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

Field Worker's name Nannie Lee Burns
 This report made on (date) July 27 1937

1. Name Mrs Sarah Longbone, Eastern Shawnee Indian
 2. Post Office Address _____
 3. Residence address (or location) _____
 4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month August Day 17 Year 1887
 5. Place of birth The Wyandotte Country in Kansas.

6. Name of Father John Mohawk Place of birth Canada
 Other information about father An Eastern Shawnee Indian
 7. Name of Mother Jane Pipe Place of birth near Old Wyandotte, Kansas
 Other information about mother Wyandotte Indian

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 _____.

Nannie Lee Burns
Interviewer
July 27, 1937

Interview with
Mrs. Sarah Longbone

EARLY LIFE.

My mother died when I was eight months old and my grandparents reared me. I always lived there at their home. I was the youngest of the three children.

One incident of my early life in Kansas stands out clearly. One day grandfather came home dragging an animal and asked us children what it was. We looked at it. It had hoofs and ears like a mule, we thought he had killed a young mule, but it was a deer, the first one I ever remember seeing.

I went to school there before we came to the Indian Territory.

REMOVAL TO THE INDIAN TERRITORY.

I was about twelve years old when we came to the Indian Territory. We came in wagons driven by horses, we never owned any oxen. We settled about ten miles south of Sandotte on the now Jim Logan place, and our first home was a crude log building with plaster between

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the logs. The first years were hard. My grandfather cut and sold wood for sixty cents per rick. I do not mean he received that much. The money was divided three ways, between the man who cut the trees, the man who sawed them and the man who hauled it to Wyandotte and Seneca, Missouri. The poor horses got nothing, and had to live on sticks and leaves through the winter and grass in the summer.

The Eastern Shawnees are very particular about their clothes. They never wore each other's clothes and were also careful to take baths. They would buy yards of cloth. It was not cut up and sewed into a dress in those days. They wrapped and draped it around themselves. When wash day came, they would go to the creek, and seat themselves in the water, and take off and wash the suit they had on. Wash it clean on their hands, and if they had only the one suit, would wear it until it was dry. They usually had an extra suit and both suits would be washed. Grandmother used to say to me, "You won't do that way, you'll learn to do the white man's way".

Grandmother often used to tell me, "Some day, the Indian language will fade away, be no more Indians. We have full bloods and half bloods now, some day they be

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one eighth, one-thirtysecond, one sixty-fourth, black eyes and hair be gone, all be white. There will be no more horses, some day you fly in air like birds. Old Indian be gone." I was taught to speak the Seneca, Wyandotte and Shawnee languages, and was interpreter for the Shawnees between the Senecas and Wyandottes.

SCHOOL DAYS.

After we came here, grandmother took me to the Wyandotte Mission and placed me there. We learned to scrub, had to get on our hands and knees and scrub with brush. They didn't give us much to eat either. Sundays we had breakfast, no dinner, and for supper two pieces of light bread with or without molasses. We wore blue hickory, I should call them shirting dresses. Danny Cochran was the Superintendent.

Grandmother came to see me and she saw a louse in my hair. She got a bottle and went through my hair and nearly filled it with them. Then she took the bottle and went to the Superintendent and told him, handing him the bottle, that he could have them, she didn't want them, but that she was taking her granddaughter home. She was mad.

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(Mrs. Longbone has beautiful, black, silky hair today).

Then I was sent to Lawrence, Kansas, to school. This was in 1900 and I stayed there for nine years or until 1909. Here we had good schools and with my other studies, I had Domestic Art, Domestic Science and the laundry course.

You remember two years ago, I applied for the position of matron in an Indian School and had several letters, but my daughter who has since died, became sick so I could not go.

MARRIAGE.

I try to tell my daughters how we were raised, and how we were taught. Those were horse and buggy days and when I had company and went in a buggy, grandmother usually went with me; or if she could not go, someone else went. She reared us right.

I was twenty-one when I returned home from school, and shortly afterwards Mrs. Dushane, my husband's mother, came to my grandmother and asked for me for her son. Dan and I had gone to school together in Kansas had always played together, and I had always known him, but I had never thought of marrying him. They arranged the marriage and grandmother talked to me, and told me that

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I was now a woman and should have a home of my own; that Dan was a good man and they wanted me for a daughter.

We were married the old Indian way. They dressed me up in red dress with blue ribbons, big bow in my hair on top of my head. My hair was plaited in two braids and one brought over each shoulder, had beaded moccasins. I painted my face, not like they do now. I had two red marks up and down on each cheek.

The paint was made by taking a piece of dead wood that is like a sponge and burning it, saving the ashes. Then there is a flower that looks like a sunflower, only the petals are red, I do not remember the name of it. You grind the red petals and you mix them with the ashes of the dead wood.

Then his people gave a big feast; they furnished everything. They killed a hog, a beef, had pies; etc, a big feast. All were seated at a big table, my folks below me on my side, his people all on his side. Then the Chief talked and told them why they were there. He talked and they answered him. They did not eat till the sun went down. After the feast all shook hands and talk-

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ed to us. Some gave us presents, anything they wanted to give, shawls, hogs, blankets, etc. His people gave money to build a house. It was a two-room log house with a fireplace. I had to cook on the fire in a Dutch oven. Then they danced after the feast. After this I could go with him, or I could go back to my people.

Dan and I made our home on this land one and a fourth miles west of Seneca, Missouri, after we were married, May 26, 1909. We lived together for twenty years and had nine children, five of whom are living. We lived on the old place till about two years before his death when we went to live east of Quapaw, where he worked for Alex Beaver. Dan was killed in a car wreck in South Dakota, while he was still working for Alex Beaver.

My husband was like myself, an Eastern Shawnee, and was born in Kansas.

VARIOUS DANCES.

I joined the Baptist Church when in school at Lawrence, but I have always been glad to take part in the dances of my people, as all of them have a religious significance. The stamp dance is held any time that they want to have one. They would then dance around a fire, one man leads them and four men follow

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him and when he talks, these men answer him. They dance a while and then the women join in the dance. They are glad to have lived and enjoyed life and to be there.

COON DANCE.

In this the men danced facing each other, dancing backwards. The men change partners in this. Later the women came in and joined the dance. In dancing, the men are very active like the coon. They dance at night, having a feast the next day. They used to have coons for their meat at the feast, now they are so hard to get that they use beef. These sometimes last three or four nights, as long as they want to stay.

CHICKEN DANCE.

This is similar to the Coon Dance, but they all bunch up. They carry a drum and two rattles. Chickens are often used as meat at feasts.

BREAD DANCE.

This is held in April. They make flour from the Indian corn by pounding the grain. It is used to make the bread, and this is the dance in which they give thanks for the growing crops.

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In October, this dance is held for the gathering of the crops, thankful for the crop raised.

It used to be that the men went out and hunted the game, to be used at the feasts and the women cooked it, but since it is impossible to get it now, they buy the meat and beef is used mostly.

INDIAN BURIAL.

No nails were used in the caskets. They were put together by notches. This was lined with blankets. The person was dressed in his best Indian dress and put in the casket. Tobacco was then sprinkled in the casket over the person, his face and all over him. After his body was covered, the Chief burned tobacco and threw the ashes while talking over the grave. The grave was marked by a red stick like an arrow at both head and foot. This was from eighteen inches to two feet high. We held our feast at the home, but the Delawares brought their food, placed it on the grave, and then sat around the graves on blankets and ate.

January 31, 1930, I married Jack Longbone, a Delaware Indian. This time we were just married like other people.

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CONCLUSION

Mrs. Longbone at present is making her home in Miami and supporting herself by her own efforts. Her two youngest children, both girls, and a three year old grandson whose mother died last year. She is an educated, refined, attractive woman, and a sincere Christian.