

WARREN, NED.

- 8 -
INTERVIEW.

Form A-(S-149)

BIOGRAPHY FORM

5933.

297

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Grace Kelley.

Report made on (date) May 21, 1937. 1937

Name Ned Warren.

Post Office Address Henryetta, Oklahoma.

Residence address (or location) 16th and Moore.

DATE OF BIRTH: Month March Day 6 Year 1882.

Place of birth Montague, Texas.

Name of Father Frederic Columbus Warren Place of birth Chattanooga, Tennessee

Other information about father _____

Name of Mother Mary Elizabeth Knight. Place of birth Upshire County, Texas.

Other information about mother _____

Notes or complete narrative by the field worker dealing with the life and history of the person interviewed. Refer to Manual for instructions on subjects and questions. Continue on blank sheets if necessary and attach family to this form. Number of sheets attached 8.

Grace Kelley,
Interviewer.

COMANCHE RAID IN TEXAS.

As told by Ned Warren,
Henryetta, Oklahoma.

To show the bravery of the pioneer women of Oklahoma I want to tell a story that happened in Texas when mother was young to show how she feared the Indians, and yet she came here to the Indians, to start over again making a home when she was middle aged.

The Comanches went on the warpath and crossed into at Texas. They stopped/her neighbor's house, where there was a man, woman, baby and two young ladies. They slit the man's throat, took the baby by its heels and dashed its head against a tree, undressed the three women and tied them on horses, taking the women with them. That night was bitter cold, and they camped and took the older woman off her horse and covered her with a robe, but the other two were left on the horses and froze before morning. The next morning the Indians were awakened by a rooster crowing and for some reason that scared them, for they got on their horses hurriedly and left her there. She thought that they had gotten lost and camped closer to a house than they knew.

-2-

Ever after that mother was afraid of the Indians.

F. C. WARREN, TEXAS COWBOY.

Father was a cowboy eighty years ago in Texas and worked for old Jim Chisholm on the Chisholm Trail, but I don't know of his experiences, though he told me when I was small. All I know was that they came from Texas to Baxter Springs, Kansas.

HUNTING A NEW HOME.

In 1897 father wanted to homestead a place as the Government would give you a hundred and sixty acres if you lived on it and improved it for five years, or you could live on it fourteen months and pay for it at a dollar and twenty-five cents an acre.

We moved in a covered wagon with horses, but my brother and I rode horseback. We got to where Weatherford is now in November; that's in the Cheyenne and Arapaho Nation. We went through the Chickasaw and Choctaw Nations to avoid the Comanche country as it would be safer, but it was farther than if we had gone straight through. Mother was Dutch and Cherokee, and wasn't afraid of the Five Civilized Tribes.

BUILDING THE NEW HOME.

Where we stopped was prairie and there were no trees to improve our place, so we (and the rest of the white settlers) went to the Caddo reservation and stole their trees and hauled them eight or ten miles to a steam saw-mill on the prairie, as there were no streams to run a water-mill. They had Indian police and if they caught you it was a trip to Guthrie, unless it was one who could be bought off. The Government tried to keep the whites from taking the trees because they belonged to the Indians.

Our first room was built of walnut boards which had been cut at this mill. We had had a half dugout, partly in the ground and about two feet boarded up with a roof, similar to a cellar. Then we built a shed room of pine boards, and we had sheds for our stock, too. The window was just a shutter window, with no glass in it. The doors and window were hung with leather hinges.

I have a good picture of it but wouldn't part with it, but would let you have it copied if you wanted to. It shows the gyphills, our grey hounds, chickens, ducks and a horse, besides mother, dad and my brother. It is a good story in itself.

WARREN, NED.

INTERVIEW.

5933.

-4-

FUEL.

We had to haul firewood ten or twelve miles and one winter it was so hard to get, and corn was so cheap, twelve cents a bushel, that we burned corn for heat.

SEVENTEEN YEAR OLD COWBOY.

In 1899 I went from Weatherford to Lipscomb, Texas, with a herd of cattle owned by Jesse West and Allen. My father didn't like for me to go with them and said, "Well, if you are bound to go be careful, for West will kill you if he gets the chance." We went through the Kiowa and Comanche and Apache country for it was too much trouble to go around. They lived in tepees; the Government had built houses ^{for} them but they kept their feed and such in the houses, sometimes they would put their horses in the houses. They had oodles of horses, the prettiest, fat ones you ever saw. Some were pure white, their white colts were as white as the grown ones, while ours are dark and get lighter as they grow up. One was all white to the center and from there back was real black. Some were black

from the head to just behind the shoulders, then white to the hips and the rest black. All kinds of pretty paints, and all colors as if somebody had splashed them.

The farms were outside, and the pastures were fenced in. One evening some of the cows got into a dry garden and a Dutchman set his dogs on them running them into a corn field, on the other side. Jesse killed the two dogs and told me to camp at the first good place, and tore the Dutchman's door down getting through. We camped a few miles from there and West came in the next morning. We had no more trouble with the Dutchman for he was afraid to do anything. I wasn't afraid of him after that but didn't like to work with ^{him.} He came back and later got into some trouble, and he and four others were mobbed at Ada.

WEATHERFORD AND EL RENO.

The first store was owned by a Mr. Keen. The Choctaw, Oklahoma and Gulf came from Memphis, Tennessee, and stopped at El Reno. (It later went into the hands of the receiver and the Rock Island leased it). The closest railroad west was Amarillo, Texas, one hundred and fifty miles away. The closest points north were in Kansas, a hundred miles, and

-6-

south a hundred miles to a railroad. So you can see why people from all around Weatherford freighted from El Reno.

When I had been there six years or in 1903, Weatherford had the population of fifteen thousand. It had eighteen saloons and seventeen gambling houses. After the railroad came to Weatherford, the town grew fast.

That was a great farming country. I've seen ten or fifteen wagons, with sideboards, loaded with castor beans to ship. A lot of broom corn was raised, corn and kaffir corn.

Sanders place had a canyon on the east and another on the west of it, where the section line ran. The roads couldn't be opened because of these canyons and everyone had to cross his land that came from the south. It was ruining his land for they were using a strip clear through, a hundred yards wide. He built a fence and gate and charged each wagon five cents each way or ten cents a trip. One day he collected forty dollars but that was more than he ordinarily received.

STAGE AND MAIL LINE.

I believe this was called the Merryfield line but I don't think the Merryfields ever drove it. They had a

stage stand and lived on the Caddo reservation, on a divide between Dead Woman's Canyon and Sugar Creek. The line was from El Reno to Arapaho, or from El Reno, Merryfield, Weatherford, and Arapaho. It seems that there was one other, but I can't think of it.

INDIAN SCARE, 1898.

The winter of 1898 was our coldest winter. Two cowboys got drunk and shot into a tepee and shot a squaw. The Indians armed themselves and our folks bunched up and armed themselves and waited, as it looked pretty bad. For some reason they didn't attack us and we heard later that the Indians were as frightened as we were.

HAULING CEDAR LOGS, 1898.

One day I went after some cedar logs, which we cut the length of three posts, and got about six loaded when it started to rain. When we had the good four-horse team we would load ten or twelve logs on, but this time I just had two horses. It was the last of October and I had planned my trip so that I would haul them at night as I wouldn't be so likely to meet any policemen. I didn't have a coat of any kind with me and it continued to rain

-8-

all of the thirty miles home. I almost froze and my teeth chattered until I thought they would never stop. We didn't steal those for the fun of it, but that was the only way we could improve our place. We took the logs home to cut for then we would have the chips for firewood.

INDIANS LIKED HOME-MADE BREAD.

One day my aunt had been baking bread and when she turned around an Indian was standing at the door. When she asked him what he wanted (they were terrible beggars) he said he wanted some bread. She told him that she didn't have any, as she didn't want to give it to him and forgetting that he could look past her and see it on the table. He said, "white woman lie." I don't know if she gave it to him or not.