

SHAFLER, IRENE

INTERVIEW

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Mannie Lee Burns, Investigator  
December 1, 1937

Interview with Mrs. Irene Shafer,  
Route 1, Baxter Springs, Kansas.  
Quapaw Indian.

My father, Abraham Dardene, a Quapaw, was born in Texas  
in 1850.

My mother, Margaret Lemons, was born in North Carolina  
1851.

My father was a graduate of the Texas University and came  
with his parents when a young man to the vicinity of Pine Bluff,  
Kansas.

I was born August 29, 1875, and my brother Abraham, who  
lives with me here, was born August 15, 1880.

#### The Move to the Indian Territory

My grandfather had continued to live here after his kins-  
men and tribesmen had left Pine Bluff for the Indian country  
out of course Grandfather heard from his family and they had  
always visited him and he knew where they were and how they  
were doing.

Grandfather had refused to consider leaving and it was  
not until in the early '90's, at the time that they were living  
in the Quapaw Nation, that the tribe sent some of their people

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from here to their kinsmen who were living in the Osage Nation and to Pine Bluff to try to get these people to come to the Indian country so that they could share in the land in this new country. It was at this time that Father and some of our people decided to come here. The Quapaws wanted to increase the size of their tribe. They had been in danger of losing their homes because so many of the Quapaws had left the Quapaw Nation.

Frank Valliere and John Medice accompanied Mr. Abrams to the Osage country and Alfonso Valliere came to Pine Bluff to see us.

Grandfather sold his home in Arkansas to two brothers and they made out the deed and together with them he started to Pine Bluff, where they said they would pay him. One of these men was carrying the deed and on the way to town the man who was to pay Grandfather jumped out and disappeared in the woods and as Grandfather had already delivered the deed he was unable to get his money so they had both the home and the money.

Among the families to come here were my grandfather and his family and the families of Ben Dardene, Felix Dardene,

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Dollie Webber, the Dysons, Benjamin Causett, and Joe Causett.

#### Life in the Indian Country

We settled south and a little west of Baxter Springs in the Spring of 1892.

Here Father built a log house of one room at first; this has burned down.

Life here was very different from what we had been used to and here we who were larger now had to help with the work and the boys had to farm and to look after the stock, especially the cows.

We were sent to the Quapaw Mission School; my sister went and I went as long as I could but Abe, who was younger, would run away and go home every time he got a chance.

When the boys from Wyandotte Mission came to play ball against us, I heard Superintendent McCoy tell the cook, in the presence of the pupils, to fix a big dinner for them and to fill them so full that they would not be able to play ball.

#### The Old Agency Site

The old Agency Buildings are about south of where we now live and the only thing that remains is the old cemetery. There are about fifty graves there and some few are marked.

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The cemetery, which is fenced, is still used but is now badly over-grown with blackberry briars.

The storm last year, I think, blew down the last of the old orchard that was there. A cedar tree was still standing there a short time ago. The cemetery is on the same ground as the buildings and was very close to them.

To Frank Valliere was allotted most of the old site where the Government farm and agency buildings were and now the land belongs to Clemons. I think even the lake where we used to go fishing is about filled up.

When the boundary line between Kansas and the Quapaw country was settled it was found that the Mission buildings were on the line and they were moved farther south to just west of Seneca, Missouri, and most of the material in these buildings was used there.

#### Marriage

September 23, 1893, I was married to William Shafer who was born and reared in Clarinda, Iowa, and we built a two-room frame house on my land just north of the little mining town of Saint Louis, which is, as you know, east of Picher and went to live there. Here our children were born and here we lived until

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mineral deposits were found on my land and since then we have lived in and near Baxter Springs. My husband was killed in an accident in Picher about five years ago.

Then I purchased this place and here with a son and daughter and my brother, Abe, I have made my home.