

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

KOEYAH,

INTERVIEW.

9990.

Field Worker's name Thomas, Bessie L.

This report made on (date) February 16, 1938. 1938

1. Name Koayah, Comanche Indian.

2. Post Office Address Cache, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

5. Place of birth _____

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 3.

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Bessie Thomas,
Investigator,
Feb. 16, 1938.

An Interview With Koeyah, Comanche
Indian, lives four miles East of
Cache, on Highway #62.

I, with a party of young Indian bucks, five friends of mine, took a notion when we were all about the same age, sixteen or seventeen, that we would steal a lot of horses and girls, for a tradition among the Plains Indians was that the young man who could steal the most horses and girls was held in the highest esteem by everyone in the tribe.

So we equipped ourselves for a trip of this kind. All of us rode Indian ponies, with two extra ones, in case of emergencies. We had no guns, only bows and arrows. All of us lived at Fort Sill at the time. We started out each with high hopes that he would bring back the most horses and girls. We traveled for days, letting our ponies graze hobbled at nights. For food we killed rabbits, squirrels and other small game, eating wild berries, nuts and herbs. One buck got sick and turned back for home. The rest of us rode for days and days until finally we reached New Mexico, where we heard of an Indian camp

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several miles inland. Being hot summer we and our ponies suffered each day from the hot sands, and from the glare of the sun.

Finally we got near enough to see the camp we were looking for, and decided to camp ourselves, until good dark, when we thought the camp would be sleeping, so we staked our own ponies quite a way from the camp and decided to sneak up on foot. When almost upon our prey, someone stepped on a twig which snapped, woke a dog which began to bark, and that woke all the dogs in the camp, and such a howling and barking you never heard. The Indians began pouring out from their teepees, shouting the war cry, throwing and holding high lighted torches and there was nothing for us to do but to turn and run, which we did, with the whole camp after us. One of my friends and I stuck together; we finally got behind a rock, and decided we had better rest as we thought we were safe for awhile. In the commotion ponies and mules broke loose; pretty soon a burrow came along where we were hidden and we thought we had better try to get away on it. We no more than got on the burro when they Indians saw us, and the arrows began

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whizzing all around us and we had not gone but a few steps when my friend caught a glancing shot in the corner of one eye, and I got shot in both hands. But we kept on and the Indians never got us, for we finally lost them. The blood kept running down the face of my friend, and getting into his mouth. By night his stomach was swelled away up, and he "pooched" out like a barrel in front, from swallowing so much blood. My hands were paining me terribly by that night. We heard the cry of our pursuers all day and rode all day, as fast as we could go, never stopping until night, when we camped and dressed our wounds. When my hands healed the muscles were drawn so that my hands never could again be straightened, and I have had crippled hands ever since. So our anticipated hunt for horses and girls ended in disaster for us all. My friend and I who finally returned home without any stolen horses or girls nor the ponies we started out with, have never again seen our three friends who started with us.