

Primus Moore

Early Settlers' Personal History Questionnaire, WPA
Interviewed by Arthur R. Hill Hempstead County, Ark. April 11, 1941.

Transcribed by Andrea E. Cantrell, University of Arkansas Libraries, 2003. [See transcriber's notes](#)

1. Early settler's name
Primus Moore "Colored" Uncle Primus.
2. Address
Saw Mill quarters.
3. Present occupation (most of the old timers are now retired).
Retired farmer.
4. Previous occupation or occupations.
Farmer.
5. Date of birth.
March 10, 1854 87 years of age.
6. Place of birth.
Washington, Arkansas.
7. Married? To whom? When? Where?
Single, (old bacchler[sic])
8. If an immigrant give particulars. City and country of derivation, name of ship on which arrived, etc.
Born in Washington, Arkansas.
9. How long has the individual resided in Arkansas?
All my life.
10. If not a native tell of the voyage to Arkansas. Boat? Wagon train? etc.
Native citizen.
11. Why did the individual come to Arkansas?
Born in Arkansas.
12. Get details of construction of early homes. (In the southern and southeastern parts of the state chimneys were frequently built of clay and split wood or trimmed branches due to the scarcity of stone and the lack of brick kilns. Some of the more pretentious houses were built with brick imported up the rivers. In the northwestern part of the state stone houses occurred much more frequently. Pay particular attention to these and similar regional differences.)
Log houses, stock holes Dirt floor and stick and dirt chimney[sic].
13. What form of lighting was used in the early days? Pine knots? Tallow dips? Candles poured at home? Oil or fat lamps? etc.
Tallow candles, and pine knots.
14. When were electric lights first used in your community?
Hope, Arkansas 1895.
15. What kind of fuel was used? (This was wood in most parts of the state, of course, because it was plentiful and convenient, but in some of the western counties coal may have appeared early.
Fire wood and pine knots.
16. What kinds of food did the early settlers have? Were fish and game depended upon for

- the meat supply? Was game plentiful? What kinds?
Hog meat, game fish, deer and turkey.
17. What kinds of clothes were worn and how manufactured?
Jeans Pants and Hickory Bark shirts.
 18. Were there any interesting customs or incidents connected with early courtships? Was bundling ever practiced? (It is highly improbable but possible.) Were charivaries (usually pronounced 'shivaree' in Arkansas and the lower Mississippi Valley territory) frequent?
Met at parties, dances and church.
 19. Compare some early food, clothing, etc. prices with those of today. (Since staples were usually bought in barrels, hogsheads, bushels, and similar large units, present prices will have to be quoted on the same basis.)
Flour barre. \$15.00 during war.
 20. What were some of the incidents pertaining to the sharing of food and other supplies in times of common need?
Shared in common at close of Civil War.
 21. What were some early cultivated crops? Domesticated animals? (For instance, when did tomatoes cease to be known as 'Love Apples,' regarded as poisonous? When moved from the flower garden to the vegetable garden?)
Corn, oats, rye, wheat, and barley,
 22. What were early farm implements? Any homemade? If purchased, where? Prices?
Bull Tongue and cutting coulter, solid sweep, and turing plow.
 23. What were early industries in the community?
Black smith shop, water mill, grist mill.
 24. What were some native wild plants used as food or for flower gardens? (For example: mullein, sassafras roots, sweet gum resin, sun-flower seed, paw-paws, sumac berries, poke salad-- or salet, or salud. There are stories told of various food substitutes used during the Civil War and Reconstruction periods. These might supply interesting sidelight.)
Poke salad, Lamb quarters, sheep shares and wild onions,
 25. Relate interesting incidents of the early days. Tell of childhood impressions and memories. Tell of group activities such as house raisings and warmings, quilting bees, corn huskings, brush arbor meetings, dances, games, socials, hunts and game drives, hog killing, sorghum making, play parties, and the like. Compare early farm and town life with that of today. Tell any experiences relating to the Indians, their customs and habits.
Log rolling, wheat threshing, and killing hogs.
 26. Tell of early methods of combating forest fires, town or building fires.
Fought it with brush tops spades and hoes.
 27. Get origin of place and thing names such as hills, valleys, rivers, soughs, bayous, plants, animals, etc.
Red River, Caney Creek, Breeds Lake.
 28. Tell of early taverns, hotels, boarding houses, stagecoach stations, boat landings, etc.
Old Washington Stage coach tarven[sic] and inn.
 29. Tell of early schools.
Log houses "square" and rought split log seats.
 30. Location of school? Late?
Wooden houses in towm[sic].
 31. Name of teacher?

Sam Newland.

32. How were funds provided? Tuition? How much? Was payment made in kind?
Tuition and pay school.
33. School books used? Title? Author? (Many of the old plantations maintained tutors either for individual families or groups of families. Sometimes 'school' was conducted on the premises for darkies'[sic] youngsters. Check on such information.)
Blue back speller, had no readers.
34. What constituted the reading matter of the early settlers? Books? Magazines? Newspapers? Get titles and authors.
Washington Telegraph and almanacs.
35. Where was the first telegraph station in the community? When established?
Hope, Arkansas 1873.
36. Tell of the early "Horse cars." When were trolley cars substituted? When buses?
Never saw any horse cars but buggy and wagon.
37. When and where was the first automobile seen?
Hope, Arkansas 1905.
38. When and where was the first train seen?
Hope, Arkansas 1874.
39. When and where was the first airplane seen?
Hope, Arkansas 1918.
40. When did automotive busses begin interurban operation? (Give descriptions on the five foregoing.)
Don't know.
41. Early theatrical performances? Local people? Traveling stock companies?
Had no shows but churches and school entertainments.
42. Tell of any important local celebration in memory of any individual or event.
Grover Cleveland 1885.
43. Does the individual recall any early historical character such as Sam Houston, Co. James Bowie, former President Zachery Taylor, the James boys, etc.?
James Boys 1881.
44. Tell of any duels. Where were they fought? By whom? Why?
No duels.
45. Tell of any feuds. Who was involved? Where? Why?
No feuds.
46. Tell of any early tombstone inscriptions. Where?
None remembered.
47. Tell of any bank robberies, stage holdups, executions of horse thieves or other impromptu executions, including lynchings. Give details.
Near Emmett, Arkansas 1882.
48. Tell of Civil War days, giving the fullest detail possible.
We were kept at home and hid in barns and cellar.
49. Tell of any battles, skirmishes, forays, etc., witnessed.
Camden, Arkansas near Poison Springs.
50. Tell of Reconstruction, the Carpetbaggers, scalawags, etc.
Carpet beggers[sic] took over meat chickens and food of all kinds.
51. Get all information possible regarding the original Ku Klux Klan or similar organizations.
Ku Klux Klan made us stay at the white folks houses at night.
52. Tell of any participation in the establishment of any religious or fraternal organizations.

- None.
53. Tell of any military affiliations.
None.
54. Tell of any Indian mounds, cliff dwellings, caves, etc., that may be recalled. Get as accurate information as possible regarding artifacts, particularly such things as calendar stones, mortars, pottery, baskets, etc.
Near Emmett, Arkansas.
55. Tell of any other historic sites.
Old State Capitol and Stage coach Inn at Washington, Arkansas.
56. What is total number of descendants?
None.
57. What are names and addresses of sons and daughters?
None.
58. Name some of the grandchildren and greatgrandchildren, if any.
None.
59. Tell of any books, diaries, journals, sketches, or newspaper articles the individual has written. Give details.
None.

The above questionnaire is intended solely as a skeleton outline to assist the interviewer in giving his subject leads. It is improbable that any one individual can answer all the questions fully but it is advisable to ask them all anyway. Record the answers on plain paper numbering the answers to correspond with the above questions, if possible.

AT THE TOP OF THE PAPER ON WHICH YOU RECORD THE ANSWERS BE CERTAIN TO PUT YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, DATE AND REFER TO ARKANSAS HRS FORM J.

Do not limit yourself to the above questions. If the subject goes off on any tangent follow it to see if it is of historical interest. Remember to get Who, What, When, Where, How, and Why on every possible question. As regards matters of location, such as Indian sites, early buildings, tombstones, etc., be as definite and detailed as possible. Give pertinent data i.e., whether or not buildings are now occupied and if so by what or whom, and in either case, in what state of preservation and repair.

AH/gm-9/13/38