

MILLER, MINNIE

INTERVIEW

#4199

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Form S-(S-149)

4199

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

Field Worker's name Ethel Mae Yates

This report made on (date) May 24 1937

1. Name Mrs. Minnie Miller

2. Post Office Address Elk City, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) 1502 West Broadway

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month January Day 14 Year 1875

5. Place of Birth Newton County, Missouri

6. Name of Father J. L. McLeer Place of birth Indiana

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Josephine McLeer Place of birth Indiana

Other information about mother _____

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 4.

Ethel Mae Yates
Interviewer
May 24, 1937

Interview with
Mrs. Minnie Miller
Elk City, Oklahoma

My father and mother married in Indiana and then came to Missouri and settled there on a farm. They principally raised corn, wheat, oats and hogs. There they lived until the year of 1889.

We moved to Indian Territory, Creek Nation, to a little village called Choska. We came in covered wagons and lived in tents.

Our first school house was built of post oak logs. This school was named Hugh Lowe for a man who was interpreter for the whites and Indians. We had circuit riders in those days. These were men on horseback and on foot who came once a month and preached to the people. There was a building made of brick where the Indian children went to school and learned to speak English.

The Indians had a custom of meeting once a year on August 1. A few would come ahead and prepare herbs and roots they had gathered from the river bottom. They would

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boil this in a large kettle, then would all gather around and drink this to ward off sickness. Then they would take hoes and clear off about an acre of ground in a circle, pile logs in the middle and set them on fire and then they would have their green corn dance. They would dance around this in a circle and for music they would take terrapin shells with buck shot in them.

In that day the Indian women dressed in shawls; the men in hides and furs, most of them lived back in the timber in little log huts. They would clear patches for sofka. This is what they called corn.

The way they would prepare sofka to eat was to take a block, and chisel or burn a sink in the middle of the block and would put the sofka in. They would then take a wooden mallet and beat it to pieces. This was put in large jars and left to sour for food.

Quansab Parker was the Indian Chief, and was their sole dependence in all their business transactions.

The way the Indians had of burying their dead was by building small stone or log pens, six feet long and four

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feet wide and about four feet high. They would place the body in, setting it in one corner and would put all their personal belongings in with the body. If it was a man they would put such things as his shot gun, shot pouch and knapsack, so when he reached the "Happy Hunting Ground" he would have everything he needed.