

ROSS, TOM (MRS.) - INTERVIEW ✓ 10100

ROSS, TOM (MRS.)

INTERVIEW
BIOGRAPHY FORM

Form A-(S-149)

#101040

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name John F. Daugherty

This report made on (date) February 26, 1938 1938

1. Name Mrs. Tom Ross

2. Post Office Address Sulphur, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) Murray County

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month January Day 4 Year 1880

5. Place of birth Texas

6. Name of Father _____ Place of birth _____

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother _____ Place of birth _____

Other information about mother _____

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 4 sheets

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Investigator
John F. Daugherty
February 26, 1938

Interview with Mrs. Tom Ross
Sulphur, Oklahoma

I know nothing about my parents except that their name was Davis and they were born and died in Texas. Father died a short time before my birth and Mother died when I was a month-old. I was born in Texas, January 4, 1880, and a great aunt took me after the death of my mother, and partly reared me. When her daughter married I went to live with her. I was then fourteen years old. We came to the Indian Territory at that time and settled at Durant, in the Chickasaw Nation. We came from Coleman, Texas, driving a three horse wagon.

How we enjoyed the wild turkeys and prairie chicken. Uncle went hunting everyday and we had fried chicken each night for supper. We rented land from Charlie Colbert, a Chickasaw Indian. He owned many cattle and gave us permission to drive any cow with the brand "75" on her side into our lot and milk her. This we did and we always had plenty of milk and butter.

We had to haul our water seven miles from Blue River.

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I had chills as long as we lived there. Uncle built a small brush arbor and here we kept our barrels of water. They always hauled four barrels at a time and we had no water except from these barrels.

We always had plenty of meat. It was often cured in hot weather by the parched salt method. Salt was put in a kettle and burned. The fresh meat was put into this hot kettle of salt and this extracted the water from the meat, and cured it so that it kept.

We burned a brass lamp with a round wick and no chimney. It burned kerosene and smoked terribly.

I have seen Robberson Kemp for whom Robber's Roost was named. It is said that he often killed and robbed the people who camped at this famous spring on his place. Thus it became known as Robber's Roost. He finally went to the penitentiary for killing a man, who was killed by his stepson. He took the blame and was serving a life term when the stepson died, confessing to the murder before his death. This released Robberson.

We frequently went to church southwest of Durant, and we passed through Fort Washita enroute. I was just a girl, and was told that the Fort was haunted. There were several brick

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chimneys left standing, and I always expected to see a woman dressed in a long white robe, seated on top of one of these chimneys, but to my great disappointment I never did.

There were large holes in the ground walled with brick, some being about ten feet deep, I was told that these were for the storing of ammunition during the Civil War.

I stayed with Tom McCoy's wife on McCoy Hill on Twelve Mile Prairie for awhile after Mr. McCoy was killed. They were fullblood Chickasaws. He was buried near the house and each night Mrs. McCoy left a lamp burning near the window. I asked her why she did that ^{and} she said that at midnight each night Tom came back and sat in his rocking chair on the porch, and she left the light so that he could find the house. She would never allow the chair to be moved. She imagined she heard him rocking in his chair each night, as he did when he was alive. His place each evening while she prepared the evening meal was in this chair.

Uncle sold his cotton at Durant for three cents per pound. Aunt sold eggs for three cents a dozen and bought material for a dress at five cents a yard. A dress required ten yards, so our dresses cost fifty cents each.

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I was married to Tom Ross in 1893 and we moved to the present Murray County a short time afterward, and have lived here since.