

METCALF, C. W.

INTERVIEW

10116

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

Field Worker's name Bessie L. Thomas

This report made on (date) February 24, 1938

1. Name C. W. Metcalf

2. Post Office Address Lawton Oklahoma, Star Route

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 4.

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Bessie L. Thomas
Investigator
February 24, 1938.

Interview with C. W. Metcalf,
Star Route, Lawton, Oklahoma.

I came to Oklahoma in the fall of 1901 and registered at El Reno, but didn't draw anything. I got in with the registration people, they charged twenty-five cents for each registration. I got fifteen cents for each one I brought in and was lucky enough to bring in at one time sixty-five girls who had come from a factory in Chicago. The factory had let them off and allowed them plenty of time so they could come here and register for the drawing. I met them at the train and told them that if they did not register at once they might have to wait two or three days. When people came and saw the crowd that was registering, they always felt that they had to get in line right then or they wouldn't ever be able to register. Forty-one of us came down together and one of us drew a farm out by Snyder. There was a doctor here and later we put in together and got a piece of school land where I am now.

I brought my family down here in 1902, I had to homestead the place for eighteen months; lived in a tent for a week, then I built a dugout and stayed in it until the water ran us out, then built a little shack. I built my barn out of five gallon

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tin cans, it would hold fifty tons of hay, and it has been filled to capacity many times. The country then was wild and raw. People used to call our place "The Last Chance". After my place there was nothing until the reserve was crossed. We always had plenty of room for people who wished to come in out of a storm and stay all night. No stranger who asked for shelter was ever turned away, and my hospitality was never abused by anyone. The main thing that happened the first year in the new country was that about every other day we ran out of "beans". The Indians called me "Meat-Calf". Those old Indians who were there when I came here are just about all gone now.

There were no tents on the original townsite of Lawton, tents all around the four sides, but the townsite itself was just prairie. During the lot^{ter} sale, the men making the sale just moved from one part of the site to another, selling first ^{enterprising} here and then there. Two ^{young} men, having nothing to do and wishing to make some money, decided that since the weather was hot and dry that the selling of iced lemonade should be a good money making project. Ice sold at the rate of ten cents a pound and after buying the lemons and sugar they finally had ready a tub

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of cold lemonade at a cost of several dollars. Picking up the tub they carried it over to the place where the lot sale was being carried on at that particular time but the people seemed to be more interested in other things than in lemonade. Not a nickels worth of lemonade had been disposed of. Setting the tub down, they turned for a minute to watch the sale, when someone touched one of the young men on the arm, and said, "I'll pay for the last drink", and handed him a nickel. Turning, he saw that a mule had wandered up from behind and had helped himself to the lemonade, clearing out the entire stock. Thoroughly disgusted, the would-be business man kicked over the tub and went out of business.

One day Sim Sheppard was going with a stranger to the top of Mount Scott. They were about half way up when Sim saw a little bear cub and said that he was going to catch it. About that time he heard a growl and looked around and there was the mother bear ready to come after him. It was a good race but Sim got to the bottom of that mountain in record time.

It was a common occurrence for people to lose their horses in this country. You would meet an Indian and ask him if he saw anything of a certain kind of horse and he would invariably

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answer "Yeh" - then a pause - "Me no see him."

I never got into any scrapes or trouble, and never went into Lawton only to buy groceries, or to transact business, as the town was plenty tough in the early days.