

McCURLEY, MARGARET

INTERVIEW

#8845

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Form A-(S-149)

BIOGRAPHY FOR
WORKS PROGRAMS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Thad Smith, Jr.This report made on (date) October 14, 1937 19371. Name Mrs. Margaret McCurley2. Post Office Address Chickasha3. Residence address (or location) 910 North 12th St.4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month December Day 11 Year 18805. Place of birth Jack County, Texas6. Name of Father John G. McBee Place of birth MississippiOther information about father Buried in Oklahoma7. Name of Mother Margaret White Place of birth TexasOther information about mother Buried in Texas

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 3.

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Thad Smith, Jr.,
Interviewer,
October 14, 1937.

An Interview with Mrs. Margaret McCurley,
Chickasha, Oklahoma.

I came to the Indian Territory with my parents in 1891.

We crossed Red River on a ferry boat at Rivlin Crossing and my father rented a farm on Ryan prairie not far from Ryan.

We lived in a dugout, but we did our cooking in a small log building near our dugout. Our dugout had a dirt floor; the roof was covered with logs, and then grass put on the logs and then covered with dirt. The only light we had, came in through the door. We had a fireplace in the rear of the dugout. The chimney was made of adobe mud.

My father raised mostly cotton and corn, but we did raise some cane, from which we made sorghum. My father had his cotton ginned at Ryan, and sold it there for five cents per pound. My father always kept what

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corn he raised to feed his horses, hogs and a few milk cows.

There were many deer, wild turkeys, prairie chickens and quails near where we lived.

I saw very few Indians while there.

I attended school at the Prairie Grove box schoolhouse which was near Ryan. There were approximately thirty-five pupils going to school there. We studied "Swintons" books and McGuffey's books. We sat on long benches and each bench had a plank nailed to the back of it that we used, to write on, and to lay our books on while studying.

Occasionally a preacher would travel through the country, and when one was available, we would get him to preach in our schoolhouse. It never mattered what denomination they were, because not any of us belonged to any certain church. One of the Baptist preachers we had was named Cloudis.

We lived on Ryan prairie until 1895, when we moved to Caddo Creek in the Chickasaw country. My father

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farmed there until 1920.

In 1896 I married John Thomas Anderson. We got our license at Ardmore and we were married by a Baptist Minister named Martin.

In 1900 my husband died and in 1903 I married J. M. McCurley.

Chills and fever used to be a very common ailment in the southern part of the Territory. The best remedy I ever used for Chills was corn shuck tea. It was made by cutting the shucks up into small pieces and boiling.

There was a weed that grew on Ryan prairie that was called "Balmonia". We used it for a purgative by making a tea of the leaves.

My mother always made our own soap out of meat cracklings, we would have left after rendering lard. We had an ash hopper we kept our wood ashes in until we could save enough to make the lye we needed to make our soap.