

HOLDEN, LULA STARR.

INTERVIEW

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BIOGRAPHY FOR:
 WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
 Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Ethel B. Tackitt

This report made on (date) April 19, 1937

1. Name Lula Starr Holden

2. Post Office Address Granite, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month _____ Day _____ Year 1869

5. Place of birth Whitestown, Texas

6. Name of Father Virgil Craven Place of birth Georgia

Other information about father Died at Whitestown, Texas, 1874

7. Name of Mother Mary Ann Parr Craven Place of birth Gadston, Alabama

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 _____

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Ethel B. Tackitt, Interviewer,
April 19, 1937.

Interview with Mrs. Lula Starr Holden
Granite, Oklahoma

I was born at Whitestown, Texas, in 1869. My parents were Virgil Craven of Georgia and Mary Ann Parr Craven, a native of Gadston, Alabama. My father died at Whitestown, Texas, in 1874.

I was married to my husband, Harvey J. Holden, in 1884, and 1887, he and his brother, Charles Holden, came to Old Greer County for the purpose of securing land on which to build a home. They stopped on North Fork of Red River and in a short time I came also. I remember it very clearly for it was on my nineteenth birthday and our baby son, Charles, was seven months old. My mother-in-law, his mother, came with me, also his brother-in-law and sister. There was quite a family of us; we all lived together.

We remained at this place for a year, then moved to Lake Creek to our homestead which I still own. Part of the land I have divided among my eight children.

My husband and his brother, Charles, made a dugout for us to live in and built a picket house of one room a short distance away. The dugout was made by digging down in the side of a bank for several feet and was then covered over with bark and on top of that was piled dirt. I did not like the dirt falling down through the cracks so I lined the walls and ceiling with newspapers. This helped a good deal but we could hear bugs and centipedes crawling behind the paper. I would push the scissors through and often cut the centipedes in two or kill the spiders, etc. The rattlesnakes were the worst thing to contend with, for they were so numerous and so poisonous, we had to be constantly on the lookout for them.

There were plenty of deer, wild turkey, prairie chickens and quail to be had for the mere shooting, while wolves were everywhere.

Just across the North Fork of Red River to the East in the Indian Territory ran the Chisholm cattle Trail and day after day great herds of cattle would

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be driven from Texas to Kansas, passing along this trail.

It was not just once in a while but day after day. These herds would reach just as far to the south as we could see and just as far to the north, and would be a quarter of a mile wide. The Cattle Commission Companies hired men to stay along the line and "cut" the herds. These men were paid to watch these herds and take all of the cattle out of the herd which did not belong to it. Brands of the cattlemen were registered and these men had long lists of brands.

Four of these Inspectors boarded with us. Two of them, I do not remember their names, but the other two were Joe Thompson and Elmo Moore.

My husband, his mother, his sister and her husband, our baby and I and the four men boarders all lived in the dugout and picket house that year. The family lived in the dugout and the men had the picket house to themselves. It does not seem to me now that we were crowded. We were happy.

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The men would go to Vernon, Texas, and get groceries two or three times a year and men from three or four families would go together.

In later years I often had to stay alone with my children as our relatives settled on their own claims and moved to themselves. One time my husband had to be away from home and it was two and one half miles to the nearest neighbor. My two children were quite small. I became very ill, suffering with pains in my body. There was no one to send for aid and I thought I might die. I wondered what would become of my children if I should leave them alone. We kept medicine on hand and I took what I thought was best and doctored myself as best I could and the next morning I was much better. People had to depend upon themselves in the early days.

We ^{raised} registered cattle and farmed. There was much more timber on the rivers in those days than now and there was much wild fruit, grapes, plums and wild currants. The grass in the river bottom

was as tall as the back of a cow.

The Kiowa Indians came over every day. I never feared them. Komalta and his tribe came often. One time more than one hundred came by on their way home from a picnic which they had attended at Mangum; this was about 1899.

We had good neighbors and enjoyed many things among ourselves. The Castle family were quite musical. There were two boys, Dwight and Babe, and two girls, Addie and "ellie, all of whom played musical instruments.

Churches and school houses were built and our family assisted in this work.

I lived forty-two years on the home place. Seven of our children were born there and three of our grandchildren.

My husband passed away March 2, 1922. My oldest son, Charles, is city manager at El Reno. He is the baby I brought to Oklahoma. I am living in my home in Granite alone but my children and grandchildren

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come to visit me often and then Verd Morris and his wife live right by me. I have known Verd since he was born.

One of my daughters lives at Altus. Two daughters and one son live in or near Granite, while my son, DeWitt, is president of the First National Bank at Lone Wolf, and he and his family live there.