

SACL, JOHN

INTERVIEW.

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Indian -Pioneer History
Grant Foreman Director
211 Federal Building.
Muskogee, Oklahoma.

An interview with
John Saul
Atoka, Okla.
Age 83 years.

Pete W. Cole
Field worker
May 14, 1937.

My father, Sam Saul, was living in Sandusky County, Ohio, when I was born on December 4, 1854, and later moved to Grant County, Wisconsin where he died. I was about eleven years of age when we moved there so I do not remember the date of his death.

Later we came to Denison, Texas, where I was married to Julia Young in 1881 and to this marriage two boys and one girl were born. One of the boys died in Tuskahoma, Okla.

After my marriage I got a job as fireman on the M.K.&T. Railroad. I fired from Denison to Muskogee for six years. I quit this work to move on the farm.

I first moved to Indian Territory near Leon Post Office in Bryan County, leased some land from Lydia Johnson, and worked about forty acres. I planted corn, and cotton chiefly and at gathering time I would make about forty bushels of corn to the acre, and a bale of cotton to the acre. Corn was sold about twelve cents

per bushel and cotton about fifteen cents a pound. We marketed most of our products at Gainesville, Texas, and from the proceeds we bought clothes and groceries. Flour was selling at \$2.50 per hundred pounds. We raised our own meat so we did not have to buy any meat. We raised our own garden vegetables and had to buy very little.

When we first came to Indian Territory, we lived in a two room box house. The house was on the rented place. There was no well at this place so we dug a well that was ninety feet deep before we struck water and that was the best water that we ever used.

We did not live at any one place long but moved here and there every few years, and the next place was Roff, Oklahoma. Before moving to Roff, Oklahoma, my wife died and in 1888 I married Johnnie Dodson, who lived at Roff, Oklahoma. The Indian law did or rather would not permit me to marry in Indian Territory so we went across on the Texas side on the banks of Red River, where we were married by Parson Holland.

After sometime we moved next to Center, Oklahoma, in the Chickasaw Nation and followed the same course of business as before. There were no railroads nor town near us in those days so we had to haul all of our farm products to Wynnewood, Oklahoma, which was about sixty miles distant.

After we moved to this place, there were several Choctaw and Chickasaw Indians living near us and it was not long until we were great friends. We used to attend their meetings and enjoyed good times together.

I owned several head of cattle at that time and one time they were driven out of the pasture for what reason I did not know then, but later I was told that the reason was that a white person who wished to pasture his cattle in Indian Territory had to buy permit before being allowed to turn his cattle out in the range. This was the law of the Indian country and afterward I did not have any trouble.

From there we moved in 1901 to near Daisy, Oklahoma, and we rented some land from Uncle Jesse Bond, a full blood Choctaw, and lived in a house which belonged to Doc Woods, a store keeper at that place.

When we were living at Roff, Oklahoma, an incident happened that I remember very well. There was a man came to

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town and lived around there for sometime until the law, Bob Nester, a Federal Officer, found that this man was wanted for some crime that he had committed, and he went out to arrest him. He was found out in the country near Roff but he resisted arrest and threatened to show fight and was shot down out in the woods.

For several years, after my crop was laid by I did carpenter work and also I worked at a cotton gin for eleven years before moving to Daisy, Oklahoma.

In my young days I enjoyed hunting as there were several kind of wild game in the country and all one had to do was to go out and kill what deer or turkey he needed. I remember on several instances when a wild turkey would come up to the house and roost on the fence. I have a home-made turkey caller which I used when hunting turkeys. In hunting deer, when the snow was on the ground, I would track them or some hounds would run them, and on several occasions when chopping wood, I would hear the hounds barking and I would take my gun and head them off and kill the deer as he would come near me. Or at other times he would jump in the water to break his track and leave the tip end of his nose above the water to breathe, when I would kill him.

I very often found wild turkey nests out in the woods while I am on my hunt and would bring them home and set them under a hen to hatch. I raised several wild turkeys by finding wild turkey nests. I also used to have several pet coons that I caught them out in the woods. I once caught a young baby wolf and raised him with the dogs and trained him to hunt. He was one of the best hunters I ever had. The way I trained him to hunt was that I would chain the wolf to one of my best hunting dogs and they would hunt together until the wolf caught on to it, after they would get on a hot trail, I would untie them and the wolf would get about forty to fifty steps away from the dog and stay in line with the dog, always watching the dog while he was trailing until the deer was sighted. Then he would take after the deer and it would be only a short time until the wolf would run him down, pounce on him, and kill him.

The wolf does not bark or howl while hunting or trailing and it was fun to watch him run after any game that was sighted, as the victim was not going to get away after the wolf got after him.

An incident happened one time when a farmer had several head of hogs running in the bottom and every time

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he would try to bring them home the hogs would get in the thicket, briars and bushes and it was difficult for him to get them out. He wanted me to help him to run them out and pen them. I brought my dog and the wolf along to the bottoms where the hogs were found and it was only a matter of short time when the wolf ran them out and chased them all of the way home and the hogs were in the lot when we arrived. Of course the folks at home caught the wolf and had chained him so he would not catch any of the hogs but that was the only way that this farmer could get his hogs penned.

When I first moved to Daisy, Oklahoma, there were not very many people living in this part of the country. The country had not been opened up and what people lived there then were mostly Choctaws. In McGee Creek there were plenty of fish that one could catch any amount in a few minutes. As the story goes every time the hook was thrown in the water, the fish would fight over the bait until one was hooked and as it was being jerked out the other fish would accompany it two feet out above the water, and the fisherman had

to stand behind a tree to bait his hook to keep from being stampeded. Such were the fishing holes of McGee Creek.

When we left Illinois we traveled in a wagon pulled by a team of oxen. We farmed with oxen. In fact we did all of our work with oxen and today I can drive a yoke of oxen anywhere as good as I did then.

I used to know a trail that the cattlemen traveled in driving their cattle to market called the Whiskey Trail. I do not know for sure just where this road lies but what I do know is that, after leaving Texas and crossing Red River, it ran north to the Washita River, thence a little east and through Apanucka town, thence north to Kansas. This road was used for driving cattle to market only.

There were no telephones in those days nor competent physicians but if any one was taken sick there was always some one who knew of some herbs that would relieve the patient and always were willing to come to their aid. There were some

herb doctors living in those days that were better than several of the doctors that we have

today. Diphtheria was controlled by herb medicines that some of the old timers knew so that hardly anyone ever died from it.

I have been married twice and to these marriages have been born eight children, three children (one boy dead) from my first wife and five children, all living, from my second wife. My second wife was born in 1870 in Dallas, Texas, and is sixty seven years of age.

In 1901 we moved from Daisy to Atoka, and went into a vulcanizing business and have been in that business until I now have retired from further business.