

TROTTER, CLM A.

INTERVIEW

9714

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TROTTER, CLEM A.

INTERVIEW.
BIOGRAPHY FORM

Form A-(S-149)

97451

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Ruby Wolfenbarger

This report made on (date) January 19 1938

1. Name Clem A. Trotter

2. Post Office Address Sentinel, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) Sentinel

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month February Day 27 Year 1869

5. Place of birth Mississippi

6. Name of Father J. D. Trotter Place of birth Mississippi

Other information about father Farmer

7. Name of Mother Sally Watson Place of birth Mississippi

Other information about mother Housewife

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 3.

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Ruby Wolfenbarger
Investigator
January 19, 1938

Interview with Clem A. Trotter
Sentinel, Oklahoma

I was born in Mississippi, February 23, 1869. I lived there with my parents until I was about thirty years of age. At that time I had a brother, living out here in the Territory, at a place called Wood. He was in the cattle business and wanted me to come out here and help him. I came on the train to Mountain View, which at that time was just a tent town. They had just finished putting the railroad through. I think the train had only made its second run through there.

I hired a man to take me out to my brother's, which was about forty five miles from Mountain View. We drove out in a two-seated buck. The driver charged me five dollars for the trip. As well as I remember it took about ten hours to make the trip.

Almost everyone lived in half dugouts or in tents around here. The country was just a barren prairie not a tree in sight but there was lots of grass.

I grazed my brother's cattle out on the range. There was a farm house near by, a two room house and a half dugout and the farmer

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who owned them let me batch in the dugout. I stayed there for about three months. When the cattle were ready for market my brother brought men from the Texas Plains who bought them and took them to market.

We had about fifty head of cattle wearing our brand, which was 96. We always sold the calves when they were about eight months old. There was not too much money in the cattle business at that time. There had been but cattle were very cheap that year.

The next year I helped my brother farm his land. In the early day our farming implements were very crude. We farmed with a double shovel for about two years. We planted cotton and corn the first years, later we planted some wheat.

Wild game was very plentiful and in the winter when we didn't have much work to do, I spent most of my time hunting. We killed lots of wild ducks during the winter months. There were also lots of fish in the streams, they were small but very plentiful.

There was a little country school in a dugout near our place. There was one teacher, Mr. G. A. Coffey, now of Webbers Falls, who it is said couldn't stand up straight in the dugout. However, it was a very good school at that.

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Dances were just about the only gatherings that we ever had, although sometimes we had a picnic or a box supper.

We had church at the neighbor's when we could. Almost everyone had to work all the time to get along and money was very scarce.

We had our first rural mail delivery in 1906. It came out from Sentinel, the mail carrier being a woman.

There was lots of smallpox in this part of the country at that time. The town of Mountain View was almost completely wiped out by it in 1901. They had a place there where they took those having the dreaded disease, who didn't have any one to care for them.

My brother took the smallpox and I remember that for awhile the only thing we had to eat was milk and bread. We were out of groceries and I couldn't go to town after them.

I lived around Mountain View for a number of years, then I bought eighty acres of land near Fort in 1906. I still have that land and I bought one hundred sixty acres about three years ago near Retrop.

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I have made lots of money since coming out here and I have also lost money on cattle and wheat. We haven't had enough rain in the last nine years for a good wheat or cotton crop.
