

WOOD, J. L.

INTERVIEW

#9062

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Form A-(S-149)

BIOGRAPHY FORM

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WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

9062.

Field Worker's name Maurice R. Anderson.

This report made on (date) October 29, 1937. 1937

1. Name Mr. J. L. Wood.

2. Post Office Address Mayaville, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month September Day 7 Year 1867.

5. Place of birth Texas.

6. Name of Father Fred Wood. Place of birth X

Other information about father Deceased.

7. Name of Mother: Sally West Place of birth North Carolina.

Other information about mother Deceased.

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.

Maurice R. Anderson,
October 29, 1937.
Investigator.

An Interview With J. L. Wood,
Maysville, Oklahoma.

I was born September 7, 1867, in a covered wagon on the plains of Texas.

My father went through the Civil War, fighting the Comanche Indians, without getting hurt, and according to what my mother told me he was killed a few weeks after I was born by a band of Indians while helping with a bunch of cattle.

I came to the Indian Territory in 1886, when I was eighteen years old. I came into this country expecting to make my home here as my mother had died a few years before and I was left on my own.

All I owned at that time was my horse and saddle a few dollars, and a few blankets for bedding.

I crossed Red River into the Choctaw Nation. After inquiring at different stores I came to, I finally learned that a railroad was being built from Fort Smith to Paris, Texas. I finally located where the grading crew was at work. I asked for a job and was given one, I was put on as a teamster and was paid twenty-five dollars a month and board. This was the Frisco railroad.

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I remember a place called Boggy. There was a store there and that was where we had our hardest time, crossing through that bottom. I worked three months before I received a payday. The railroad company had a commissary and we could buy what we wanted and it would be charged to us.

When I was paid I only owed three dollars, I quit the railroad and settled at a place called Scullyville, in the Choctaw Nation. I leased some land and began to farm.

At that time you could get all the land you wanted to farm for ten dollars a year by leasing from an Indian. A ten to twenty acre farm was a large farm, or a large crop for one man to handle. There was lots of wild game and I didn't have to worry about having something to eat. I raised corn and some cotton. The first crop I raised I only had my saddle horse to farm with and used a six inch turning plow to break the ground with. I used a georgia stock to lay off the rows with and planted my corn and cotton by hand and covered it with my foot. I would drop two or three grains of corn in the furrow and rake dirt over it with my foot.

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I was married at Sculleyville, in 1891. At that time you didn't have to get a marriage license, all you had to do was get the girl and go to a preacher and give him two dollars and he would marry you. He charged two dollars more for going to Fort Smith and having the marriage put on record. After I was married I moved to old Oklahoma and settled on a farm, about two miles from Sacred Heart Mission near a place called Georgetown, in Pottawatomie County.

Violet Springs was the toughest town in old Oklahoma. I knew of twenty-five men who were killed there at the saloon.

I made up twenty-five dollars and bought one acre of ground. That acre was used for the first cemetery at Violet Springs. When I was making up this money to buy the ground to start the cemetery on I asked a man living there at Violet Springs to give one dollar. He said he didn't have anyone to bury. Within two months two of his sons were killed and they were buried in the new cemetery.

I was a deputy sheriff of Pottawatomie County and our main trouble was running down horse thieves. I remember in 1895 I had to go to Oklahoma City on business and I took a wagon load of corn at the time with me. I remember I

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put my wagon and team and load of corn in the wagon yard.

The wagon yard was located about where the main part of the business district is now, and the man who owned the

wagon yard wanted to trade his wagon yard for my wagon

and team. The sheds and the surrounding ground covered

about an acre of ground. I told him I wouldn't have it.

If I had known then what I do now, I would have given him

a dozen wagons, and teams for that piece of ground. When

the Seminole Country was open for leasing my brother-in-

law and I took up the first lease, near where Konawa is

now. We got all we made off of the land for five years

for putting it in cultivation.