

MOSS, C. L.

INTERVIEW

#8076

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

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MOSS, C. L. INTERVIEW.

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Field Worker's name John F. DaughertyThis report made on (date) July 27, 1937

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1. Name C. L. Moss
 2. Post Office Address Mill Creek, Oklahoma
 3. Residence address (or location) Route 1.
 4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month January Day 20 Year 1858
 5. Place of birth Missouri
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6. Name of Father Jerry Moss Place of birth Kentucky
Other information about father Farmer
 7. Name of Mother Isabelle Wilson Place of birth Missouri
Other information about mother _____
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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 _____.

John F. Daugherty
Field Worker
July 27, 1937

Interview with C. L. Moss
Mill Creek, Oklahoma

My father was Jerry Moss, born in Kentucky in 1823. He was a farmer. Mother was Isabelle Wilson, born in Missouri in 1824. There were five children in our family. I was born in Missouri January 20, 1858.

In the fall of 1879 seven wagons started from Missouri to Texas. We stopped on the Missouri-Oklahoma line and worked two or three months, then proceeded south.

We got down near the Texas line and stopped to camp late one evening. There were some more campers across the creek, and that night we gathered around the campfire to visit. Our neighbors told us what a fine country we were passing through and to what a drouthy place we were going. We turned around the next morning and drove back to Lawrence Lake, southeast of what is now Sulphur, in Murray County. At that time it was Tishomingo County, Chickasaw Nation.

Our first house was one small log cabin with a rough board floor. We hauled the lumber for the floor

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from Stringtown, in the Choctaw Nation. I made a stick and mud chimney and covered the house with clapboards, made in the woods near my home. This was on Judge Ben Carter's farm. We used water from a spring.

On April 22, 1889, I made the run into Old Oklahoma. I rode a white cow pony. We were all lined up on the south side of the South Canadian River and when the guns were fired at high noon we plunged into the river. Such a splashing and scrambling to see who would be the first to reach the opposite side.

I ran three miles and staked my claim one mile east and one mile south of Norman. There was no town there then, just a depot and section house. I filed on this claim soon after and paid the Government a dollar and a quarter an acre for my one hundred sixty acres. This gave me full possession of the land, and I didn't have to live on it unless I wanted to. Otherwise I would have been required to live on it five to seven years before I could claim it as my own.

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I built a two room house of pine lumber and my wife and I lived here fourteen months and moved back to the Chickasaw Nation, near Mill Creek.

I had a good pony team, as did my brother and we freighted for Jimmy Davidson, who had the store in Mill Creek. In those days one store made a town. We hitched both teams to one wagon, and hauled cotton in the fall to Denison. We hauled five bales each trip. This cotton belonged to Mr. Davidson, who had taken it in payment of accounts at the store. On our return trip we were loaded with merchandise for the store. We often went to Caddo, also. It was fifty-two miles to Caddo and seventy-five miles to Denison, and it took from five to six days to make the round trip.

There were no railroads closer than these two places so the freight had to be hauled in wagons. We were never molested by outlaws or Indians, although we camped two or three nights on each trip. We didn't carry a gun. It was against the law to carry a gun in Texas, so we didn't carry one in the Territory either.

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After I moved near Davis I freighted for Sam Davis from Denison. One day in the winter four of us were returning from a freighting trip. Sam was along this time, and each of us had a wagon loaded with goods. We crossed Red River above Thompson Ferry to avoid the ferry fee of one dollar. The second team to try to ford the river got into quicksand. Then we had to do some quick acting to get them out. I had a good team, so I hitched on to the back of the wagon and jerked one side at a time out of the sand. It was noon when we got on the bank on the Territory side. We stopped long enough to feed our teams and eat a snack. Then we started north. When night came on we could find no place to camp where there was water, so camped without water. The next morning we had driven only two or three miles when a norther struck us. It was dreadfully cold. We got to Robber's Roost by noon, and there was plenty of water. We were very hungry, but we had nothing to eat but canned goods. Sam opened some of his canned food, made some coffee, and we had a feast.

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It was getting colder, and we were at the edge of Twelve Mile Prairie. Now we dreaded the trip across that cold strip of land! By walking part of the way we got across by dark and camped in the timber on the north side. We were barely through with our supper when it began to lighten and thunder. The storm broke in all its fury, and it rained and froze. We slept in the wagons on top of the goods. The wagons were covered with bows and sheets. The next morning it was very difficult for the teams to walk on the frozen ground. We ate dinner north of Tishomingo and got to the Roman Ranch, near the present site of Sulphur, that night. We slept in the ranch house as it was raining again. The next day we drove on to Ashita, where Sam's store was located in a tent. That was one trip we never forgot, and we were more than glad to get those goods unloaded and get home to our warm fireplaces.

I had a team and a slip working on the Santa Fe Railroad grade when it was being built, in 1886. I boarded myself and team. We were required to work ten

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hours a day for which we were paid two dollars and a half. One day our boss got on a horse and rode off with our months pay. We never saw him again and our money was gone. I quit and went home after that.

I was married March 1, 1888, to Isabelle Chronister, northeast of Davis. He didn't have a license, a Methodist preacher married us at Isabelle's home.

There were no buggies at this time, so we went to dances in wagons. Three or four boys would get a wagon and team and drive around to the homes of our girls, take them in the wagon with us and away we would go to the dance. After it was over we would drive back to each of the girls' home and after the last one was delivered safely to her home the boy owning the team and wagon would take each of the other boys home. Sometimes we went on a horse, with our girl riding behind us. We used to go twelve or fifteen miles to a dance.

I am the father of eight children. I have lived continuously on this farm southeast of Sulphur since 1912.