

MOORE, HENRY

INTERVIEW

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268

269

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

MOORE, HENRY. INTERVIEW.

9302

Field Worker's name John F. Daugherty,

This report made on (date) January 27, 1933. 1933

1. Name Henry Moore

2. Post Office Address Nichory, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) Murray County

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month July Day 27, Year 1891

5. Place of birth Texas

6. Name of Father James A. Moore Place of birth Georgia

Other information about father Stockman

7. Name of Mother Martha Hiler Place of birth Georgia

Other information about mother _____

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 _____.

Investigator, John P. Daugherty,
January 27, 1939.

Interview with Henry Moore,
Hickory, Oklahoma.

'My parents were James Watson Moore and Martha Nisler Moore, born in Georgia. Father was a stockman. I was born in Texas in 1891, one of three children, and came with my parents to the Indian Territory that year, settling on the Harper Turner Ranch, east of Hickory in the Chickasaw Nation. The grass was waist high and higher in places.

The Indians disliked the invasion by the white man, and each Fall they set the grass afire to try to burn the invaders out. Those were exciting times. If the wind blew the fire travelled faster than a horse. It was impossible to fight it with water and sacks. The cowboys would kill a cow, split it open, tie each side of the body to the horn of a saddle on a horse, one on each side of the dead cow. They dragged her along the fire line, thus halting the blaze so that others could follow with sacks and water.

-2-

The annual round-ups were great events in the life of the cowboy. Each ranch for miles around had its chuck wagon and a bunch of boys to round up their cattle. Each bunch had two or three spoiled ponies, and for pastime the boys took turns trying to ride the spoiled ponies. I was a mere lad and there was always horse racing. I was one of the riders. I rode for all of them. I had a race saddle which Father bought for me and racing was my favorite sport. Another amusing sport was tying shucks or tin cans to the tails of the cattle to make them run. On Sunday we would go out and round up a bunch of bulls and drive them onto a strange range. The fight was on as soon as the strangers arrived, and many times we were forced to climb trees to escape the furious bulls. Any time one ventured onto the range on foot he was likely to be attacked by the cattle, and unless he had a tree to climb it was almost impossible to escape. I have had to stay in a tree top a half day many a time, waiting for a wild cow or bull to go away so I could climb down and sneak away. On the round-ups we put up a rope corral. The horses

MOORE, HENRY. INTERVIEW.

9802

-3-

were driven into this. When we had chosen the horses we wanted we threw a rope over his neck or around his front foot and he stood quietly while we caught him but if we had a bridle in our hand he would not let us get near him. Our horses were trained so that no stranger could catch them and when we stopped we threw the bridle rein on the ground and left him standing. When we returned he was still there.

A neighborhood pond was built on our ranch. Each Sunday the boys for miles would come to the pond to swim. One day a bunch of us were swimming when we noticed a man coming across the prairie in a run. He grabbed one of the ponies belonging to a boy in the pond and mounted it and rode away. We thought nothing about it for about half an hour, then some United States Marshals came riding up and asked if we had seen this man. It was then we found out he was a horse thief trying to escape the law. He had ridden a horse to death, left it and started out afoot. When he saw these ponies saddled and bridled he made a dash for one of them and we had let him get away. He later changed horses and the

-4-

boy's pony was recovered but the saddle was never found.

Horses on range were very hard to pen, especially if they were with a bunch of wild ponies. I have seen Father shoot wild ponies down to scatter the horses so he could drive ours to the corral. We had a blind corral; it had wings built of rails for about a mile, spreading over a large area at the outer side and when we got the horses started towards the corral inside these wings they could not escape. We gradually closed in on them until they were forced through the gate.

When one rode up to a house at mealtime he didn't ask if he might eat then. He got off his horse, walked in and ate when the meal was ready or if there were no one at home he cooked for himself, cleaned up the kitchen and left things as they were found.

The cowboys were a jolly bunch of fellows, always playing jokes on each other. One day at a neighboring ranch the ranch owner and a cow-hand were penning some cattle. The owner was a large man and the hand was slender. The owner accidentally let a cow down the chute in the pen with the hand. Now that cowboy did run around

-5-

the pen and finally managed to scramble over the fence. The owner laughed heartily at this joke but the hand decided that "he who laughs last, laughs best." So the next day while they were penning cattle he managed to get the owner in the pen and turned a cow down the chute into the pen. Now it was the hand's time to laugh. The owner raced around the pen several times with the infuriated cow at his heels. At last he crawled onto the fence and to the ground on the opposite side. How he did puff and blow.

Doctor War Eagle, a full blood Chickasaw doctor, came past our house once each year with about twelve wagons on his way to the Arbuckle Mountains to dig herbs and roots from which he made his medicines. He always camped at our place. One year when he came my sister was very ill. The doctor had told us she could never get well. Dr. War Eagle said he was sure he could cure her. He went to his wagon and got a white powder, from which he made a tea. Then he asked that brother and I go with him to his home near Wapanucka in the Choctaw Nation and bring back some medicine for her. He sent

MOORE, HENRY. INTERVIEW.

9802

-6-

a wooden box with several kinds of medicine, with instructions for using it. Sister recovered, and we always welcomed Dr. War Eagle when he came to our house.