

GEER, LOTTIE.

INTERVIEW

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BIOGRAPHY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

GEER, LOTTIE

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Field Worker's name Ida B. Lankford

This report made on (date) March 15, 1938

1. Name Mrs. Lottie Geer

2. Post Office Address Foss, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) 3 miles east of Foss. R. R. 4.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month April Day 7 Year 1871

5. Place of birth Stark County, Ohio.

6. Name of Father Lafayette Cossler Place of birth Ohio

Other information about father Methodist preacher.

7. Name of Mother Melvina Weaver Place of birth Ohio.

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 _____.

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Ida B. Lankford
Interviewer
March 15, 1938

Interview with Mrs. Lottie Geer
Foss, Oklahoma.

We came from Gainesville, Texas; we left there September 3, 1894, and landed in Oklahoma Territory in what is now Washita County September 10, 1894; we were seven days on the road. We filed on this farm we now live on; we built a little dugout and lived in that and when the weather was pretty we would camp under the oak trees. We raised Kaffir corn and corn, then in a few years we learned that we could plant cotton, and Mr. Geer saw right away that he could cut the prairie hay or grass, so he bought a baler and began putting up hay. We began making a little money so we built a one roomed house and we were proud of the little house.

We had a sod house for our church and school, and we all went to church. We didn't have any nice clothes, we wore calico dresses and sunbonnets in the summer and in the winter time we had dresses of outing cloth.

The first hens I sold I got 25 cents a piece for them and I sold eggs at El Reno for 5 cents a dozen but we ate all the eggs we could.

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We had a big flood here at Foss, May 3, 1902, there were eight drowned and many folks got up in tree tops. I know my mother sat in a tree top for hours before she could be rescued and in two weeks after the flood we had another big rain and the creeks overflowed. The people had hunted for a young lady who had been drowned two weeks before and two little boys found her body which was all buried except her feet. Also a lawyer, his wife and his little boy were drowned but they did not find the boy's body until a year later and then they only found his little bones.

We didn't have many doctors in those days. Long years ago we waited on the sick and laid out the dead. We didn't have funeral homes, we made the caskets of ^{planks} and the outsides were covered with black calico and the insides were covered with white muslin. My father and my husband were the men who made the caskets.

There were no roads nor bridges, we just traveled by trails and forded all rivers and creeks. I remember well our neighbors, an old man and his wife, started to El Reno to get supplies; a big rain came and they drove into Barnitz Creek and their wagon washed away; they were both drowned.

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For our fuel we had plenty of wood on the farm that we filed on, but folks who didn't have wood would go to the river and steal posts and wood from the Indians.

The white men would do mean things and the Indians would take the punishment, I remember at Arapaho, a white man was drunk and an Indian was standing in a store, the drunk white teased the Indian, until the Indian got on his horse and rode off; the store_keeper said, "Aren't you ashamed! The Indian has left his groceries." The drunk man said, "I will get on my horse and bring him back." He left on his horse, which was a good one, and as he was getting close to the Indian, the Indian jumped off of his horse and ran through the pasture, but the white man shot and killed him. That happened about the same time that the Indians killed Bill Breedings.

There was an eighty acre place joining ours that was not taken for a year or two as it was rough. An old man and his wife came in and filed on it; they lived in a tent and didn't have hardly any food to eat so the old man went out one evening and killed a rabbit for supper, but as he shot the rabbit it fell into a hole and the old

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man reached his hand and arm into the hole to get the rabbit; as he do so a large rattlesnake bit him. Our boy was coming from school and heard the old man crying for some one to help, so he came on home and told us about it. Mr. Geer went to the man to see what was wrong, then went for a doctor; the closest one was at Weatherford, and he came but was too late to save the old man who died. My father and my husband made his casket and as we didn't have any cemetery, he was buried on a mound on his farm, and the grave is still there.

I have worked hard all my life but have enjoyed it and now I am old and Mr. Geer and I still live on the place we filed on in 1894. I milk eight cows, raise chickens and make a garden. We get by fine; we rent our land out as Mr. Geer is too old to farm. Our children are all married and have homes and children of their own. We are both ready to go to a new country not built by men and hands.