

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

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LEWIS, GEORGE W.

INTERVIEW

4671

Field Worker's name John F. Daugherty

This report made on (date) June 23 1957

1. Name George W. Lewis,

2. Post Office Address Davis, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month September Day 8 Year 1855

5. Place of birth Dacatur, Texas

6. Name of Father William Lewis Place of birth Maryland

Other information about father Farmer

7. Name of Mother Jane Kinder Place of birth Virginia

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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John F. Daugherty,
Field Worker,
June 25, 1937.

An Interview with Mr. George W. Lewis,
Davis, Oklahoma.

My father was William Lewis, born in Maryland, and my mother was Jane Kinder, born in Virginia. There were eight children.

I was born September 8, 1855, in Decatur, Texas. I came to the Indian Territory in 1884. I came in a prairie schooner from Texas, and crossed Red Oak, east of Wilburton, in the old Choctaw Nation. I lived in a log house with a puncheon floor and a clapboard door. We drank water from a spring.

Sam Holsom had a black mare about eighteen years old. One night a neighbor and I went deer hunting. We had a fire pan with pine knots in it which were burning to make a light to shine in the eyes of the deer. We saw a pair of eyes shining. I had the pan and my neighbor had the gun, so he shot, and down fell the animal which we supposed was a deer. When we got to it we found to our horror and amazement it was Sam's old

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black mare that we had killed. Neither of us told what had happened for a long time. It nearly worried my friend to death, so at last I told Sam about it. He certainly did tease the other fellow about having to pay for the mare. But since it was an accident he did not try to collect for her.

We made soap from lye in ash hoppers. I made all my axe handles of hickory and put in the ash hoppers to season them. This made them so hard that they seldom broke.

I broke land with a bull tongue plow with a jumping colter in it. I dropped corn by hand. I made a hoop apron for this purpose and put two hoops, one on each side, for my hands to go through into the sack, and I planted two rows of corn at a time. We raised cotton, corn, wheat and oats. We cradled our wheat and threshed it by putting it on a large sheet and letting the ozen tramp it out.

We cut hay with a reap hook and stacked it instead of baling it. I moved to Arnoldville near Marietta in

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1886 and became the foreman of the Washington farm. Mr. Washington had six teams of mules working on the Santa Fe grade. I had charge of these, although a skinner drove them.

We had our cotton ginned at Arnoldville where there was a wooden screw press gin. Its capacity was about twelve bales a day.

Washington had a drift line fence about sixty-five miles long to hold his cattle in. This fence ran from near Marietta to Mud Creek. Building drift line fences was strictly against the Chickasaw law. Ranchers were not permitted to fence any land. So, one night the Indian Militia cut the whole string of fence into very small pieces. Not long after this the Indian Militia woke up and could not find a single horse and a search revealed their horses in a canyon dead. They suspected one of the Washington boys and arrested him. His wife armed herself with a Winchester and a six shooter and went into their midst saying she would kill the first man who moved. She rescued her husband and they returned

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to their home. The Indian Militia never could prove anyone guilty of killing their horses.

Our first washboard was a piece of wood with grooves cut in it.

I was married to Margaret Reed at McKinney, Texas in 1876. we have eleven children.
