

CONE, W. R.

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

Field Worker's name Maurice R. Anderson

This report made on (date) August 31 193 7

1. Name Mr. W. R. Cone

2. Post Office Address Davis, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) Seven miles west of Davis

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month May Day 19 Year 1877

5. Place of birth Texas

6. Name of Father E. D. Cone Place of birth Tennessee

Other information about father Deceased

7. Name of Mother Nancy Ferguson Place of birth Texas

Other information about mother Deceased

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 5

Maurice R. Anderson
Interviewer
August 31, 1937

8347

33

Interview with
Mr. W. R. Cone
Davis, Oklahoma.

I was born May 19, 1877, in Texas.

I came to the Indian Territory with my father, in 1886. He settled at Price Falls. There was a store and post office and Mr. N. P. Price, who owned the store, also owned a large cattle ranch, known as the N. P. brand. There was a cotton gin there which was run by water power. My father went to work for Mr. Price running this gin. Later he bought it and made a steam gin out of it. There wasn't very much cotton raised around there at that time, but lots of corn.

There was a ferry boat crossing at Price Falls, on the Washita River, pulled by a cable fastened to a tree on each side.

There was a log school house owned by Mr. Price, but a few years later he had a school house built out of rocks, and paid for it himself.

The Santa Fe Railroad started building through that part of the country in 1886. The first train to go over this new road was in 1887.

I was a small boy when we came to Price Falls. My

- 2 -

father was working all the time, so it was up to me to do all the hunting. We had turkey or fresh meat to eat every meal. There was plenty of deer and wild hogs then, running wild, and if you found a hog that didn't have a mark on it and could catch it and put your own mark on, the hog was yours. I was small, but the next fall after we were here father helped me hunt up my hogs, and when we finally got all we could find, I was the owner of around fifty. But we never found all of them for I know I marked around a hundred.

I remember one time my father helped the United States Marshal take some prisoners to Fort Smith, Arkansas, and I went with him. On our way back, we camped at a small place in the Choctaw Nation and the Choctaw Indians were having a big dance or celebration of some kind, which had been going on for two or three days. They had a big pot of meat and ground up corn to eat. They had a block of wood with a hollow in it and a deer's hide stretched over it. One of the Indians would beat on this, and the ones that were dancing would keep time with this drum or tom tom as they called it. They would go around and around in a big circle, and one of them, the leader I guess would whoop every once in a while.

- 3 -

The men and women would be in line behind each other, and all they did was to stomp their feet as they went around. I have heard my father say, if the Indians had it in for someone, they would get him in side of this ring where they were dancing and when they cleared away from the dancing ring there would be a dead Indian, but no one would know who killed him.

My father had to pay a \$5.00 permit each year to live in the Indian Territory. There was a Chickasaw Militia, who would come around every year and collect the five dollars. If you didn't pay it, they would load everything you had and take you to Red River and set you across on the other side. I have heard my father say that he knew of several families that the militia had put across Red River, and in two or three days they would be right back.

There was very little money in those days, and people could hardly make a living. When my father ran the gin, the farmers would pay in cotton for having their cotton ginned. Father would take out his toll just like the corn mills did.

The old log house that we lived in fifty-one years

- 4 -

ago is still standing near Price Falls. There was an old cattle trail that crossed the Arbuckle Mountains and went north near Price Falls. This was called the "Whiskey Trail."