

LAWSON, I. M.

INTERVIEW

10509

484

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

LAWSON, I. M. - INTERVIEW.

10509

Field Worker's name Ophelia D. VestalThis report made on (date) April 20-21, 19381. Name I. M. Lawson2. Post Office Address Apache, Oklahoma.3. Residence address (or location) Route 3.4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month April Day 23 Year 1866.5. Place of birth Red River County, Texas.

6. Name of Father _____ Place of birth _____

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 4.

LAWSON, I. M. - INTERVIEW.

10509

Vestal, Ophelia D.- Investigator.
Indian Pioneer History-S-149.
April 20-21, 1938.

Interview with I. M. Lawson
Apache, Oklahoma, Route 3.

I was born in Red River County, Texas, and lived there until I was seven years old, then, with my parents, two brothers and two sisters moved to McClennan County, near Waco, Texas.

In 1879 my family moved to the Indian Territory near Aaron Springs, a few miles east of where Duncan is now located, although that town had not been thought of at that time. We drove a team of ponies to this country, locating in a log house near a small creek called Bear Creek.

One of my brother's ponies happened to get away and he went back to Texas to hunt it. After finding it, he married and remained there. The other brother who was about grown at that time started freighting for Fort Sill, driving eight mules, using a jerk line. His route was from Fort Sill to Henryetta, Texas, and from Fort Sill to Caldwell, Kansas. Among the supplies he hauled for the fort, sometimes he hauled feed. This was part of his freight until they started putting up a wonderful supply of good prairie

-2-

hay here in the Territory. When crops were laid by in the summer, there wasn't any work to be done for some time, so when I was nearly eighteen years old, as all boys did in those days, I usually looked other places for work. I came to Fort Sill in 1881. I found work cutting wood for the fort to use.

Then I worked for a man by the name of Ed Welch who had a contract to put up hay for the fort. In those days the hay was not baled, it was stacked, and a man had to know his work about stacking hay before he got a contract. The hay was stacked in long stacks as high as it could be, then it had to be stacked by hoist higher. Sometimes there was as many as four or five hundred tons of hay in one rick.

One very strange sight I saw while working at the Fort once. It was a long row of skeletons of horses that I was told belonged to Geronimo's band. It was believed they might try to escape sometime so the horses were killed down to where there were three Indians to each horse.

I remember when small, of seeing Indians wearing a small buckskin pouch fastened to their gun pouch. Once my

father asked an old Indian why these small pouches were carried. The Indian replied, "Medicine in it, maybe so get shot; if so, use medicine and maybe so get well - not die". But I never did find out the kind of medicine they had in those bags.

The Indians used wooden mallets and beat corn up in a stump in one end of which they had burned something like the shape of a hen's nest. The husk came off the corn and the corn was kind of a corn chop. Then it was placed in a big kettle and sometimes beef was added and cooked a little while.

I had a part Indian friend to tell me once that years ago there was an Indian battle near Fort Arbuckle, near where the town of Davis is now. A band of Comanche Indians stole some ponies from the Choctaws and Chickasaws. These Indians hired a scout to help them and for about thirty miles the Comanches were traced. The scout was very good and could trace the Indians through the tall grass very easily. When nearing the Comanches both sides had used all their bows and arrows. The Comanches were driven between two large hills. In these hills was a large spring. The Comanches jumped from

4

their horses and jumped into the spring. The following Indians dismounted their horses quickly and went to the spring and as the Comanches put their heads out of the water to breathe, they threw rocks, hitting them and killing the Comanches, then they got their stolen ponies.

There was a family living where the town of Marlow now stands, by the name of Marlow. They were good people and I knew them pretty well.

In those early days cattle was driven up the old Chisholm Trail to market; this was in 1883. Some few cattle were missing once and a sheriff blamed the two older Marlow boys of stealing them. They were away from home, working in corn, shucking and shelling corn, and did not like to be accused of something they did not do, so in defending themselves they got in serious trouble which followed many years. That is the starting of the Marlow brothers as desperadoes. Later, two other brothers helped them.

We had one son who was killed in the World War.

I am very proud to state that Comanche County has a wonderful and interesting history. If more people could

LAWSON, I. M. - INTERVIEW.

10509

5

just know about these interesting happenings.

The Easter services which are held each year in the Washita Mountains has gained the attraction and interest of many thousands of people over the United States. That is of much importance, because of its location being in our Comanche County.