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Investigator, W. T. Holland,
February 15, 1933.

Interview with William Jasper McCain,
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Tulsa.

My parents were early settlers of Missouri, coming from Kentucky, traveling in their covered wagon, in 1857. My father, Robert McCain, was born in Kentucky, November 17, 1824, and my mother, Rebecca (Waller) McCain, was born in Tennessee, October 5, 1833. I have these records in the old family Bible. My parents were married in Tennessee in 1851. Even in that early day, 1857, pioneers were wending their way westward, several families coming at the time my parents came.

I was born in Vernon County, Missouri, just over the line from Fort Scott, Kansas, March 17, 1859. In 1866, lured by the free lands of Kansas, my parents loaded their household goods and family onto the old covered wagon and we moved to Ottawa County, Kansas, where we lived until 1874 when we moved to Howard County, Kansas. Howard County at that time was forty miles wide from east to west and forty-two miles from south to north,

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later on it was divided into two counties as it now stands.

My father was a farmer, and as such lived a quiet life, and to me, it seems that peace and quiet reigned there or at least where we lived.

I married Emma L. Ross, a native of Illinois, who then lived in Kansas. We were married March 13, 1881, and the 13th proved very lucky for us as she is still living and is my wife until this day, after fifty-seven years of trials, tribulations, and happiness, and I'm glad to say happiness over-balanced our troubles.

We came to Oklahoma in January, 1893, locating near Claremore. Our trip, like most all travel then, was made in a covered wagon. We came here from Chautauqua County, north of Sedan, Kansas. We spent our first night of the trip at Sedan and crossed over into the Osage country at Caney, Kansas, then went to Bartlesville, then down the Caney River on to a place near Claremore. My first year here was spent in the timber business. There was a lot of walnut timber along the Caney and Verdigris

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Rivers. This, we cut and hauled to Claremore where it was shipped out by rail. Walnut then, as now, was a valuable timber and we got good prices as we were buying for an English firm. All our logs were exported. This first year, 1881, we lived near the Claremore mound but in 1889, we rented a farm from a widow, Rosenthal. She was a daughter of Joe Chambers, Cherokee, and had married a Jew who had died prior to our going there. Right here I'll say, that the Chambers, Rogers, Clem, Bushyheads, Bulletts, all Cherokees, were the finest of people. We never had any trouble, business or otherwise, with anybody. Claremore, in 1888, didn't have more than fifteen houses in the town, business houses, residences and all.

John Bullett was the postmaster. He had a little store house, a small stock of goods, and the post office in one corner of the room. That was a meeting place, but little mail was handled; letters principally, as there were very few newspapers then. I lived on the place seven years, and in all that time never had a lock on my house,

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barn, crib or smokehouse. We would go away for two or three days on a visit and nothing would be bothered. This may be contrary to the accounts of some, but in the Claremore community we had a good citizenship, honest and reliable people, whose words were their bonds. Times and people too, it seems to me, were more sociable. Of course, once in a while an outlaw would come thru but they didn't molest anybody. I knew Bob Delton when he was United States Marshal. He would come through occasionally.

Our crops then, as now, were corn, oats, wheat and potatoes. I raised cattle and hogs, too. The biggest ranches were, the Rucker Ranch, east of Claremore, Charles McClellon, north, and Clem Rogers, also, north of town. Halsell's ranch was not far away, on the Verdigris River. Reverend Jack was the pastor of the Presbyterian Church in 1889. We didn't have any schools except subscription schools which were held in the Summer or early Fall. We moved into Claremore in 1900 to be near a school, and there we lived for twenty years or until 1920. During that time I continued to farm and followed my trade, too, as a carpenter.

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Dr. Lynn was one of Claremore's first doctors. Dr. Bowlin and Holcomb were also practicing physicians there. Dr. Bowlin and Tate Brady, of Tulsa, married sisters.

I didn't make the "Run" of 1889 into Oklahoma Territory. I did go to El Reno in 1893 at the Strip Opening but didn't file on any land as I didn't find any to suit me. In fact, land was cheap, both to buy or rent, so I preferred to live near a settlement as I had a family (in 1893.)

Pioneering, as it is now spoken of, wasn't a hardship, that is, for us. We had plenty to eat, a good house, good neighbors, no taxes, in fact, to us, it was a happy existence. Of course, schools were not so good nor so numerous. We had neighbors whom we visited and who visited us. Travel wasn't so extensive, and then we traveled in a wagon or on horseback but after all is said, we had a happy existence.