

MOORE, T. D.

INTERVIEW

12900

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BIOGRAPHY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

374

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Field Worker's name Lula Austin

This report made on (date) February 9 1938

1. Name T. D. Moore (Choctaw)

2. Post Office Address Aylesworth

3. Residence address (or location) (In town) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month July Day 25 Year 1864

5. Place of birth West of Fort Washita

6. Name of Father Joseph G. Moore Place of birth Tennessee

Other information about father Choctaw

7. Name of Mother Mary Rider Place of birth Missouri

Other information about mother white

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 5.

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Lula Austin,
Investigator,
February 9, 1938.

An Interview with Mr. T. D. Moore,
Aylesworth, Oklahoma.

T. D. Moore, Choctaw, was born four miles west of Fort Washita, July 25, 1804, at seven o'clock in the morning. His father came here in 1833 at the age of ten years and lived at Boggy Depot until he married and then moved four miles west of Fort Washita, living in that vicinity until his death. My father was a patroller during the war; he caught the slaves who had run off from their masters in Texas and were hiding out in the Territory. One day he traced fourteen negroes to the linekilm which ran one half mile back into the bank of the Washita River. These negroes had their camping outfit and one young negro had gone out to kill game for food and Father waited at the entrance of the cave and when the negro came back with the young deer which he had killed Father ordered them all out of the cave and marched them back to Texas where he received \$50.00 for each negro caught.

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Father has often told me stories about the Mexicans bringing loads of gold here and burying it on the banks of the Washita River. He also said there was a lead mine in the vicinity of our home as a man who worked for him would bring hun's of lead to the house but would never tell him just where he got it.

There is an old cannon buried in the well at Fort Washita. The Fort was set on fire at eight o'clock one morning and two men were seen running from the fire who were supposed to be the ones who had set fire to the buildings. General Douglas Cooper lived around among his friends after the Fort burned. When I was a boy of three, I remember his staying at our house; he was a man with snow white hair then. He made his home with his friends until his death.

When Father was sheriff of Pickens County in the Chickasaw Nation, the Comanches stole two white girls in Texas and my father with others ran the Indians as far as Stonewall but lost them there. After the government took charge of the Comanches one girl was found and returned to

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her people in Sherman, Texas. She married a man there of the name of Fairchilds. I have often gone to Emet in Johnston County when the Government wagons would be there distributing rations to the Comanches. The Indians would take the flour that was given them, split the sack and pour the flour out and take the sack.

Father told me that in the early days the Comanches would bury the dead and then cut down trees and cover the graves with brush. The Indian would ask to see your horse and as many as could would get on the horse to see if he was strong.

The Indians shot and then scalped an old man of the name of Current near our home on the Washita River then went on through our lot and the next morning Mother found a breech clout that one of the Indians had lost; it reached just below the knees and forked. She sent it to someone in Missouri.

My parents raised eleven children, I am the only one living. I have been married four times. My first wife is a

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Choctaw (Nancy Turner). We raised sixteen children- eight are now living.

My father, while Sheriff of Pickens County, whipped three men at the whipping post. The first one cried, the second was stubborn, and the third one looked Father in the face and gave a war whoop and then gobbled. This man later burned my father's home and we lost everything including four thousand pounds of bacon. My father followed him to the Creek Nation but he got away. I was six years old when this happened and remember my clothes were all burned and I had to wear a dress until my mother could make me a pair of pants. Our home had just been completed; Father had hauled the lumber from Tishomingo.

West of Bee there was a Creek Indian hanged to a tree with a sign around his neck "Death to any man that takes him down". He hanged there, with his long hair almost reaching his knees flying around in the breeze, until he dried up on the bone; he hung there for four years. I was sixteen and often rode there with others to see him. The old limekiln was located near my father's home where the lime

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was burned to build Fort Washita. Fort Washita was found to be on fire about eight o'clock one morning. Two men were seen running from the fire. General Cooper stayed among the neighbors after the Fort burned. He spent most of his time with Father and Eastman Harney. I was about three. I remember he had snow white hair. Houses were far apart; sometimes you would go ten miles before coming to a house.

An Indian of the name of Jackson Robinson, a Chickasaw, got mad at Fate Ellis and went to his home on Glasses Creek to kill him and he was gone so he killed his wife and child; hacked their heads off. I was with my father at the ferry when Jackson Robinson swam his pony across and later Eastman Harney, Jerry Lewis and Fate Ellis came looking for him. The creek was up so Father put their saddles in the skiff and swam their horses across- they followed the Indian and captured him twenty miles below Caddo, brought him back and tied him to a tree and shot him to pieces. I was constable for twenty years and have served as Justice of Peace here at Aylesworth for six years.