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INTERVIEW WITH MABEL LEE YORK  
NOW SUMMITT, AGE 55FIELD WORKER PETE W. COLE  
April 26, 1937

My father, W. C. York, came from New Jersey to this country when he was about eighteen years of age with his parents Mr. and Mrs. Aven York. He was born in the year 1853, and after he came to this country he married Sarah E. Ward, a native of Choctaw Nation, and to this union there were born seven children, of whom all are living, except one.

Before settling in the Indian Territory, they lived in Missouri for a number of years, and later moved to this country and settled near what is now Boggy Depot, Oklahoma, a country post office in the southwest corner of Atoka County. They did not have anything other than household furniture and cooking utensils when they settled here.

My father was a farmer and a rancher. After we settled down, he bought, sold, and traded stock. At the same time he was having the farm work done by hired hand. When they came they traveled in a covered wagon but there were no roads at that time so they did not travel any distance in any one day, yet they continued traveling, not knowing where they were going, until they came to the country they liked and were satisfied that this would be a fine country for farming and cattle raising.

The grass grew from a knee to waist high anywhere in the country and so did not take time for feeding or fattening, nor did it take much feed to take care of them during the winter.

Father became prosperous before man was born, owned a large herd of cattle, horses and pigs. He was a good hunter, hunter, hunter and a tax marshal and held the position for about twenty years. He had retired to private life when he died. He was buried in Stoke Cemetery.

My grandmother owned a slave hut in the slave days. There was a negro woman, Eliza Jane Ward, who lived till 1914, who used to be my grandmother's slave. I remember when grandmother was operating a boarding house and used to board several section hands and women when they were building the B. & T. Railroad through here.

I was born in 1882 and after I was old enough to go to school, I went to an Indian school. This was a reservation school and my teacher was Mrs. Sopha Flint, now Bulberson, who is living at Kiowa, Oklahoma. We had to walk about two and a half miles to school every day. After I quit going to school there, I went to Morrow Baptist Academy at Atoka, and finished there; and a few years later I married.

W. H. SUNNITT

After I finished school, I was married in December, 1901, to William Henry Sunnitt, a Tennessean, and to this union were born three boys, who are all living and married. Mr. Sunnitt was born in 1866, and came from Knoxville, Tennessee to this country in the year 1896. He was about 30 years of age when he came to Indian Territory.

He has been in a mercantile business nearly all of his life. He had stores at several different places in Atoka County until he moved to Atoka, Oklahoma, when he took up railroading, which work he followed for a number of years. He quit railroading and in the year 1932 he was a candidate for the office of Justice of Peace, and was elected. He was nominated and elected for the third term and is at present Justice of Atoka Township.

When my parents first came to this country, they did not have much of anything, other than every day necessities. They did not have any cook stoves so they had to cook over camp fires in an old fashioned way. The grocery supply was mostly bought from stores, besides the garden vegetables that we raised every spring.

I was born in a double log house with half way between. There was nothing lovely nor luxurious about this place but it was home to me, although my father had money to improve fixtures

and furniture of the house had he desired to do so.

I can remember when the hog buyers drove a bunch of hogs to the pen to be fed for the night. There were some wild hogs in the bunch and some looked so mean and scary that it almost frightened me to death.

Being a part Indian myself, I have never had any trouble with any of the full blood Indians that I ever came in contact with. In fact some of the best friends that I have are full-blood Indians. I have in my possession an old dirk knife with a buckhorn handle that was made and given to my father by a full-blood Indian. It is not known just how old the knife is but it was made by an Indian.

I am a Baptist by faith and was baptised by Father Hogue when I was small at Boggy Depot.