

HOLMAN, CHARLES C.

INTERVIEW

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

Field Worker's name Ida B. Lankford

Report made on (date) August 30 1937

Name Charles C. Holman

Post Office Address Gordell, Oklahoma

Residence address (or location) City Route

DATE OF BIRTH: Month December Day 12 Year 1871

Place of birth Rock Park Line of Texas and Arkansas

Name of Father John W. Holman Place of birth Ala.

Other information about father Cowman

Name of Mother Ida R. Ward Place of birth Texas

Other information about mother Housekeeper

Write 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 _____.

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My first advent into what is now Oklahoma was in the fall of 1885. My cousin, C. W. Ward of Wichita Falls, Texas, obtained a contract from the government to furnish beef for the Indians at Anadarko.

He employed my father, John W. Holman, to manage his outfit. We were living at that time in Wise County, Texas, on a farm about half way between Alvord and Decatur. Father needed a horse wrangler so he sent for me, and say did the boys have some fun out of me. About all the riding experience I had had was riding calves and work horses. My father turned over to me eight head of Spanish cow ponies and I got a fall about every day and sometimes two. I wanted to ride fast so when I would be chasing a cow or horse, my pony would turn right short and very soon after he would turn I would hit the ground.

I would always have to walk back to camp, for when I parted company with the horse, he would pull out for the other horses as fast as he could go.

We issued beef to three different tribes of Indians, the Kiowas, Comanches and Apaches. On the general issue day the Indians would congregat around the issue place. Sometimes there would be as many as a thousand in their paints and feathers and they looked very scary to me, a

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boy thirteen years of age.

During the fall of 1884, a horse fell on me one morning while ^{I was} hunting horses and crippled me for one year and I couldn't ride anymore until 1887.

In 1887, I went to work for my uncle, M. T. Ward, who was running a ranch around Old Fort Supply. I worked in that country until the cattle were ordered out of the Cherokee Strip, in 1891.

Then my uncle moved his cattle to what was then Day County about five miles north of Grand, the county seat and I worked there off and on until 1896.

I was married to Miss Gertrude Bright. I took a claim in Day County on Mosquito Creek. I brought my wife there and lived on my claim until the fall of 1896.

I proved up on my place and sold it to my uncle and then moved to my father's ranch, in Woodward County, fifteen miles southeast of Woodward and lived there until November, 1899.

We then moved to Washita County and settled six miles southeast of Dill City. We made a small crop that year and pretty soon the grub supply began to get low.

I drove down to Cordell where there were two stores

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of one of the stores and asked the manager about getting a grub stake till I laid my crop by. He told me he was not able to sell on credit. I went back home feeling blue.

I had rented my wife's brother's farm and he was working for my uncle in Day County. He owed me some work so I saddled up one of my work horses and told my wife I'd be back Friday night if nothing happened.

When I got to the ranch, Uncle said, "Charles, I am sure glad you've come. I want you to take a large number of horses and go down the Canadian River and work in the general roundup. I haven't another hand here that knows my brands."

I told him I had a crop started down in Washita County and I would have to go back but he said we would send Gertie some money and she could hire the crop worked.

I was gone thirty days and I took \$30.00 back home with me, and say \$30.00 would buy something those days. Bacon was eight cents per pound, Arbuckle coffee was ten cents per pound. You could get a large sack of navy beans for \$1.00. Corn was fifteen to twenty cents a bushel, and sweet potatoes were twenty-five cents per bushel.

We moved about five and one-half miles southeast

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of Cordell on what was called the Burnett place, but now is called the Old Garst place. The only place we had to live was a hole in the ground, dug back about twenty-two feet and we had no windows except one little window beside the door. It was covered with logs, brush, and dirt, but when it rained it didn't leak, then my dear wife put up a ceiling of cretonne, a carpet of the same, and lined the walls of different material, then we thought we had a mansion.

My wife had the smallpox and I had to be chief cook, bottle washer, nurse and farmer, but we made it all right. The rest of us had been vaccinated and we didn't take the smallpox.

In those days when our provisions would get low we would hook up our old team and drive it to Old Cordell, to H. D. Young's, one of Cordell's pioneer merchants, or go to Cloud Chief to Charlie Summer and say, "How about a load of freight from Weatherford," and we almost always got a job.

We would haul five bales of cotton on a common wagon box to Weatherford and would receive fifty cents per bale. If we got a load of freight to haul back, that was ten

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cents per hundred weight.

I remember I made two trips for Mr. Summer before I went back home and I made sixteen dollars and thirty-five cents during the five days I was gone from home. By doing this work we were able to keep the wolf from the door, although he would get pretty close sometimes.

In those old pioneer days we knew everyone and everyone knew us and if our neighbor got sick or in need, the night didn't get too dark nor the weather too bad for us to go to his rescue.

It was several years before my boys were large enough to help me much with the farming but when they did, we began to get better places and handled more land and finally we rented three quarters of ^a section of land from

Uncle Joe Lambert, on Elk Creek. We lived there for ten years and made lots of money there but somehow we never learned the "art of saving."

I have a family of eight boys and three girls, all married now but one girl and my baby boy. We are now living in New Cordell.