

MORRIS, .. C.

INTERVIEW

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Form A-(S-149)

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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 21, 1937. 1937

Name W. C. Morris.

Post Office Address Pauls Valley, Oklahoma.

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

DATE OF BIRTH: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year 1867.

5. Place of birth Georgia.

6. Name of Father H. F. Morris. Place of birth Georgia.

Other information about father Deceased.

7. Name of Mother Emily Nelson. 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 4.

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Maurice Anderscn,  
Field Worker.

An Interview With W. C. Morris,  
Pauls Valley, Oklahoma.

I was born 1867, in Georgia. I came to the Indian Territory in 1889, and settled at Pauls Valley, in the Chickasaw Nation.

There were two stores there then, C. J. Grant owned one and Jim Rennie owned the other.

John Harvey owned a gin at Pauls Valley then, run by steam. Zach Gardner owned a gin and grist mill on the Washita River, east of Pauls Valley. This gin was run by water power.

C. J. Grant established the first bank in Pauls Valley, in 1891.

When I came to Pauls Valley, W. J. Long owned a large ranch near old McGee and he also owned a general store there. E. R. Spears owned a large ranch southwest of Pauls Valley and he always had three to four thousand head of cattle on his ranch.

There were several large farms around Pauls Valley and when I came here most of them were fenced with rail fences. Then, this part of the country was open

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range and you could ride all day and wouldn't have to open any gates.

There was lots of corn and oats raised then, but very little cotton, nothing like it is today. If people had raised lots of cotton they couldn't have gotten help to pick it, as there wasn't very many people living around here. The farmers that raised cotton just raised what they could take care of with their own family. There was no alfalfa growing in this valley. I sowed the first patch of alfalfa, in 1894.

When I came to Pauls Valley, the court for this part of the country was held at Paris, Texas, and later there was a court established at Ardmore, but that court only tried minor cases. Murder and whiskey violators were taken to Paris, Texas until 1895, when the court was established at Pauls Valley.

When I came to Pauls Valley, Sam Paul owned about eighteen hundred acres of fine prairie land, just south of Pauls Valley. Mr. Paul had this fenced and turned it into a large farm. A Mr. Scrivner farmed this place

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for Mr. Paul.

There were lots of deer and turkey in this part of the country when I came here. I have killed deer right where the main part of Pauls Valley is now.

There were several big cattlemen living around Pauls Valley and in the vicinity of what now is Garvin County, but after people began to come in and settle this county up and fence this prairie land, that put most of the cattle raisers out of business. In 1891, I went to work for Mr. Agnew, who owned the cotton yard and bought cotton. The cotton, after it was ginned, was stacked on the cotton yard until we had several carloads then it would be shipped to Texas to the market.

People didn't visit among their neighbors then as they do now. Of course there wasn't very many neighbors, in some cases it would be seven or eight miles to your nearest neighbor.

There were very few churches and no shows or ball games then. About all the amusement the boys had then was to go out on the prairie and ride steers

all day, and this usually took place around on the prairie nearly every Sunday.

In 1889 and 1890 what little cotton that was raised sold for eight to nine cents a pound.

When I came here there was a ferry crossing on the Washita River northeast of Pauls Valley.

The first bridge was built by the business men of Pauls Valley, it was built across the Washita River at Zach Gardners mill, east of Pauls Valley.

I still live in Pauls Valley where I have lived since 1889.