

INDEX CARDS:

No Man's Land
Ranching
Fort Sill
Red Store
Peyote
Anadarko
Indian Games
Indian Courts

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

4325

Field Worker's name Chester A. LambThis report made on (date) June 4 19371. Name W. H. Darnold2. Post Office Address Anadarko, Oklahoma3. Residence address (or location) Anadarko Oklahoma4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month February Day 3 Year 18735. Place of birth Missouri6. Name of Father W. H. Darnold Place of birth Kentucky

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Celia (Bates) Darnold Place of birth Tennessee

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 _____

Experiences of W.H. Darnold
Anadarko, Oklahoma

I came to Oklahoma in 1880, or that part of Oklahoma between Kansas and Texas known as "No Man's Land", situated in Beaver County. We made the trip here in a covered wagon. I was then 13 years of age.

We settled outside of Norman, Oklahoma, staying there a short while and coming on to Anadarko. It was just a cattle country at that time. There was no town here at that time, just grazing land. I have plowed corn where the present city of Anadarko now stands. I worked for a man by the name of Thompson when I was 14 years old and that same year I went down to Ft. Sill and helped put up hay for the government. I was at Ft. Sill when the Indians burned the government school. They were very superstitious about the school so they banded together and burned it down.

There was only one store at Ft. Sill at that time. It was called the Red Store. I don't know who owned it or ran it, but I am under the impression it was the late General Need.

I have dealt with the Indians since I was 13 years old. In fact, in the early days I was known as handy-man among the Indians, and was well known among the different tribes. I have had many dealings

with them, and they were always fair and above board. The Indians at that time did not drink. There was very little alcohol in the country. However, I have seen them at their religious councils when they indulged in Peyote. They would all gather around in their tents, wrapped up in blankets; they would sit this way for hours under the influence of this drug. One of the Indians would beat the tom tom, and this slow monotonous boom of the tom tom would go on continuously. This worship would sometimes last for two or three days.

When I first came to Anadarko there were Indian tents stretched clear out to the Indian school north of town (Riverside Indian School, which is located two miles north of Anadarko). I have seen under some of those elm trees, along the banks of the river, more silver money stacked up than anyone could ever dream of. This silver money was brought here in wagons, guarded by government troops. It was called grazing money or rass money. The government always paid them in silver.

At the old Agency building north of town there was a cannon which was used by the government as sort of a curfew. The cannon was called the Break-of-day-gun and Sunset-gun. When this gun was shot all the Indians had to be in camp, and any Indian found out-

3

side of camp after this gun was shot was punished.

The Indians played many games. They also had many foot and horse races. One of the games played by the Indians was to put a rock or ball like object in one of their hands, and have the other side guess which hand it was in. In case they guessed right they would gain a man; but if the guess was wrong, they would have to give one of their men to the other side. They also had another game in which they used a big hoop. They would throw this hoop in the air and the men would try to shoot their arrows through the hoop before it hit the ground. They played many other games which I do not remember.

I also remember the Indians would hold Court for Council, when one of the tribe had disobeyed the rules of the tribe. It was much like our present day court. They would hold this court or council once a month. When an Indian was brought before the court the Chief would send a man for him and this Indian would get the accused Indian by the braid and bring him in to answer to whatever offense he had committed. He was

4

allowed council among his tribe. One of the punishments inflicted on them, if found guilty, was to be dismounted. He was not allowed to go on hunts, but had to stay in camp with the squaws and take care of the camp, keep it clean, etc.

Wild game was plentiful here at that time. There were many deer and wild turkey in the country.

The only trouble any of my family had with the Indians happened in Beaver County. A band of Cheyennes and Arapahoes stole two of my cousins, boy and a girl. These children were stolen on the day of their mother's funeral. They were taken to the Black Hills of Montana. The boy died in Montana, but we never did know what happened to the little girl. Quannah Parker told my uncle that these Indians had stolen the children, and that the little boy died in Montana.

(Comment)

(Mr. Kagaman of Salina, Kansas, in a letter to Ross Hume of Anadarko tells of the time when the two tribes above mentioned went on this kidnapping and murder spree. He says that these Indians were brought back from Montana and tried in United States Court at Ft. Sill.)