

SMITH, AMANDA

INTERVIEW.

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Field Worker: Maurice H. Anderson
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BIOGRAPHY OF: Mrs. Amanda (James) Smith
 Pauls Valley, Oklahoma

BORN: October 8, 1895 in Calhoun,
 Indian Territory

PARENTS: Ellis James, Choctaw Nation
 Sealy Mackey, Choctaw Nation

I am a full-blood Choctaw Indian. My mother had her own mill and mortar for beating corn, I used to help her fix "Tomfullah". She would beat the corn in the wooden mortar and after fanning the husks out of it until it was clean she would soak as much as she thought she would need and put meat in with it and boil it. We used pork meat. Then we would put some of the corn in a stone jar with water over it and set it close to the fireplace and let it sour; this was called "sofka".

My mother made some of our medicine. If we were sick, she would use a paste made of persimmon and flour baked for a laxative and give us a small amount when needed. For colds or croup she would use broom-weed roots boiled and take the juice and sweeten it with brown sugar or honey to suit the taste.

I remember one time, my sister and two brothers and I built a big fire and caught some dry land terrapins, roasted and ate them. As they tried to crawl off we would throw them back on the fire with a stick. When they were roasted we would take the hull off and eat the meat. I don't know why we did this, my mother always had plenty on the table to eat.

I didn't get to go to school much. The little schooling I did get was after 1907 when we moved to Pauls Valley. I went to Klondike school five miles southwest of Pauls Valley.

I don't know much about my tribe and I never asked my mother about the Indian customs. I have heard my older Indian friends tell about the old days and what they did and the things they saw. If what they say is true I know that they had a hard life.

I have always had plenty of clothes to wear and plenty to eat. I grew up in and around Pauls valley. I married Mr. H. W. Smith, a white man, in March 1913. We have lived either in Pauls Valley or on my homestead six miles southwest of Pauls Valley ever since we were married.

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