

1365

Field Worker: Ruth Kerbo  
April 16, 1937

Interview with Mrs. Annie E. Tillman  
433 South Louisiana Ave.  
Mangum, Oklahoma.

Date of Birth February 16, 1877  
Hot Springs, Arkansas

Parents Father, J. K. P. Duncan  
Tennessee-Came to Okla. 1895  
Mother, Ella Green  
Arkansas

\*\*\*\*\*

BIOGRAPHY.

Mrs. Annie E. Tillman had never seen an Indian and she had heard they were very cruel and would kill everyone they met. One day she looked out of her dugout door and saw a caravan of eight wagons coming and she felt sure they were Indians. Her first thought was to go to the field where her husband was plowing, but before she could get her baby ready, the Indians were there saying, "Me no hurt you, something to eat." Mrs. Tillman finally understood what they wanted and gave them beans and bread. After they had gotten food they left her unharmed.

Mrs. Tillman came to Greer County from Denton County, Texas, in 1897, with her husband and small son,

-2-

1365

and settled on a farm her father had given her. It was located one mile south and three miles east of Mangum.

Their abode for several years was a half dugout, which was 14" by 28", and had a new shingle roof, which Mr. Tillman put on himself. The shingles were hauled from Quanah. Most of the dugouts were covered with cottonwood logs and earth at that time.

The trip from Denton County was in a covered wagon, drawn by a team of horses, which the family prized most highly. Another family came along with them as far as Vernon, Texas, but was not heard of any more.

Their furniture consisted of one bed, a home-made table, a cook stove, and some chairs. Cow chips were the main fuel in the early days of the country. Mrs. Tillman recalls buying wood for \$4.00 a load that had been hauled in the country from the Indian Territory. Coal was used generally after the railroad was established, but it was so expensive some people still depended on mosquito roots.

Mrs. Tillman recalls that her husband hauled merchandise for the different merchants in Mangum, and

would take merchandise for pay--money was very scarce, fryers were 15¢ each, and butter was 10¢ a pound.

Ready made clothes for children was unknown to the settlers, and patterns for little boys' clothing was hard to get. Mrs. Tillman recalls that when a woman got a pattern she would cut it for her own use, then pass it around to the other neighbors until every woman in the whole country had the same pattern.

Fishing trips and hunting wild fruit were the only kind of amusement in those early days. Wild plums were plentiful and there were also plenty of fish. One one occasion several families went over where the Lugart Dam is now located and stayed three days fishing and hunting. They were allowed to drag a seine in the creek and caught more fish than they could possibly eat.

The people of different denominations would have a camp meeting at grounds where the City View School is located. These meetings would last from two weeks to a month and people from miles around would come. The ones who lived quite a distance would bring a camping outfit and stay until the meeting was over.

Later Mr. Tillman went to Fort Sill and drew a lucky card, which enabled him to file on 160 acres of land in the Twin Elk River bottom. He relinquished this claim for \$1,000. and built a nice five room house on the 80 acre farm Mrs. Tillman's father gave her. He also bought a new Singer sewing machine and 50 head of cattle with the money.

Mrs. Tillman reared her family of five sons here in the country; two sons died quite young of scarlet fever. One son teaches school in Jackson County, Oklahoma, another operates a filling station in Mangum and the other son lives in Chicago, Illinois.

After Mr. Tillman's death in 1934, Mrs. Tillman has lived alone and she is still very active despite her sixty years.

\*\*\*\*\*

---