

ELKINS, H. H.

INTERVIEW #4410

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BIOGRAPHY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION 4410
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Jasper H. Mead.

This report made on (date) June 15, 1937

1. Name H. H. Elkins.

2. Post Office Address Chickasha, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) Ratliff Tourist Camp.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month June Day 14, Year 1866.

5. Place of birth Coal Creek-Anderson County, Tennessee.

6. Name of Father A. C. Elkins Place of birth Virginia.

Other information about father Died '72.

7. Name of Mother Elmely Reever Place of birth Tennessee

Other information about mother 60 years of age at death.

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 2

Jasper H. Mead,
Field Worker.

An Interview with H. H. Elkins.
by
Jasper H. Mead,

My name is H. H. Elkins. I was born in Coal Creek, Anderson County, Tennessee, in 1866 on June 14.

I came to Oklahoma thirty-five years ago and landed at the Birdsong Crossing on the Kiamichi River, which Crossing was named after my wife's brother-in-law, George Birdsong. That country in 1902 was covered with timber and grass that was hip high to a man. There was no way of telling how many thousands of four year old steers there were in and around Birdsong Crossing at that time. These steers belonged to a man by the name of Willie Wilson, who lived at Ft. Towson.

There were also lots of wild hogs, turkey, wild cats, and deer and most any kind of wild game that could be thought of. I have seen the squirrels so thick in the bottoms of the Kiamichi River you couldn't tell which one to shoot at.

The people around Birdsong Crossing were Indians, negroes, and whites-fewer whites than the others.

There was no school around there in 1902 and farming was done on a small scale. Just little patches of different things, here and there.

The water supply came from dug wells and springs, and

it was the finest water in the country.

The people around Birdsong Crossing did their trading at a little place called Goodland, where there was a small store and post office. The fine town now of Hugo was three miles south of Goodland, but in 1903 Hugo was just a tent town. Later on the little place of Goodland united with Hugo, and Hugo became the county seat of Choctaw County, a county that was first called Cedar.

After Statehood in 1907, Jim Meredith, a one-armed man, was the first sheriff of Choctaw County. The old saying was that he could shoot faster with one hand than most people could with two.

In three or four months after Statehood I had 120 men under me and built the first roads, culverts, and bridges there were in Choctaw County in Ratliff township. We sure had a tough time, but up until then there weren't any roads at all, just small cow trails.