, the Indian sat on his horse and watched me until I got the chickens all in the coops, then gave a big laugh and rode off. But the Indians were my friends and I really do give them a very kind word, even today.

Old Jot Bull Bear was a very dear friend of mine but he is dead now.

I am a very old man and can't work so I just sit around and think of the old times; they were hard times but very happy. I am blind in both eyes but I enjoy music very much; I play the violin quite a bit and used to play for the Indian Dances.