

MELTON, LEE

INTERVIEW

#4614

145

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

146

MELTON, LEE.

INTERVIEW.

4614.

Field Worker's name Warren D. Morse.

This report made on (date) June 21, 1937. 1937

1. Name Mr. Lee Melton.

2. Post Office Address Velma, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month July Day _____ Year 1856.

5. Place of birth Arkansas.

6. Name of Father Bill Melton. 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 3.

MELTON, LEE,

INTERVIEW.

4614.

warren D. Morse,
Field worker,
June 21, 1937.

An interview with Mr. Lee Melton,
Velma, Oklahoma.

I came into what is now Oklahoma from Denison, Texas, along in '73 and came up to Caddo in Bryan County. I was just a kid at that time and people told me that there was plenty of money in Oklahoma and that it was easily made.

Mr. Campbell asked me to drive some horses to Fayetteville, Arkansas. I had never seen Indians dressed in their peculiar garb before. They had very little clothing on and wore their war paint. I didn't have any trouble driving the horses to Arkansas.

When I started back from Fayetteville I stopped at the Green ranch on Big Blue Creek near Toll Mountain in Arkansas.

This ranch was small but neat and nice; their ranch house was built out of mud which is commonly called "doby". Their out buildings were small and made of "doby" also. Later Mrs. Bob Green built a ranch house out of lumber which was the only one of that kind in the country.

Mrs. Bob Green was an Indian; Bob took her when she was small and sent her north to Cincinnati, Ohio, to his folks

MELTON, LEE,

INTERVIEW.

4614.

-2-

who reared and educated her. Then Bob married her and brought her back to Oklahoma. Bob secured mining rights at McAlester besides holding most of the Indian rights around there.

Bob got to drinking quite a bit and stayed in Denison, Texas, most of the time and his wife went back to Ohio and lived with his people.

It took me about three years to find out that I could not have much pleasure in cowboy life. We slept in the open, rain or shine. When we made a market trip that would be our hardest time especially if it started to storm. The lightning would play over the cows horns and we would have to ride almost continually night and day to keep the cattle from stampeding and at that they would sometimes get away from us.

We had to ride the range a lot in bad weather and some times it would take many night rides to gather the cattle together.

We never had any trouble with the Indians.

We made friends with those Indians down east.

MELTON, LEE,

INTERVIEW.

4614.

-3-

One time we started north with a bunch of cattle when a crowd of those Comanches came up on us and our foreman told them that he was not going to give them any beef. We had a small skirmish and after we had had this skirmish I decided I had better leave Oklahoma.

It wasn't the Five Civilized Tribes who worried me; it was those Comanches, Kiowa, and Apaches. Geronimo ran loose every once in a while and I was afraid he would make a break for our place sometime.