

LEWIS, STEWART.

THIRD INTERVIEW

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Etta D. Mason,
Investigator,
Jan. 8, 1938.

An Interview With Lewis Stewart,
Tushka, Oklahoma.

William H. Evans

At the time I knew Evans he was serving as Deputy United States Marshal under Ben H. Colbert, the United States Marshal in the Chickasaw Nation. Evans had also served as deputy under United States Marshal G. A. Porter and J. H. Bridges.

Evans was a posseman who led a party of officers in pursuit of the notorious Swafford outlaw gang. The outlaws were overtaken on Delaware Creek and the band was completely broken up.

Evans had come from Texas to the Indian Territory at the age of twenty-one and settled on a farm near Emmett, owned by Governor Johnston of the Chickasaw Nation, and later he established a ranch near Tishomingo.

Thievery was rampant and had been for years. The country was being settled then by respectable white people and the necessity for law and order became evident.

Evans left a peaceful farm life to become a factor in law enforcement. He hounded law-breakers and made

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life miserable for them. One event in the life of Mr. Evans illustrates what was commonly termed justice in the early days in Oklahoma. A man known as "One Eyed Ward" who lived near Madill killed a man named Harkey at Oakland. Evans, who at that time was a deputy under Ben Colbert, arrested Ward and took him to prison at Tishomingo. Ward finally made bond, but as feeling against him was high Evans advised him to remain in jail for protection. Ward would not listen but made his bond and returned to Madill. A few days later he and a man named R. J. Toppey were driving toward Oakland and both men were shot from ambush and killed; an effort was made to locate the men who did the killing, but it was unsuccessful. The pioneers of that section looked upon the matter without comment, just deciding that a score settled.

In the course of his career as deputy Evans picked up the bodies of seventeen men, but saw only three killed. He made twenty-six arrests for murder in four years. He recovered stolen horses over a territory extending over two hundred miles. Evans was born in North Carolina and came to Madill in 1902, but had been here some time before this.