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Interview with Frank Messenger
909 South "G" street, Muskogee

by
Carl Sherwood, Field Worker
March 24, 1937

Jobin Messenger was my father. He was born in Clay County, Michigan, in the year of 1848 on August 1st.

In 1872 he was married to Nancy A. Coleman, who was born in Ohio, August 6th, 1852; and to that union were born two sons and two daughters as follows:

Lyda Elnora Messenger; born September 23, 1869.

Mary Louisa Messenger; born April 1, 1882.

Joel Franklin Messenger; born June 28, 1887.

Charles H. Messenger; born August 29, 1890.

My father left Cleveland, Kansas, in 1889 and leased a tract of Government land on Bear Creek in the Kickapoo reservation. For this lease he paid \$54.00 for one-fourth section for each year. Each year he would lease more land until he had several sections. He broke the land in Bear Creek bottom to raise feed for his stock through the winter. The remainder was in pasture which he had filled with sheep and cattle. He sold all the sheep he could raise to the Kickapoo Indians. They would buy as many as twenty-five head at one time for their annual feast which was in September.

We lived on this place about eight years and moved down to Wellston. In this town there was one general merchandise store owned by C. L. Williams; and the Government stockade.

Here, my father went to work for Bill Tillman as a deputy sheriff. They would guard the stage coach when they would leave Guthrie with gold and silver to pay the Kickapoo Indians at the Wellston Stockade. Captain Duese had charge of the stockade and was paymaster.

I was married to Dora May James, October 16, 1907, in Oklahoma City. Thirty days later my wife and I were in Guthrie on the day old Oklahoma and the five

Civilized Tribes became a state. In front of the Capitol Building they held ²⁴² a mock wedding. The bride was a tall Kickapoo Indian maiden and the bridegroom was a white man. This wedding represented the uniting of the Indians and the white people.

On February 10, 1911, I came to Muskogee and started a hog ranch at McBride.