

MILLER, J. D. (SR.)

INTERVIEW

#8408

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

Field Worker's name Maurice R. Anderson

This report made on (date) September 15 1937

Name Mr. J. D. Miller Sr.

Post Office Address Pauls Valley, Oklahoma

Residence address (or location) \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH: Month October Day 6 Year 1864

Place of birth Georgia

Name of Father J. L. Miller Place of birth Georgia

Other information about father Deceased

Name of Mother Anna Kirkpatrick Place of birth Georgia

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 \_\_\_\_\_

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Interview with Mr. J. D. Miller  
Pauls Valley, Oklahoma

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Mr. J. D. Miller Sr. was born in 1864, in Georgia. I left Texas in the Spring of 1888 for the Indian Territory. I had been farming in Texas, but the drouth hit Texas in 1885 and for two years it never rained and my cattle died and I lost everything I owned. After paying my debts I had two horses and a hack, so my wife<sup>and</sup>/I loaded up our feather bed and with only a frying pan to cook in, we started for the Indian Territory. I came over the old Whiskey Trail, crossed Red River near Burlington, Texas, and followed the old trail over the Arbuckle Mountains. This trail went on out by Beef Creek, now called Maysville, and on into Kansas, joining the old Chisholm Trail near the line of Kansas. I left this trail after crossing the Arbuckle mountains and forded the Washita River south of Wynnewood. We stopped at a little town called Washita. This was a little western town, and was owned by Matt Wolfe, a Chickasaw Indian. There

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were three stores, a doctor's office, and the post office was in one of the stores. This little town was on the Santa Fe railroad, about five miles south of Wynnewood. There was a depot and a cotton gin and this little town was doing a good business when I came there. I had done some blacksmith work back in Texas, so I started a blacksmith shop at Washita, and leased a farm from Mr. Davis south of Washita, about four miles. The first year I raised cotton and here Davis, Oklahoma, is now, I had that land in cotton when the first store was built there. In fact it was not in the center of my cotton field, and I hauled the lumber for this store, from Pauls Valley. I saw that this was a good location for a town and Mr. Davis and myself set out makin a town out of the site. We got the railroad company to make this a flag stop and then we set out to get a post office. We had some trouble in deciding what to name the new town, finally we sent in the name Davis. We went to Matt Wolfe and tried to get him to move Washita to Davis, but he wouldn't see to it; so there we were with a town

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started and only one store. I built a blacksmith shop and in a short while there was another store put there. At that time the road to Sulphur was only a horse trail, so by building a road and putting a bridge across Sandy Creek between Davis and Sulphur we finally pulled the trade away from the town of Washita and in a few years we had a good little town started, and then the town of Washita died out.

When I came to the Indian Territory I had to pay a five dollar permit to live in the Chickasaw Nation. A Chickasaw Indian named Chip Harris did the collecting in the district I lived in. The first steel bridge on the Washita River was built west of Davis across the Washita River.

My brother and I owned the first livery stable at Wynnewood. We were in the livery business there when John Walner killed Bill Lewis. John Walner at one time had been a deputy United States Marshal and under the Indian law or belief if you were a deputy marshal at one time you were always one. John Walner was called the bull of the range, and he was a dangerous man to mess with. Andy Roff was a dangerous man, but they died with their boots on just like they lived. I now run a blacksmith shop at Pauls Valley.