

MOORE, ROSA WARD HORNBERGER.

INTERVIEW

8669

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

MS. ROSA WARD HORNBERGER

INTERVIEW

#8669

Field Worker's name Mrs. Nora Lorrin, El Reno, Oklahoma.

This report made on (date) September 22, 1937.

1. Name Mrs. Rosa Ward Hornberger Moore

2. Post Office Address El Reno Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) West Side

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month April Day 3 Year 1886

5. Place of birth Schuyler County, Illinois

6. Name of Father Freeman Ward Place of birth Illinois

Other information about father Died September 3, 1937

7. Name of Mother Mary M. (Palmer) Ward Place of birth Indiana

Other information about mother August 1, 1867.
Still living.

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

6 sheets

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Mrs. Nora Lorrin,
Interviewer,
September 22, 1937.

An Interview with Rosa Ward Hornberger Moore,
El Reno, Oklahoma.

Mrs. Rosa (Ward) Hornberger-Moore was born April 3, 1886, in Schuyler County, Illinois. Her father, Freeman Ward, was born in Illinois on August 1, 1858. Her mother, Mary Margaret (Palmer) Ward, was born in Indiana, August 23, 1867. She is still living and makes her home here in El Reno.

Mrs. Moore lived in Illinois and Kansas until she came to Oklahoma Territory. They came here from Illinois when she was twelve years of age. Before coming to Oklahoma Territory, they crossed Missouri, in their moving about, just thirteen times.

Mrs. Moore's mother had a brother living at Racine, and he kept writing and telling them what a wonderful country this was, until they became enthused with the idea. They came to the conclusion that Oklahoma would be a wonderful place to come to. Racine used to be a store and post office on the old White

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farm fourteen miles northeast of El Reno. It is only a schoolhouse now.

They came to the Territory from Illinois in a covered wagon and were on the road twenty-two days on nineteen of which it rained. It was a wet spring in 1898 when they came to Oklahoma. They stayed at a relative's place for about three months and then started back to Illinois, homesick and disillusioned. They decided to visit an aunt Mrs. Annie Kerr, wife of the Reverend Spark Kerr, before going back to Illinois. The Kerr family lived at Kiel in Kingfisher County. The name of Kiel was later changed to Leyal.

The Reverend Spark Kerr, used to preach at a good many of the small towns and schoolhouses in that section and he also preached at Yukon. They were pretty well known.

The Wards moved on a farm a mile east and a mile and a quarter north of Kiel, instead of going on back to Illinois. Mr. Ward took up the carpenter trade at Kiel. They moved onto the farm in September, and moved to Kiel in January. They lived there just a very short time, moving in February to a claim in Dewey County, upon which Mr. Ward had previously filed. He found a claim that had not been filed on,

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filed on it, and they moved there when Rosa Moore was fourteen years old.

Their first home was a tent, and they lived in it for two months, before they got their house built.

Their house was what they called a picket house, and it was about 14 x 14 feet square. There were many blackjacks out there and they cut blackjack saplings about five inches in diameter, and all the same length. Then they dug a trench around the square fourteen foot site, on which they decided to build their house and they set the saplings up and down in it, solidly against each other, in something of the same way in which you would build a stockade.

Two-by-four planks were put around the top and the building was roofed with tar paper, over cottonwood (native) planks. Later they built a dugout with logs laid horizontally and extending about two feet above the dug portion. They constructed the dugout in the fall, after they came to the claim and used it for a kitchen. There was no trouble about getting fuel, as they used wood and there were many of the blackjacks.

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They dug a well and had to go one hundred and eighty-three feet to get water. It was fine water, soft and ice-cold. They pulled the water up with a horse. There were two pulleys, one at the top of the well and one nearer to the ground. The rope went over the top pulley and under the bottom one. The rope was then tied to a hame on the harness and the horse was driven away from the well, until the water bucket reached the top and the horse held it there, until they emptied it and got the water.

Mrs. Moore saw her first prairie fire while they were living in the tent, and it came close enough to set fire to their tent in one place. They herded the turkeys and chickens into the tent and corral while they were fighting the fire. They had a barrel of water and fought the fire with wet gunny sacks with the help of kindly neighbors, losing nothing but some prairie grass.

They took a good many turkeys with them to their claim and a coyote got their large forty pound turkey gobbler; they always wondered how the coyote got the gobbler, as he roosted in a tree, out of the reach of the coyotes, but this coyote

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managed it some way.

The first year on their claim, hunters got about fifteen of their turkeys, assuming them to be wild ones.

There wasn't a chance but that the hunters knew better, because some of their turkeys were white and wild turkeys are not white.

There was a covey of quail that used to feed with their chickens and when the hunters got after them, the quails would come flying home. They would come close up to the house, realizing that they would be safe there, as the wards did not kill them and did not allow the hunters to do any hunting on their claim.

The wards raised kaffir corn, corn, sweet potatoes and other vegetables. The land was sandy.

They did not have any church houses and they attended church services at a schoolhouse three miles north of Oakwood.

Kingfisher was their closest railroad town and it was fifty-six miles away from their claim. They had chickens, turkeys, guineas, a cow and a team.

Mr. and Mrs. Ward's bed was built on hinges so that

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it could be pulled up out of the way against the wall in the daytime. The children's bed was up under the roof. The house was unceiled and there were no joists extending across above the beds, so they nailed a number of boards to the slanting rafters, long enough to be even with what would have been the ceiling, had it been ceiled. They nailed boards to the lower end of those boards and then nailed a platform on the bottom. The children's bed was made on the platform and they got up there by climbing a ladder.

Mrs. Ward's sister in Illinois sent them a barrel of clothes and in it were some dried apples and dried peaches which came in pretty handy.

They dyed their carpet rags with what they called "Ink Balls" that they pulled off the blackjack shinnery. They would often cut a load of wood and take it to Watonga, sell it and get a sack of flour.

They always had a good garden.

There was a mill about nine miles south of their claim, and they would take their corn there and have it ground into meal.

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There were many deer and when they first came to Oklahoma, the deer would come in and bed down among the cattle at night. Mrs. Ward would often see them leaving in the morning and has seen as many as three and four deer at a time. The same man who ran the mill owned a pack of deer hounds and one day when Mrs. Ward was coming home from visiting a friend or neighbor, he was out hunting with his hounds in their neighborhood. He saw something moving that he took to be a deer and shot. It was Mrs. Ward that he had shot at, instead of a deer as he had supposed and had his aim been better, in all probability he would have killed Mrs. Ward, but as it was he missed her.

Their nearest trading post was Murley, which was located three miles south of their claim. It is gone now. After the railroad came through Oakwood, Murley died. They lived on the claim for five years and the railroad came through there, after they had left it.

In the Fall of 1903 when Mrs. Ward was seventeen years old, she came to Alamo working in and around town here in various places until she was nineteen, when she went back

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home. Then they sold the claim and started back to Illinois again and landed at Humboldt, Kansas. Her mother's people had come there from Indiana and settled. They stayed at Humboldt for almost two years and then returned to Oklahoma. She and her mother, sister, and little brother came back on the train, and her father and her oldest brother drove through in their wagon. They traded the team, wagon, and harness for a house and a lot on North McComb Street, El Reno, and lived in it eighteen months, in the meantime building a new five-room house on it. Her parents then separated, her father going to Illinois and her mother to Topeka, Kansas.

Mrs. Moore went to Topeka that Fall for a short time and then returned to El Reno and worked around town for two years. She cooked most of the time.

One place where she cooked was at the Gem Hotel at 212 West Wade Street, where Waldo's Beauty Shop is now located. She ran a boardinghouse on South Gresham Street, where she met Mr. William Hornberger and married him on February 3, 1909. She is the mother of four children, all by her first husband. After Mr. Honberger's death she married Mr. Moore on June 26, 1937.