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Interviewer Ruth Kerbo
August 19, 1937.

Interview with Mr. G. C. Moore,
Mangum, Oklahoma.

Born October 16, 1863,
Fatesville, Arkansas.

Parents Charles Moore, Tennessee

Coretha Vaughn, West Virginia.

A pioneer peace officer and merchant, G. C. Moore, has seen the transformation of Mangum from a straggling frontier settlement to one of the active communities of the Southwest.

Mr. Moore came to this section in 1888, arriving at Vernon, Texas, from North Arkansas. The trip to Mangum was made in a wagon since there were no railways in this section until 1900.

Altus had not been built then, although Mangum was a bustling settlement, being on the mail stage route from Vernon to Lodge City, Kansas. At that time Mangum had two hotels, a postoffice, and four frame residences.

Offices of the "Mangum Star" were located on the site of the Staton residence on South Oklahoma Avenue.

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Most of the buildings in Mangum were located on land between South Oklahoma Avenue and the place where the reservoir is now.

Mr. Moore had firsthand experience in dealing with the "bad men" of this section, having served seven years as undersheriff with Jasper Nelson.

He also operated the first motion picture theater in Mangum.

He also ran a blacksmith and machine shop. His blacksmith and machine shop was located in part of a business block which he had built himself.

Among the early day settlers in Mangum Mr. Moore remembers are Houston Tittle, Captain Loyd Lige Reeves, Judge Todd, George Wade, Henry Hoover, Frank and Horace Simpson, Dan Cullins and Ashley Wilson.

Henry Thompson, well known to early day residents, also ran an Indian trading store near the Elm River at Granite.

Granite at that time was just a cow ranch and most of the present townsite of Granite was occupied by the famous "Swinging Hearts" Ranch.

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Other noted estates in this section were the Jaybuckle, T. E. and V-Bar Ranches.

In 1888, newcomers were amazed to find the settlers comfortably living in dugouts. Tenderfeet were afraid of water dogs and gophers which sometimes found entrance to these underground dwellings. Dugouts, however, were the principal dwellings in that day.

A few of the early day saloons had fancy names, such as "The White Elephant," "The Grey Wolf," and the "Elks."

When statehood came in 1907 it was Mr. Moore's duty to help close these establishments.

Outlawry was practically unknown in Old Greer County unless some of the Joe Beckham boys got "on the loose."

Joe himself, whom old timers recall as a typical desperado of the old school, was killed near Altus after robbing a store there.

Indians were plentiful in the new territory, most of them being Kiowas or Comanches.

One of the hardest duties of the early day bar-keeper, as well as of the peace officer, was to keep the Indians from obtaining any "fire water."

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On two occasions in the early days, Mr. Moore recalls driving herds of cattle to this section. In 1885 he helped herd cattle from southern Texas, via the ~~Loam~~ crossing to Vernon, Woodward, and on to Dodge City, Kansas.

In 1887 Mr. Moore accompanied a cattle outfit to this section, driving a herd for the old Chain C Ranch. Some of the cattle bore the brand of Cunningham and Marlow, well known cattlemen of this section.

Mr. Moore recalls that during his first months in this country there was only one house between Mangum and Navajo. This was the farm house of Tom Hawkins. The years from 1893 to 1896 were "hard times."

Mr. Moore is now living at 116¹/₂ East Pierce street, Mangum, Oklahoma.