

PERKINS, EMILY J.

INTERVIEW

7414

223

PHEIFER, EMILY J. INTERVIEW. 7414.

Charline M. Culbertson,
Interviewer,
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An Interview with Emily J. Pfeifer,
Savanna, Oklahoma.

I was born in Yorkshire, England, in the year of 1875, and came to the United States with my mother, Mary Ann Moore, when I was six years of age. My father, John G. Moore, had preceded mother and me to this county. We first located in Indiana and stayed there two years before coming to the Indian Territory. Our trip from Indiana was by train. We located at Savanna, as in the early eighties Savanna was one of the greatest coal mining towns in this part of the country, and my father was a coal weigher at number two mine. Most of the families who worked at the mines lived in little company houses but father always owned his little place.

Two years after we moved to this mining town there was an explosion which stopped the mining business for sometime. The night of the explosion I had gone to a concert at the church, as that is what we called ^amusica. in those days. Shortly after my return home the explosion happened. My father happened to be on the day

- 2 -

shift and was not at the mine; however, there were six men in the mine at the time who were killed. There were twelve rescue workers who went down the slope after the men but were overcome with after-damp and died.

The mines in those days were slope mines instead of shaft.

After this explosion, the mine was abandoned but there is still lots of coal there today and it will probably be opened up again some day.

The workers removed all the steel from this mine and opened a mine a Lehigh, which made that little town almost over night. People tore down their houses in Savanna just as Father did and rebuilt in Lehigh.

A few years later Father and three other men went in together and started a little mine at what is called Brewer now, but what was known then as Johnsville. The mine was called the Four J's as two of the men were named Jack and the other two were John.

PREIFER, EMILY J. INTERVIEW. 7414.

- 3 -

This was the beginning of the little one time coal mining town called Brewer.

My mother and father died and were buried in Savanna.

I am in possession of an old teapot, which is about one hundred and fifty years old, which belonged to my grandmother. It was brought from England.

The only activities we had was our church. I was converted in the Methodist Church in Savanna forty-five years ago, the same church that stands today, only with some improvements.

We held our summer camp meetings at Godfrey Spring, camping there for two weeks at a time. We also went on big fishing trips staying for ten days or two weeks. We took our tents and equipment and caught lots of fish and had big fish fries.

We had a little subscription school at Savanna near where the present school house is today, but I never attended school as Father did not think it was necessary.