

CHITWOOD, WILLIAM A.

INTERVIEW

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BIOGRAPHY FORM

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Mildred B. McFarlandThis report made on (date) August 17, 19371. Name William A. Chitwood2. Post Office Address 203 West Main3. Residence address (or location) Edmond, Oklahoma.4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month September Day 25 Year 18695. Place of birth Missouri6. Name of Father Henderson Chitwood Place of birth Scott County, Tenn.Other information about father Died 18457. Name of Mother Elizabeth Robinson Place of birth Reynolds County, Mo.Other information about mother Died 1847

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 Six.

Mildred B. McFarland  
Interviewer  
August 17, 1937

Interview with  
William A. Chitwood  
Edmond, Oklahoma.

My former home was in Ellington, Missouri. I had taught school there for several years. My father came to Hartsell for his health in 1892. He was very ill and sent for me the following year of 1893. I arrived in March. Father passed away in May. There were no cemeteries closer than Oklahoma City, so we buried him on his homestead. He had bought a place about ten miles southeast of Edmond. There are quite a number of the family buried there.

There was no necessity of my going back to Missouri, as the family insisted on my staying and making the run on the Cherokee Strip.

I went to Orlando in a lumber wagon and into Perry on a flat car. The trains were so crowded that I had to wait for the third train out. Consequently, when I did arrive I was too late to file on a claim. I bought a relinquishment later, however, and started

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to farm it. The following year I taught school for six months and farmed the other six.

The school was a small one-roomed affair, one and one half miles northwest of Spencer. It was called "Bloody-Point," later changed to "Sunnyside." It is still standing.

When the Kickapoo Reservation was thrown open for settlement, my sister decided to make the run. She was going to ride a fast pony of mine and I was going to ride with her on a mule. I was not going to stake a claim, but my sister did not want to go alone. There was a large crowd assembled and everyone was restless as the time drew near to start.

I got off my mule to go into a building to ask the time and while I was inside, the starting gun was fired. Everyone started in a mad rush and my mule went too. I never expected to see him again, but some-time later I found him tied to a tree.

Before my father died the family lived in a small one-roomed log cabin. After his death I had a two-roomed frame house built. We did not have much furni-

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ture, most of it was made from native lumber taken off the farm. We only had one home made bed. The children slept on pallets, made from dried grass.

The Indians were very friendly and never caused us any trouble. There was a large cattle ranch not far from our place called "Seventh Sea." Just across the river from it is where Washington Irving caught a wild horse. That was northeast of our place. We were located on the western edge of what was called "Nine Mile Flats."

There was a smallpox epidemic in 1897. All the schools were closed and the children were vaccinated. There was a small trading post and post office located on the southeast quarter of <sup>a</sup> Section <sup>in township</sup> 13, range 2 west. It was on the southwest corner of the quarter section. It was called the "Hartsell Trading Post" and is no longer there.

The Star Mail Route extended from Edmond as far east as Chandler.

Mr. Hartsell was the postmaster and also carried the mail. He would ride horseback, with the mail in

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saddle bags across his horse.

I taught in several District Schools from 1894 to 1901. I kept the farm going in the meantime. We raised sheep and cotton. Mother used to weave all our carpets. She would sit at her spinning wheel for hours. She made all our clothes in this way. She gathered bark from trees to make brown dye. Blue dye was too expensive. A pair of "store pants" with one hip pocket were a luxury. If there were two hip pockets in a pair of "store pants" that was the height of elegance for a man or boy.