

LYNN, MARTHA CAMPBELL. INTERVIEW 8074

343

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

344

LYNN, MARTHA CAMPBELL. INTERVIEW. 8074

Field Worker's name Ethel B. Tackitt

This report made on (date) July 22, 1937

1. Name Martha Campbell Lynn

2. Post Office Address Lone Wolf, Oklahoma. Route 4

3. Residence address (or location) Three miles south of Lugert, Okla.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month January Day 17 Year 1875

5. Place of birth Clark County, Indiana

6. Name of Father Jim Campbell Place of birth Indiana

Other information about father Died when 'rs. Lynn was small

7. Name of Mother Minerva Jackson Campbell Place of birth Texas

Other information about mother Was remarried to Jacob Wiley.

Emigrant from Fort Worth, Texas, to California in 1866.

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 _____.

LYNN, MARTHA CAMPBELL. INTERVIEW. 8074

Ethel B. Tackitt
Field Worker
July 22, 1937

Interview with Martha Campbell Lynn
Lone Wolf, Oklahoma

I was born in Indiana, January 17, 1885. I know little of my father, as he died when I was quite small. My mother, Minerva Jackson Campbell, was born in Texas.

After the death of my father, my mother married Jacob Riley and we moved to the Indian Territory, near a little settlement called Tussy. The town was named for a white man who had married an Indian woman, a squaw man. However, Mrs. Tussy was educated and other than being very dark of complexion, her manners and home were like those of any white woman.

Father Riley leased land from Henry Tussy for ten years and we farmed.

We lived in a cottonwood log house. We raised mostly cotton, corn and all kinds of garden vegetables.

We had no such thing as fruit jars, so did not can vegetables. However, we dried many different kinds; we also dried fruit. Walnuts and pecans could be had for the gathering and we had a sorghum mill, as did all our neighbors. We made great quantities of molasses

LYNN, MARTHA CAMPBELL. INTERVIEW. 8074

-2-

and this was used for sweetening. Green corn was grated on a piece of tin with nail holes driven through, and this was made into puddings.

The cattle and hogs ran out, for there was free range then. We had an abundance of food and there was no great need of money as our clothing was very simple. A neat clean calico or lawn dress was considered good enough for any occasion and we made the dresses at home.

Keeping teams with which to farm the land was a problem, as the horse thieves were so bad it was almost impossible to have horses. Therefore, everybody used oxen and it was a number of years before Father Riley even tried to keep horses. When he did get a team of horses he built a high picket fence corral by digging a ditch and setting the ends in the ground so deep it would be hard to get them out. He then wove barbed wire back and forth among the pickets until the fence was so solid it would have taken a long time to get through it. We also watched the horses all the time.

LYNN, MARTHA CAMPBELL. INTERVIEW. 8074

-3-

Whiskey was not allowed by the law in the Territory but the bootleggers were so bold they would ride up to a house at night and call out asking if anybody wanted to buy whiskey. These bootleggers and horse thieves were generally renegade white men and were a nuisance to the country.

I never attended a free school as there were none for the whites in the country.

Subscription schools at from one dollar to one dollar and a half per month for each pupil were the only kind for white children and four months was the usual term.

Spelling, reading, writing were my only studies until the last few terms I attended, when I studied arithmetic and geography. I learned to spell and read in Webster's Bluebacked speller. For writing, the teacher set a copy on my slate and I would copy that so many times, erasing my work and leaving the copy each time. I never owned an arithmetic text book, neither did the other pupils. The teacher placed the work on the home-made board blackboard, then the pupils

-4-

copied it and worked the examples on their slates.

My first teacher's name was Mr. Redwine and it seems to me that these teachers taught good schools.

There were no grades; there were first, second and third spelling and reading classes, and the pupil was advanced according to his ability to spell or read. One learned much by listening to older pupils.

The last school I attended Mr. Charles Hightower was the teacher. He had seventy-five pupils and he taught a fine school.

The teachers in our schools seldom whipped a pupil but they were made to obey. Mr. Hightower was a small man. Charley Cook, the oldest boy in the school, was a big fellow and continued to provoke the teacher, at the same time bragging that teacher could not whip him. He continued to disobey until one day the teacher told him that he whipped the little pupils to make them mind and for him to come forward and take his whipping. He refused to come up and Mr. Hightower went back after him. He jumped up and began to fight. They knocked over the home-made benches and desks and all of the

LYNN, MARTHA CAMPBELL. INTERVIEW. 8074

-5-

pupils ran out of the house screaming. Another girl and I were the oldest girls and we went around to a crack in the wall and watched the teacher whip him, which he certainly did. Then he called all the pupils back into the house. Charley Cook went on to school. He was one of the best pupils and liked the teacher better than anybody else.

After I grew old enough to have beaus and the horse thieves were not so bad, most all the young people rode horseback. I have seen fifteen and twenty couples riding in one group to meetings, dances and candy pullings. Singings were also a great amusement and most everybody had an organ.

The camp meetings were held down in Wild Horse Bottom, which was more than a mile wide then, with beautiful big trees growing everywhere. These have been cut down, leaving an open space. The trunks of the cut trees were split open and fixed for benches. Straw was spread over the ground, a book-stand was built and the tabernacle was ready. Reverend Acres, a Methodist minister, conducted some of these meetings.

LYNN, MARTHA CAMPBELL. INTERVIEW. 8074

-6-

For the candy pullings a big kettle of sorghum was boiled down and made into taffy in the evening before the company came to the home and the taffy was set out to cool. When the party started each young couple, as well as the old folks, greased their hands with butter and pulled until their taffy was white. If you got taffy in your hair or on your clothes it would wash off your calico dress or shirt as the case might be and there were few door knobs or furniture to be smeared.

If we danced it was usually out doors, for the houses were too small. A place by the house was scraped off and packed hard. We often danced by the light of the moon and if it was a dark night a lantern was hung up for light.

No girl would have thought of leaving the crowd for any purpose whatsoever unless chaperoned by the lady of the house. Girls and women were much more careful of their conduct then than at the present time and more particular about their reputation.

Our family moved to Greer County in 1900 and

LYNN, MARTHA CAMPBELL. INTERVIEW. 8074

-7-

drew a claim near Soldier Springs, Kiowa County, in 1901.

I was married to Jess Lynn, in September of 1902, and we are living now on our farm near Lugert, in Kiowa County.

Mrs. Betsie Davis, who, with her two little girls and little boy, was carried away by the Comanche Indians from Texas and brought to the Indian Territory, was my mother's aunt, and Jim Jackson, who traded horses to the Indians and bought her and one little ^{girl} back from the Indians, was my mother's brother.

Texas history gives an account of this story. The little boy had been sick and the Indians took him by the heels and knocked his brains out against a tree before aunt Betsie's eyes. They brought her and the two girls to the Territory. Uncle Jim bought her and one of the girls back from them. The Indians claimed that the other little girl had died, but it was later learned that she was kept by them. She was said to have been a beautiful child and it was supposed that was the reason they would not give her up.