

YOUNGER, PAULINE

INTERVIEW

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Effie S. Jackson,
Interviewer,
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An Interview with Pauline Younger,
812 S. Elgin, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Early Movie Production- Tulsa, Oklahoma.

The Younger family came originally from Kentucky and Virginia. Judge Younger came to Lees Summit, Missouri, but I don't know when. He was a southern sympathizer. He was the father of Cole, Bob, Jim and John Younger. There is no direct relationship between Scout Younger and Cole Younger and his brothers. Cole Younger, who has often been a guest in my house, told me the reason he became a leader in the Quantrill Gang during the Civil War was to avenge his father's death. His father was murdered by bushwhackers and robbed of \$1600.00 according to the story Cole told me. He also said that his mother was forced to take her younger children and leave home in the midst of winter, watching it burn down.

My people were from Alabama, Livelys. I married Scout Younger in 1895. We went first to Dallas then to

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Durant. Scout was a cattleman. In 1902 we came to Tulsa and started our Wild West Indian Show. We got together about fifty Apache and Comanche Indians from western Oklahoma, squaws, bucks and paposes, also about fifty hard riding cowpunchers. We paid the Indians five dollars a week and their room and board. As an extra attraction, when we took our show to Texas in 1904, we were able to take along the old Apache Chief-Geronimo. He was a prisoner of war at that time and was accompanied by guards. Also another attraction was Quanah Parker, Chief of the Comanches, Mrs. Birdsong, Quanah Parker's daughter accompanied him. She was such a sweet woman, I think she is still living. The only trouble with local Indians they either had to get out or get drunk. When we were showing at Cycle Park in Dallas in 1904 we put a fence sixteen feet high around those Indians. When it was time for the performance, believe it or not, they had scaled that fence and were too drunk to be seen. Two weeks finished those Indians.

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Then we decided to use Sioux. We obtained fifty from Rosebud, South Dakota. They were far from home and easier handled. Then we began our eastern tour. "Younger's Wild West Indian show" -- fifty Sioux and one hundred cowpunchers. Back in 1902, in Tulsa, we had made our first movie production -- "Scout Younger on the Western Border." When we were in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, in 1905, Carl Laemmle came to our lot and took a two-reel picture which he called "Great Western Train Hold-up." The next year we put this production on the stage at Kennwood Park out from Allegheny, Pennsylvania. I think this "two-reeler" was the first of the kind made in the United States by a regular producer. We had made a simplified production of our own in 1902.

In 1906 we returned to Tulsa and went seriously into producing our pictures. We built a big stage at 19 North Victor, and had our cameras. Of course, it was all simple like those nickelodeons you used to see thirty years ago. We produced our

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own pictures, then travelled around from town to town in the United States presenting them and giving lectures in connection with them. Our motto was "Crime does not pay." To prove this, whenever possible, we had the original bandit or outlaw with us and had him tell his own story and draw his own moral from his experience. I think we were the first independent movie producers in the United States.

The first "four-reeler" we made was in 1906, "Scout Younger on the Western Border." (We had made a two-reeler of this in 1902). In 1907 we made a "four-reeler", "Quantrell". In 1909 we made "The Dalton Gang". Emmett Dalton was out of the pen (Coffeyville bank robbery) and not only took part and helped to direct the production but personally appeared and lectured on the evil of his ways. Later Cole Younger (when his prison days were over) appeared in "The Younger Brothers". Cole reformed and became sort of

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Christian Minister. The only place he would appear and lecture on this picture was in a church. Next we made "Belle Starr". I posed for her. I got every book and article I could find about her so as to make the story authentic. Cole Younger was a great help in this. As a young girl she left her good home in Carthage, Missouri, good parents, and followed Cole Younger. But that's another story. In 1912 we filmed "Bosco" at the One Hundred and One Ranch and, in 1913, "Texas" at the same place. We travelled with these films all over the United States, making pretty good money. In 1924 we sold out to a man named Humphrey at Miami.

I had had an idea in my head ever since I visited the Eden Musee in New York, in 1905. Everytime I went back I studied the possibilities of a Wax Work Production to be shown from town to town. I made inquiry and found that the wax figures in the Eden Musee were made by a German named Schmidt, who lived

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in Chicago. So after selling out our movie films in 1924 we went to Chicago, taking all our accumulated material and pictures of outlaws, etc., and Schmidt made a collection of wax figures of Oklahoma outlaws. Scout and I separated soon after this. He took the collection from town to town, later he put it in show wagon and travelled with various circuses and carnivals. Now in his old days he is using these wax figures and accompanying relics of outlaw days to decorate a Cowboy Bar. he has at 1440 E. Third Street, Tulsa.