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## INDEX CARDS

Openings--Old Oklahoma  
Contests--Old Oklahoma  
Fences  
Words--Terdignis  
Tulsa  
Words--Arkansas River  
Pioneer life--Oklahoma Territory  
Water--Oklahoma Territory  
Relief--Oklahoma Territory  
Buffalo bones  
Oklahoma City  
Edmond

Field Worker: L. A. Nelson  
March 11, 1937

BIOGRAPHY OF Mrs. W. C. (Ora Trotter) Brissey  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

BORN Lawrence County, Arkansas,  
December 29, 1875

PARENTS Father, James Trotter, Loone County, Ark.  
Mother, Rebecca J. Loer, Fooner County, Ark.

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I came to Oklahoma in December 1889.

My father's people were English. Three brothers settled in the Carolinas. One went northeast, one to the sunken lands in St. Louis. The other stayed in Tennessee a while. Then Mother, Mrs. Rebecca J. Loer, and he, came to southwest Missouri. About the time of the opening of old Oklahoma they were living in Pierce City, Missouri.

In April 1889, my father, James Trotter and my oldest brother, James Robert Trotter and two other men loaded their grub boxes in a wagon and started for the opening. Arriving at the east side of the Hickapoo country (the line) Saturday, they rested until Monday morning and made acquaintances.

These acquaintances later became of great advantage to Father. One thing they did was to exchange addresses, signatures, and dates, so in case there should be any doubt as their entering unlawfully before that day, they would be witnesses to one another to the fact that they entered at the time set by the government. They started April 22, 12 o'clock, 1889.

Father settled on nine mile flat, 18½ miles northeast of Oklahoma City. A valley two miles wide and nine miles long near the

Canadian river.

Mr. Trotter, with a fast team of horses and a good wagon, found several claimants on one fourth or part of it on which he wished to file. However, he decided, owing to the lay of the land and the fertile soil to stay and fight it out.

On the southwest corner he found a man with a yoke of oxen ploughing, with ten acres already ploughed, and that no oxen could have come more quickly than he, much less ploughing any land, asked him how he came to get it. The man said "I have been catching tail flies a week and at the o' end, I turned them loose and we just plow".

Mr. Trotter found another man claiming the land also "Sooners". But there he ran the lines the place they were settled on was 40 rods from the place they were trying to claim, and had they claimed the land they were actually on, their claim would have been in much better shape.

Two men had made the run with the man, one Dickerson, an old clock tinker and a young man living with Mr. Dickerson secured a place north of East Fork, but his brother, although he made the run on the Illinois side, over the line again at the Dickerson claim, east border Oklahoma county by a tickrood flats never secured a homestead.

The man with oxen whose claim was so poor was soon disposed of, but the lady and her three sons, the other claimants kept him in on. The old lady was known as old one-eye Granny Duncan. One of her sons was said to be a horse thief and that you could tell his horses by a shuck braid under the mane.

In those days father planted with a shot gun and harvested with a cannon. He felt he must stay on the place to meet the requirement of the Government- has continuously resided thereon.

When father went to Leticia, where the land office was located, to file, the men would be in line some of them all night. A man by the name of ... Howell, who claimed to be 160 acres south of us, but whose land was on the river and fractionally, asked, when he came to file- father ... standing in line his ... saying he had forgotten his ... he took ... as was ... done, a place in line ahead of father for five dollars, when father came to file, he found Howell had filed for the other south half of father's claim, which with the north half of his own claim made a very level farm, not ... right.

Mr. Brissey, not daunted, knew he had priority of settlement, against old lady Duncan, and Howell, as Howell had not made settlement nor previous claims to this ... of land.

So Mr. Trotter, ... filed ... against Howell. This was one of the long ... the long drawn out contests in Leticia. ... of the evidence took over ... cases. ... of ... 200.00 an act of ... of ... the ... that in my father. ... case was ... the ... to the Supreme Court and ... over to the ... of the ... for final settlement. Every decision was awarded in my father's favor.

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... matter, and from ... wanted to assist and in a  
fine letter said, "I never would forget

boyhood friends ... to see that father  
got justice.

... friends, who had ... before the son were in-  
valuable in proving father's right to ...

... the ... store that ... entitled ...  
According to law, ...

... old ...  
... stick ...

... character ... on the ...  
of our family.

... the father ... were ...  
... to see ...

... other ...  
... old ...

... other ... for ...  
... the ...

...  
... follow.

...  
... that the ...

... did not want to leave.  
... the ...

... children ... her to the ...  
stand.



As soon as he was fixed, the house was, and other's  
 brother Millie, had to leave, and he was taken care of by  
 older's son and his wife. Millie was the only one who could have  
 trouble by driving around the house, and she was taken care of  
 offering me a ride to the store. I had to go to the store and  
 to live the rest of the day, and she was taken care of, and she  
 came across the threshold. It was a very hard time, and it was  
 at night we cleaned and thought. I was very tired and I was

... with what is called... of, and I was...  
 ... to do, and I was... to the river,  
 "Come and drink water from the well, and I will give you a  
 matter for the courts to settle."

... after he left the door, he was...  
 the forest himself and he had chopped out a hickory log. He used  
 hickory because of its toughness. Its time was for the oxen's neck and  
 its durability. After one day the piece the right side reached it he  
 used a drawing knife to shape the piece. He had cut it with  
 a piece of glass, and I spent the rest of the day, and I was  
 place on the racks and I was...

... after he left the door, he was...  
 ... driving... of us  
 ... carried in... of the...  
 ... over the... for the  
 ... after...  
 ... of...  
 ... over... covered...  
 ... sheet, which I tried to... but had to allow a neighbor lady to





the cities passed Indian villages, north of Fort Union  
 to the Churches. After that I went to the houses; in one of which we  
 slept one night. The next day we went to the store where we  
 their row out onto the water. The boats were rowed off.  
 men in the center had for to go with the boat. The extreme left  
 the Indian boats. The boat in the center had a small cabin in  
 the middle to sit on. The boat in the center had a small cabin in  
 the middle to sit on. The boat in the center had a small cabin in

we picked up a few things, and then the river crossed was the  
 ground. I still could not see the land on the other side of the river.  
 we crossed the river. The boat in the center had a small cabin in  
 near the rear end and a small cabin in the middle of the boat.  
 it was necessary to turn the boat to start on the north side of the river  
 under the trees. The boat in the center had a small cabin in  
 a little way from the shore. The boat in the center had a small cabin in  
 of which we could see the land on the other side of the river.  
 to get to the shore.

After we crossed the river, we went to a small village.  
 we went to the store where we bought some things.  
 by the name of Christian. The store was situated at the corner  
 with Baptist College.  
 but some river and the houses, which consisted of not  
 from the land on the other side of the river. The church was situated there also.  
 a little Indian boy was shooting at a wild rabbit with a bow and  
 arrow as I remember about where the old Tulsa hotel now stands.

we camped on the bank of the river near the present Trisco bridge (she thought it might be the same one then). On this bank wild and wooded with heavy timber, the boys went turkey hunting. They claimed they shot a turkey but the hound took it. (Half jokingly she located this about where the La Crosse hotel now stands.)

The boys propped it in a chuck, skinned it and we put it in a black pot, put rocks under the pot and after heating the rocks drew the coals out. I put the potatoes in with it, in the morning the potatoes, small to start with, looked like vermicelli, the possum, it was so tiny that in the middle of a ketle of porridge. A body had nerve enough to eat.

Breakfast over another day and the next horses was by the river. He was the only one we carried with on our trip. Altho in December, the Arkansas is low, the bottom contains quicksand, so we made an agreement, that, we would go ahead and if stuck he was to help us out. We sent the oxen ahead, we drove in, as we left the camp we dropped almost straight down, in a deep hole. Old Whitey, the bull cow was led from a rope in the back of the wagon. As the herd was now in the rear, in the center of the river one of the horses talked. He waved for the ox to get out he would get out. "Turn her loose", Father yelled, and he let go of the bull cow's rope. One of the hired boys rounded up the straggling herd which had begun to fill about. The men came back with the ox team and pulled us out.

Without further unpleasant incident we reached our home.

It was built of native oak, chinked not with mud alone, as some say but chinked with wood and doubed with mud which we sneaked off of unsettled land.

After Mother came they had a house raising, the house was heated with red mud and had "loderin" shingles. The house was 12 x 14 and was on a hill side. The roof was bowed with a ridge pole. It had a basement, three feet of the basement was made out of the sandstone. A sandstone fireplace was built out from the chimney, no windows. (I think she means there was a nailed floor, the door was fixed by a 2 x 4, slipped under a cross piece or panel on the door and braced by a two by four.

Mother had spent was looking out the door for us, her only companion, a six year old boy and three smaller children, (and the before mentioned one.)

We brought just as little as we could for one small house, old black walnut carved barbed seats, an old fashioned cupboard and a chair.

For water, a hand dug well. There was an old well some weight on one end. One would pull down on the bucket and the weight on the other end would lift the full bucket. I thought I never saw such a well, still, like that old.

CONTINUED.

Our neighbors were very kind by the name of Mrs. they lived close by and came to get water into our well. They were friendly to us.

Our land was ideal till our five acres were level and that five acres had a mill, which was suitable for building purposes.

The unsettled conditions made us slow to put up improvements of which we had almost none. Father carried a commission as deputy

U. S. Marshall, chiefly to ward off disturbances.

there was a reason why other had not been distrusted. The  
O'alley boys, respectable family, but they had been warned  
Duncans and others that they could have a settle with them; the  
O'alley's, if other was disturbed.

The next spring, we had for first time plowed the ten acres  
of ploughed land, formerly mentioned which had been abandoned, after  
we ploughed it again. The farm was strong with buffalo horses. A few  
willows of purple and buffalo grass. Some water would be found in  
these willows which was so clear we used it for washing.

We secured our supplies from Watsons (?), from Adona and  
Oklahoma. On account of the difficulties of getting started the  
government issued relief supplies. Father refused this as you had  
to swear you were absolutely destitute. ~~Some~~ people who were there and  
were unable to get their crops in in 1898, having come too late, accept  
ed this; but you had to swear you were absolutely destitute and though  
you could well have used the supplies father would not swear to a lie,  
to get this aid.

Chicago City was a residential city with a village. There  
were many north of seventh street. Part of the land of the tents  
tract. (with the exception of a building on the corner of  
fourth street and the bridge street, which was fourth streets  
were the best residential streets. Mrs. J. J. Miller, lived near  
where the library now is and the site of the Methodist Church corner  
of the street and the bridge street.

London just a small village of three or four stores.

... to ... our ...  
as it is known as ...  
... of ... children  
... in the house ...  
... children said "..."