

THORNE, MISSOURI INTERVIEW.

#4415

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Indian-Pioneer History

June 16, 1937

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An interview with Missouri Thorne,
East Main Street, Blair, Oklahoma

Mrs. Thorne was born March 6, 1847 in Gonzales
County, Texas. Five miles from the town of Gonzales.
Father was Nathaniel Tramel born in Tennessee.

Mother was Elizabeth Cramel.

In 1898 my husband and I decided we would like
to come west and take up a fresh start. In the
winter my husband and oldest son started out pros-
pecting. They spent more than three months at it
before my husband filed on a short section two

miles east and one south of the present town of Blair.

My husband filed; dug a well; planted a few trees
and left our son to look after things while he came
back home for me and the children. He bought a small
house and I never did live in it; didn't even go
there. Everything he could get with a mule and wagon by freight
to bring, axes, and matches, traps for traps and
have the traps baited before we got here. We drove
through in the wagon, and it took us about five weeks
from Waco County in Texas. We got along pretty well.
My husband always said he would never have a family of
children in the winter for it would disagreeable,
but the weather was so nice we made a kind of picnic
of the journey. It was a beautiful, pleasant trip.

the earth was smiling in all of its new spring dress
and it was before the flood time for the rivers.

We had plain marks roads too. Of course they were
not gravelled but they were much travel on and there
were lots of bridges over the smaller streams.

brought seven children with us in the train and they
all seemed to enjoy the trip and after we got home
they enjoyed the new country, I think more
than I did. I was concerned about getting some
improvements and no vehicles while I left behind,
while they were only interested in meeting the new
people and making new friends. Everything was so
different they enjoyed the change.

CRIPS

The very first year we made a bad crop. We
put in cotton and the next year we were able to rent
some land that had already been broke out, in addition
to what we had already, and made good wheat. The
wheat and cotton both had to be sent at Vernon, Texas.

I do not remember what we got for our wheat and cotton
but remember that we bought all the corn we needed for
twenty-five cents a bushel.

The country was so very desolate looking without

trees that I was anxious to plant trees and an orchard. You could not get extra land when we came as the ones who came earlier could. There were lots of nice orchards already set out by settlers and we could buy plenty of fruit, only nobody sold such things to neighbors in those days, but all were welcome to go to an orchard and help themselves.

There were also, lots of wild grapes and plums.

Everyone had all the vegetables wanted. He did not

can a great deal but dried a lot of things, Okra,

corn, beans, peas. He also dried a lot of fruit,

apricots, peaches, apples, pears and some of the

small berries. Berries were hard to dry for they

were so juicy. He had lots of pies and made wine and

cordial from the berries.

We seasoned everything with butter, I mean cakes,

pies, breads of all kinds, as well as many of the

vegetables. I had so much butter I made soap of it.

I raised chickens, turkeys, guineas. Every meal had

meat for the main dish. I put up a lot of both

sweet and sour pickles of cucumbers, peaches, pears,

and apples, water melon rind and pie melon. Beets

and tomatoes we could can, but I had to use acid to

keep my beans. I never could keep corn very well.

We never thought of canning our meats. We cured our

hog meat and everything else was used fresh as it was

killed. My children put out all our trees. They

thought it great fun to stick a switch in the ground

and watch it grow into a tree. We planted see or

most of our fruit trees it took them longer to grow

and bear but the fruit had a better flavor I think and

I do not think it is as often killed.

SOCIAL LIFE

There were lots of candy pullings, singings, spelling matches, and fish fries and us neighbors.

My oldest daughter married Christmas Day 1899,

and what a crowd we had and we served dinner to them.

It was a home wedding but all the neighbors knew they

were invited and never thought of bringing presents

as they do today. The parents on both sides usually

helped the couple set up house-keeping, unless the

young man already had his claim filed on and had been

keeping batch. When this was the case we always added

some fowls or maybe a heifer and the bride's saddle

pony. Our pioneer girls always had their bed covers,

usually a lot of quilts, a few blankets purchased at some store or maybe some that grandmother or auntie back in some of the old states made. There was no weaving and not much spinning done here when we came. We knit all our stockings and socks, sweaters and scarfs, and made lots of hand lace. Also made rag rugs a little later.

I think my children had the finest time growing up. They were so happy in sharing their work and play. One day one of the small boys came in with an egg he said he had picked up on the ground. Not wanting the other children to handle it too much and perhaps break it, he hid it in the bottom of the large clock that sat on the mantle. I guess he forgot all about it for I did. The day I heard the clock stop and I wondered what made that. It was the only time piece we had. I went and opened it to see if I could tell what was the matter and there was a little terrapin hatched out of that egg son had hid.

INDIANS

We did not see a great deal of the Indians. They came through here sometimes but I do not remember their ever stopping at my place. I was a little afraid of

them and just always wished that they would never find their way to our place. I have heard a good many legends about the Indians' sayings, but can remember only that they say that El Reno will never have a cyclone. I wish I could live there. They claim it is the way the rivers run around it.

I have seen several cyclones and it always scares me although I have never been hurt in one nor any of my loved ones. I always go to a cellar now when there comes a cloud. I sat in my door and watched Blair blow away the time everything was wrecked and would rather not see it again. Although there were not many lives lost, all of the houses in town nearly were wrecked.

My children are all married but one son and he cannot live here on account of asthma. I live all alone but my daughters are near and I have a telephone and can call them. My husband has been dead sometime. I have lived long and have reared a nice family. I am content. The hardships were many for us pioneers but we were a hardy, happy people and helped settle a great state.