

SOMMERS, EFFIE KELLER.

INTERVIEW #12355

425

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Investigator
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Interview with
Mrs. Effie Keller Sommers
408 E. Second Street
Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Mrs. Sommers, nee Keller, was born in Philipsburg, Kansas, in 1884 and came to Indian Territory in 1894. The first home of the family in the Territory was at Afton, then a little settlement of three or four hundred people. Mrs. Sommers attended a subscription school in Afton. After about a year there the family moved on to Tulsa.

When the father and brother were on their way to Tulsa to look the place over before moving, they came in a wagon with a team of mules. When they came to the Verdigris River it had to be forded. The mules were young and became excited by the water, one crowded the other off the path into a whirlpool and both were drowned and the wagon wrecked; the father and brother saving their own lives only with great difficulty. This happened at the ford where Catoosa is now located.

The Kellers lived for a while at Sand Springs

- 2 -

where Mr. Keller worked as a woodhacker, but they soon settled in Tulsa. Mrs. Sommers attended school in the building which stood where the Cosden building now stands.

Three brothers of Mrs. Sommers, Lee, J. H., and Forrest, each served as U. S. deputy marshal, two of them under Marshal Ledbetter. Her brothers, in Territorial days, used to hunt game and ship it out under the name of Mrs. Tate Brady, since only an Indian could legally ship game out of the Territory. All kinds of game was abundant in those days. Mrs. Sommers herself often hunted quail, ducks, geese, and even deer. She used also to help swim cattle across the Arkansas just for the fun of swimming the river on her horse.

Mrs. Sommers has several trophies of the hunt mounted and on display in her home at 1347 East Admiral Avenue, all of them shot by either herself or her husband. Those killed in Oklahoma are: a monkey-face or barn owl, badger, bobcat, and a cougar killed in the Kiamichi mountains. She has a wolf-hide rug and two black skunk hides in her Oklahoma collection, her collection containing also trophies of the hunt obtained in other states.