

GOODSON, MATTIE

INTERVIEW

#8941

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GOODSON, MATTIE.

INTERVIEW.

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

Field Worker's name John F. Daugherty.

This report made on (date) October 21, 1937. 1937

1. Name Mrs. Mattie Goodson.

2. Post Office Address Mill Creek, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) Route 1.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month May Day 20 Year 1863.

5. Place of birth Tennessee.

6. Name of Father Tom-Runnels Place of birth Tennessee.

Other information about father Farmer.

7. Name of Mother Penny Woolard Place of birth North Carolina.

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.

John Daugherty,
Interviewer.
October 19, 1937.

An Interview With Mrs Mattie Goodson,
Route #1, Mill Creek, Oklahoma.

Father was Tom Runnels, born in Tennessee, (date unknown). He was a farmer. Mother was Penny Wooland Runnels, born in North Carolina, about 1827. (Exact date unknown). There were six children in our family. I was born in Tennessee, May 20, 1863.

I came to the Indian Territory in a covered wagon, in 1882, from Texas. We settled north of Berwyn, Indian Territory, in the Chickasaw Nation. Our house was built of logs, and it had a dirt floor, clapboard roof and cat chimneys. The place belonged to a negro preacher by the name of Banks for whom a negro school called Banks Summit was named. We had no well nor spring, but used water from the Washita River.

We traded at Sherman, Texas, making two trips a year for supplies to last for six months. My husband raised cotton and had it ginned at Henderson's Gin near Berwyn, then hauled it to Sherman to sell it.

He and my brother-in-law were building houses near Mannsville. They went to Sherman after a load of lumber.

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There were three wagons, and a nephew twelve years old went with them. They bought the lumber, loaded the wagons and started back to the Territory. About five miles from Red River they decided to stop at a saloon. They all got drunk, and in some manner broke out a plate glass at the front of the saloon. The saloon keeper tried to make them pay for it, and they refused. They realized there might be trouble so they got on their wagons and started for Red River. If they could get to the Territory they knew they would be safe. The wagons were so heavily loaded that the teams were unable to travel fast, and it wasn't long until they discovered a mob was following them. They couldn't escape, so they faced them. The mob began shooting and my husband and brother-in-law were killed.

They buried them there, and a day or so later my nephew came riding a horse and told me of the tragedy which had occurred.

I lived with relatives for two years and married Mr. Goodson. We lived near Berwyn for sixteen years, and then moved near Mill Creek, where we have lived since.

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Those early days were ideal for poor people. Farming was easy. There was never a crop failure, and a small amount of land would produce abundantly anything which was planted upon it. There was plenty of game for meat, and hogs and cattle were numerous. There was plenty for them to eat on the range, and we didn't have to feed them. Hogs fattened in the woods, and all we did was to take a sack of corn about twice a week, go into the woods, blow a horn, and call them up to feed, so that they would not wander entirely away. We paid a permit of five dollars a year to the Chickasaw Government, which entitled us to grazing and farming land, also hunting and fishing. There were no taxes paid for anything.

In those days people loved one another. There were not many places to go, but when a crowd got together there was a feeling of love and friendship for one another which doesn't exist today. It was very hard to part from each other. Camp meetings were a source of joy to everybody. It was here that we could meet and stay together for several days. We also enjoyed our neighborhood log rollings.

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When my second husband and I married we didn't have a license. We went to a preacher near Berwyn. He married us and made a note of our marriage which he took to the Indian Mission Conference. Here it was recorded by the clerk and stood as a record of our marriage.

I am the mother of eight children, and I now make my home with all of them.