

MAYFIELD, LULA

INTERVIEW #8227

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

#8227

MAYFIELD, LULA. - INTERVIEW.

Field Worker's name Anna R. Barry

This report made on (date) August 12, 1937

1. Name Mrs. Lula Mayfield.

2. Post Office Address El Reno, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) 1011 West Rogers Street.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month February Day 26 Year 1870

5. Place of birth Ballard County, Kentucky.

6. Name of Father George Hill Place of birth Bardstown, Kentucky

Other information about father Buried at El Reno, Oklahoma.

7. Name of Mother Roda (Carpenter) Hill Place of birth Bardstown, Kentucky.

Other information about mother Buried At El Reno, Oklahoma.

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 _____

An Interview with Mrs. Lula Mayfield, El Reno, Oklahoma.
By - Anna R. Barry - Journalist.

I was born in Ballard County, Kentucky, February 26, 1870. Here I spent my early life. Later my folks' moved to Reno County, Kansas. I think it was in 1887. Here my father filed on a claim. From 1889 until 1892, all we could hear around our neighborhood was the Opening of Oklahoma and what wonderful opportunities Oklahoma offered people who were seeking homes. My father was a man who always believed success was just ahead of him, and never seemed satisfied to stay in one place very long.

In January, 1892, my father sold our claim in Kansas for \$300.00 and at once we began to get ready to move to Oklahoma. We loaded what things we had, such as bedding, clothing, cooking utensils, on one wagon, and another wagon was loaded with farm implements, several sacks of corn and a box of chickens. We also brought along a black wash pot and several cane bottom chairs which we tied on the side of the covered wagon.

On the 10th day of February, 1892, we rounded up our five cows and six head of horses and started for Oklahoma. Our family consisted of Father, Mother and six of us children.

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We came by the way of Caldwell, Kansas, on down the trail to Hennessey, then to Dover and to Kingfisher. After we left Kingfisher, one of my sisters became suddenly ill. My father began to travel more rapidly to get to some town to a doctor, but all along the way my mother kept begging Father to stop at some farm house as she knew this child had pneumonia in a very serious stage. Nine miles north of El Reno we stopped at a little two roomed frame house. As we drove into the yard, a man and his wife and several children came out to our wagons. My father immediately told them that he had a very sick child and would like to get her to a doctor and into a house if possible. The lady said she would fix a bed in the house at once for the sick child and the man told one of his elder sons to get on a horse and ride over to an Indian camp at a place near where Darlington now stands and get the old Indian Medicine Chief to come at once. Such a look of relief came over Father's and Mother's faces after they had gotten the child into bed and were waiting for the Indian doctor to arrive. As Father sat there waiting he glanced at several pictures on the wall, jumped to his feet, gave

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out a big scream and said, "Of all things!" This family in whose home we were happened to be from Kentucky and were named Mayfield. They had been close friends to my parents and it had been over twenty years since they had seen one another. This picture was a large frame picture taken on the wedding day of my parents with this Mr. and Mrs. Mayfield. Mr. and Mrs. Mayfield each said he and she thought Father and Mother looked familiar but they were so worried about my sister's illness that they gave the resemblance very little thought. I later married one of the Mayfield boys.

I can still remember how frightened I was when I saw this Indian doctor come riding up with this boy. I whispered to my father to watch him. We were very afraid of Indians. This Indian's body was painted a deep red all over; his only clothing was a beaded piece of cloth around his waist which fitted close around each leg and on his chest was painted a turtle of deep blue. A large beautiful blanket hung from his shoulders. His dark hair was braided in two long braids.

When he reached the bed of this sick child he wouldn't

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sit in the chair offered him but went on his knees, took her hand and touched it to his face, and said "high fever", he then took his mouth, sucked on her chest and said he could bring the poison out that way. Each time he did this he would spit in an old bucket. From the rafters in this room hung a few red onions, he pointed to these saying, "White Squaw, fry in pan, put on chest, quick!" My mother quickly ran to the wagon to get some onions and in a few minutes we had a hot poultice made from these onions and placed on my sister's chest. This Indian doctor stayed most of the day; that evening when he left my sister was some better. The next morning the Indian came back and my father told him if he cured Sister that he would give him a cow. This pleased the Indian very much. He did everything possible for her. After my sister began to get better, one day he brought her a little pair of beaded moccasins that just fit her. It wasn't long before this child was able to sit up and I shall never forget the happy smile that came over the face of this Indian Medicine Man when my father gave him the cow. They shook hands and he left, driving his cow to their camp, a very happy Indian.

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Finding these friends ended our journey; we camped in their yard until the day of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Opening which was April 19, 1892. During this time Hilary Mayfield, our host's oldest son, and I became engaged to be married; this boy kept telling me if we each staked a claim it would be five years before we could be married. But I was determined to make the run for a claim, so the morning of the 19th of April found me on my horse nine miles north of El Reno ready to stake a claim. As the guns were fired at 12:00 noon and everyone shouted "Go", my horse gave a leap which broke the saddle band. ~~I went on for a quarter of a mile, still among the leaders in the race.~~ One man hallowed to me to stop and he would fix this saddle. He told me that the men who were in his bunch were not going to stake a claim around there, that they intended to each run until they found bottom claims. I stopped my horse, this man fixed my saddle band with a piece of wire and in a few minutes I was on my horse again, still among the leaders. I staked a claim four miles south of Okarcho, on a bottom farm; my father staked a claim joining mine which was more hilly than the one I staked. My father wanted

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this claim that I had staked so we just traded claims that day, but my claim proved to be a good claim and in later years among the best of wheat farms in this part of the country.

In the Fall of 1892 I went to Frisco (a little town in Canadian County) to teach school, or in other words I taught in the morning, went to class in the afternoon. For this I received \$15.00 per month, room and board. I saved most of this money and in the Summer of 1893, I built a little box house on my claim, ten by twelve feet, which had two little slide windows in it, and a door. I planted little trees in the yard, put out flowers and lilies, fenced the yard, doing most of the work myself. I lived on my claim until I was married, January 29, 1893, to Hilary Mayfield. We lived on my claim; my husband ^{bought} new furniture for our little house and I was so proud of that little home - little did I realize all the hardships I was to later meet.

Near my claim ran the old Chisholm stage trail and every day wagon after wagon-load of Indians passed by going to Darlington to receive their rations, clothing, money and

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beef issues. All my life I had been afraid of the Indians. One day my husband had gone down to my father's house to work and I was alone, standing at the table washing dishes, as I turned around there stood an Indian buck, he was saying, "Heap, white squaw, where man?" I told him out in the field; as I walked to the door to look out I said, "Oh John, your horse has run off", at this the Indian ran out in the yard and as soon as he was out the door I slammed it shut and bolted it. That was the way I had of getting him out of the house. Indians never knocked at the door, they just opened it and walked in.

We never thought of buying clothing then as when the Indians came back from these clothing issues at Darlington, some of them would stop and trade bolts of calico, shirts and all kinds of beaded work for chickens, butter and eggs. They would trade a whole bolt of calico for a chicken. When I would go down to the hen house to get them a chicken, if a dead one happened to be under the roost they would pick it up and take it and when they would leave they would hold up two fingers, laugh and say "White Squaw, got two good chickens for cloth". Not far from our house

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was a small creek and these Indians would camp here. I have sold them many little pups for \$2.50 each. My husband would trade horses with them. They didn't care for their horses, would let them get poor and would let their feet get sore from traveling so much, then they were ready to trade the horses off. We always kept our horses fat; sometimes we would trade an old horse to the Indians for a young one that was poor. We would feed it well and in a months time it would be in good shape and maybe we could sell it for \$75.00. At this Indian camp not far from our house, sometimes they would gather for a big pow-wow, sometimes staying for a week or longer and my children and I would often sit in our yard and watch them. One of their games which we often watched was shinney, as they called it, which was played with sticks. They would throw up a ball and I have seen them use a tin can and one side would hit the ball or tin can one way and the other side would go the other, and of all the yelling they would do, but they always seemed to enjoy this game and never had any trouble. Then they had horse races and foot races for the younger ones.

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Sometimes they would line up little children not more than five years old, then an Indian man would start running in front of them, all the time waving his hand for them to come on. I have heard that they would run this way a mile or two and each time they would take the children a little further. It is said they did this to train their children to run.

When the Indian women came to our house after water, they had their little papooses sitting on their backs. I often wondered what kept them from falling. One day I asked an Indian squaw and she laughed and unwrapped her blanket. Around her waist she had a piece of cloth drawn very tight and in this the little papoose's feet and legs rested, and it also supported him to rest on his mother's back. I often noticed these little fellows if their mothers stooped over, they always grabbed around her neck for support, for fear of falling. Sometimes when the little papooses were in their baskets, their little arms and feet tied down and just their faces showing, they would be hot and fretting and I would beg the squaws to take ^{the} ~~papooses~~ out; I told the mothers that the papooses would be more comfortable out. They would always

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say, "No, heap too many bugs, ants get in mouth . Hang in trees, swing, go to sleep". I felt sorry for the Indian women, they did all the work around the camp, always carried the water, got the wood, hitched and unhitched the horses, staked the horses out and cooked the meals.

In later years we built a two room frame house with a side kitchen on the south. We did most of our trading in Okarche. We came to El Reno about every three months, usually when the children needed shoes and coats. I never shall forget when my five children were very small; it was then very seldom we went anywhere. At that time my children had never been to El Reno. This day we were coming to El Reno to a circus and as we drove along in the wagon my husband and I were sitting on the spring seat and the children were sitting on a quilt in the bottom of the wagon and as we neared El Reno, my husband said to me. "Don't say a word and see what the children will do when they see El Reno". After we had crossed the river bridge north of town, the oldest boy stood up and said, "Paw, what do you think this is?" We had quite a job telling the children

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to be quiet and not to point their fingers. They enjoyed that trip to town and seeing the circus just as much as children of today would a trip abroad.