

WATSON, DORA

INTERVIEW

9839

468

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

Field Worker's name Ophelia D. Vestal

This report made on (date) January 31, 1938

1. Name Dora Watson.

2. Post Office Address Lawton, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) Route #4

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month June Day 18 Year 1884

5. Place of birth Texas (East)

6. Name of Father _____ 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

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Ophelia D. Vestal
Investigator
January 31, 1938.

Interview with Mrs. Dora Watson,
Route #4, Lawton, Oklahoma.

On July 11, 1901, my father, mother and I started on a little vacation. I was old enough to file on some land; as I was so anxious to get here the time passed very slowly.

My father had farmed some in eastern Oklahoma for about ten years, always keeping pretty horses. When we heard of this opening we hitched the horses to a covered wagon, putting in some bedding and filled a "grub" box, also carrying a five gallon keg for water. We went to El Reno, camping there for a few days, taking our time and registering for the opening. People were friendly and nice most everywhere we camped, but when we went to register two big fat women seemed rather greedy and got in a head of me. I thought, "Well, all right." I drew some land and they didn't get any.

After leaving El Reno to come on to Fort Hill, we saw people from everywhere on their way down here, lots of covered wagons. This was nearing the last days of July, the wind was hot and it had not rained for so long; I never saw such a long dusty road. Water was a serious problem on the way down here

as well as when we reached here. If we could have had rains I don't know how things would have turned out. Lots of people who drew claims soon left, they were so disgusted over the dry times. Camping along, taking our time, it was a pretty sight when we saw the mount ins. Then we knew we were near Fort Silo, because those mountains had all ready been fully described to us.

Our home was first started with just one room. In later years we added a room as we could. Things did well here. The crops were good, fruit trees grew fast, we had beautiful wild flowers and an abundance of wild berry vines. This was a healthful place to live and everybody who stayed here as long as six months would hardly move away.

The first streets and sidewalks that were laid off really meant the town was growing fast. It was a sight how the Indians would come into town and stay for awhile. They camped at the ed Store camp grounds, but would be in town early in the morning and stay late. The Indians would sit on the ground in groups. I often wondered if they were angry at us for coming here.

So many people were from other states, especially back East and North where no cotton was raised. Once

we were working in the field planting some cotton where the first planting didn't come up to a perfect stand. A neighbor man came out where we were working, asking why we had planted so many acres of beans.

I have heard just recently that "Post Oak Jim", a medicine man of the early day, now living near Cache, will go to town and go to his nearest white friends, sit down in the store, get a pipe and go through the peace pipe treaty. They will tell him to be quiet, not talk so much, but he just laughs and says, "Well we all want to be friends, don't we maybeso." He seems to be a pretty good old Indian and is quiet.

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