

PARKINSON, ROXIE.

INTERVIEW

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LEGEND & STORY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

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Field worker's name Nannie Lee Burns

This report made on (date) March 14 1938

This legend was secured from (name) Mrs. Roxie Parkinson

Address Cardin, Oklahoma

This person is (~~male~~ or female) White, ~~Negro~~, ~~Indian~~

If Indian, give tribe _____

Origin and history of legend or story as recalled by her

Write out the legend or story as completely as possible. Use blank sheets and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached 10

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Hannie Lee Burns,
Investigator,
March 14, 1938.

An Interview with Mrs. Roxie Parkinson,
Cardin, Oklahoma.

My father, L. P. Joslin, was born at Columbus, Ohio, May 1, 1825. My mother, Lydia Joslin, nee Robinson, was born in the same state, two years later. They were married when father was nineteen and mother seventeen.

I, one of the several children, was born April 4, 1853, and when I was two years old my parents moved to Whitley County, Indiana. Here on a well improved farm, I grew up and attended the free schools of that state. The district school was on my father's farm. We had a comfortable school building with seats, desks and blackboards. I also attended Sunday School and Church regularly.

On the farm, father raised flax with the other things and we raised sheep as well but though I was taught to spin, we never did any great amount of either spinning or weaving.

It was in Indiana that we lived during the Civil War days and being so far from the active fighting, we did not suffer any of the privations experienced by those living in

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the regions that bordered the Mason-Dixon Line.

I married Jake Parkinson May 30, 1874, just four
~~miles from my home and was given no marriage certificate.~~

It was not customary in those days and when I needed it
two years ago, I was able to send back there and had a
certified copy of it sent to me at my home here.

One of the things most cherished by me is a tin-type
photograph of myself taken when I was a very small girl
showing my curly hair.

Kansas Bound

In those days, the movement was westward and young
people and, in fact, whole families, had their eyes on
new homes farther west where the soil was new and the land
was free. So in 1877 in company with my people and the
Golden family, we started westward. We shipped our stock
and household goods as far as possible and then selected for
the new home land near Great Bend, Kansas. Here we had no
improvements, only the vast prairie covered with tall grass
and many wild animals.

My first home here was a combination dugout and stone

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house. They dug a foot and a half into the ground and the upper part of the house was of stone. It was one long room and as I had brought lots of things with me, I was able to have a nice home. I hung a curtain across the room and divided it into two rooms.

Our barns were sod barns, warm in the winter and cool in the summer. Only our pastures were fenced at first and the posts were of stone and are still standing. The wire was fastened in these posts by means of holes in the rock posts.

We did not have the many conveniences that the people in the country have today, such as good roads and automobiles but the neighbors were always ready and even anxious to help each other and how good they were in cases of sickness and misfortune! They would come and stay when there was sickness in the home and in case of death everything in that community stopped and they made the coffins, the women the clothes, the neighbors dug the graves and did everything that was needed, without any expense.

The local schoolhouse was across the road from us and two days after my second child was born, there was a funeral

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there. After the funeral all of the women wanting to be neighborly visited me. The strain was severe and after they were gone, I fainted and my sister who was staying with me, after doing what she could for me, ran all the way to my father's home to bring my mother.

Goldens, who had come at the same time with us, had by this time built themselves a big frame house, the largest in our community and they gave just before the event mentioned a big birthday dinner and invited all of the people in the community. In fact, our whole community was like one big family and everyone was ready to drop what they might be doing to help one who needed their help.

We had lived here nineteen years and had built ourselves a nice home when some of our neighbors began to talk of the wonderful opportunities to be had in the Indian country, so my husband came down and looked the country over and leased for a dollar an acre the farming land, over two hundred acres, from Jack Barker in the neighborhood of Kennison which was south of Chatopa, Kansas.

We had a box frame house to live in and were also allowed the land used as truck patches free and our stock was to

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run on the range if the pasture thrown in was not sufficient. I did not want to leave our home and refused to sign the deed to our Kansas home and it was three years before I did. I finally did though I did not want to live here for at that time there were no schools for our children. They were not allowed to attend the Cherokee National Schools that were provided for the Indian children.

Seeing no chance for the children to go to school here, at the end of three years, as a compromise I signed the deed to our Kansas home and my husband then went to the Russell Switch just south of Chetopa, Kansas, and rented a farm from Mr. Wasson. We lived at this place just across the State line and the children could attend the Kansas school. The schoolhouse was located on the Fisher Land.

My husband entered the elevator business and bought grain and shipped it here as this switch was a loading point on the M.K. & T. Railroad.

Here life was more pleasant for the children and myself and in those days, Chetopa, Kansas, was a town of

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considerable importance as it was a trading point for the people who lived farther down in the Indian country. Many of the farmers in the Indian country hauled their grain here to sell it and the elevator did a good business. Here too and especially at Chetopa just over the state line, many cattle were loaded to ship to the markets by those who had fattened them on the long blue stem grasses in the Indian Territory and also here were, after the completion of the railroad, many hundreds of the Texas cattle unloaded each year and driven south to the Indian Territory to graze.

The cowboys from the neighboring range would come to Chetopa occasionally for a celebration after they had been paid and sometimes life was rather exciting.

While in the grain business here my husband became better acquainted with the country here and the people and so he had an opportunity to lease the Joe Abner place which was the first place north of the Peoria Schoolhouse over in the Peoria Nation and south of Baxter Springs, Kansas, on the old Military Road.

This place had a large frame house, one of the first houses that had been built by the Peorias. The house had

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two porches and on the front porch when we moved, there was a large iron safe. I do not know its history but after we had been there some time, United States soldiers came and loaded it on a wagon and took it away.

The school was close to us and how different it was from the buildings and schools of today! It was only a small one-room box building and had only one teacher, and school was taught here through the cold, bad winter months when the children could not do anything at home and as the warm spring days came the older boys and even the girls would have to drop out to help at home with the work. The children did not have many clothes and many of them would wash their clothes and dresses on Saturday and iron them so to have them for the following week.

While living here we became acquainted with the older Peorias and their families and among the ones that I recall was Dr. Wade (Long Jim as he was called from his height) and his family. He traveled in a cart to make his calls when the roads and weather would permit but if not, he made his calls on horseback. His oldest daughter, Florence,

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often went with him.

By now mining was beginning to attract some attention and as the prospecting that had been done around now Lincolnville looked as though that would become a mining camp, my husband decided to move there and open a general merchandise store so this was our next home and here we remained until we came to Cardin, my present home.

While living at Lincolnville, we lived in rooms attached to the store building and living near and next door to us was a man who had a wife with tuberculosis and this man had to leave her with their two small children and work each day. Each morning when I got up I would put on our breakfast and then leave my daughters to finish it while I went to their home and got his breakfast. Afterwards through the day if we did not bring the woman and the children to our place, either my daughters or I looked after them until the husband would return in the evening. Such were neighbors in those days.

After the mining in this district began on so large a scale and the men began to desert Lincolnville, we moved

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to Cardin but then we located west of the N.E.O. Railroad tracks on leased ground as we could not purchase the land. At first we paid \$1.00 each month to the Indian Land Owner as ground rent and built our own building. In this was the first store on the site of the present Cardin which was then called "Tar River". Our building had to be built so that we could move it as we had no lease on the ground and could stay only from month to month and would have to move at any time they wanted to use the ground.

As the mining activity increased in importance here, the agent for the land owner tried to raise our ground rent from \$1.00 each month to \$2.50 a month and this caused much confusion and my husband compromised for himself and the others by paying \$2.00 per month.

After the N E O built their tracks from Miami through the mining field by way of Commerce, Tar River and Picher, my husband decided to enter the coal business in addition to the store so we leased lots for our home and the business on the present Cardin Townsite east of where we were and so moved to our present location which we purchased when

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the forty acres belonging to Oscar Cardin was platted and offered for sale. Many of the better buildings were moved here to this forty where we could obtain deeds to our homes and the members of the Baptist Church which then had a small building west of the tracks also decided to buy a lot and build on it. This is now the west side of the present school building and is called the Auditorium.

Our family consisted of two girls and three boys who have long since made homes for themselves. My husband died at our home here twelve years ago last October the 8th. I have continued to live at the old place alone except for the frequent visits of my children.