

DODSON, MARION H.

INTERVIEW

#4667

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BIOGRAPHY FORM  
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION  
Indian Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

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DODSON, MARION H.

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Field Worker's name Ethel B. Tackitt,

This report made on (date) June 26, 1937. 193

1. Name Marion H. Dodson.

2. Post Office Address Mangum, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) Mangum Bus Station.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month November Day 13 Year 1870.

5. Place of birth Coryell County, Texas.

6. Name of Father W. F. Dodson. Place of birth Tennessee.

Other information about father An old style gentleman.

7. Name of Mother Jennie Dodson. 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 5.

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Ethel B. Tackitt,  
field worker.  
June 26, 1937.

An interview with Marion H. Wodson,  
Mangum Bus Station, Mangum, Okla.

EARLY EXPERIENCES AS A  
COWBOY AND A BUSINESS MAN.

I came as a boy with my father's family from Coryell  
County, Texas to Greer County, in April, 1889.

My father settled on a claim three miles north and  
one mile east of the town of Mangum which at that time had  
grown to have several stores, which were owned by the Van  
Lier brothers, and the Clampitts and Pendergrafts were also  
in business in Mangum.

In the spring of 1890 I went to work for the H — I.  
(H bar X) Cow outfit. It belonged to Sam Reed and after  
his death was sold by his widow to the Day Land and Cattle  
Company who owned the J. Buckle (J G) outfit.

The J Buckle headquarters ranch was near the west line  
of Greer County joining Texas. The J. Buckle spring which  
has been a landmark from the earliest knowledge of white man  
and is situated on the fork of Red River due north of the  
town of Reed, was in a line camp. A line camp was a camp in  
which the cowboys lived while they looked after the thousands

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of head of cattle which were stamped with the two different brands. A certain number of cattle were kept north of Elm River and others were kept on the south side of Elm River so that they would not eat a range completely out in the summer, nor drift from the northers in the winter, and pile up in canyons to die of hunger or thirst.

In the winter each line rider carried a hatchet or small axe so that he could chop holes in the ice on the river and creeks and the cattle could get water.

These streams were often frozen over for weeks and the thin cattle would slip on the ice, fall and die because of the cold.

Coyotes seldom bothered anything except very small calves but the lobo or lofer wolves, as they were known and called, would kill even grown stock, and a little colt simply could not escape if a Lofer wolf was on the range, and for that reason the little colts were driven out if possible before spring.

Each cowboy carried his slicker and coat tied behind his saddle if it was warm weather, and to the horn of his saddle his lariat or "catch rope". Under his arm, in a holster,

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or in his trousers belt, each cowboy carried a pistol and often carried a Winchester by the side of his saddle. He did not carry these pistols "to shot things up" as is told in stories but to protect his stock from wolves, panthers and other varmints.

at that time along the north fork and the Elm Fork of Red River, there grew large cottonwood, hackberry and elm trees, in great numbers.

The river valleys were covered with tall grass which would hide a man on horseback and in many places the wild pea vines and bird pease grew knee high.

Most all of the ranches cut wild blue-stem sage grass and stacked it for winter hay for their horses which were kept up for winter saddle horses. the other horses were allowed to run out until needed for the spring round-up when they were hunted up, fed a little and the young ones were broken to ride.

Then when the grass came, usually about April 15th, the chuck wagons were made resdy and started out from the different headquarter ranches. everybody was notified either by a hand sent out for the purpose or by the cowboys telling one another when and where to meet the wagon.

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The cowboys would come with their pack horses and their mounts of from six to ten horses; the number would depend upon how good the horses were and upon just how hard a man was on his horses.

There was always at least one horse in a cowboy's mount on which he stood guard/because it was well trained, dependable and would stand staked out at night. Then if he was a good cowhand there was his cutting horse which he used only in the cutting out work of the round-up. Every man loved his cutting horse and above all if a cowboy had a good roping horse he was the envy of the outfit. Many a hot argument took place over who owned the best cutting and roping horse. The other cowboys always had to give up to Ellison Carroll who was acknowledged to be the best roper in the outfit and who won the world's championship as a roper later.

There was a round-up ground on what is now White Flat, one on Elm River, northeast of Mangum, one on Doggy Creek in the southwest part of Creek County and another down below where Altus is now located.

It was not wise to have too many cattle in a round-up; a thousand or fifteen hundred were plenty. They were too

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much trouble to handle and get water for and dry cattle caused stampedes.

In 1891 I quit working for the J. Buckle outfit and went to work for the \_\_\_ W (Bar W) outfit, Johnnie Moseby was in charge of it and I continued to work with them for several years. He had a smaller outfit than the H \_\_\_ Y, (H BAR Y) outfit.

Then when the railroad came to Mangum I went into the transfer business and put in a horse drawn bus and have continued in this business and in other kinds of business in Mangum until the present time.