

TANNERHILL, MINTIE.

INTERVIEW

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Charline M. Culbertson,
Investigator,
January 25, 1938.

an interview with Mrs. Mintie
Tannehill, North McAlester.

I was born at Seelyville in the year of 1877. My
parents were Ed and Elizabeth Wilson. Father was known
by all the friends as Ed Wilson. He is buried at Seelyville;
other is buried at McAlester.

We lived at Seelyville until I was eight years of
age. I recall very little of this little town.

I do recall that Seelyville was then located about six
miles from the McAlester. Father had a house
house to live in, which earned only a few dollars a month.

an in possession of a picture of this old place. The only

stores I recall being there were two operated by Jack Bell

and one by Mr. Harper. Both were general merchandise

stores.

When I was but a few years of age the brothers,

mother and I moved to Seelyville ~~where we lived for a few years~~

three miles north of Seelyville, which was then in way

drawn by an ox team. We passed through what is now South

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McAlester; at that time it was nothing but a Tom Fuller patch. We were on the road eight days going a distance of ninety miles. We lived at this location five years then moved six miles from Terryville to a place called Deer Creek. My next move in the territory was to the Tannehill Prairie which was named for my husband who was the first settler in that district.

I received my higher education at Tuskahoma Indian school when I was fourteen years of age. I attended three years. It was while I was at Tannehill Prairie that I attended. My train station was on the Rock Island to Wister and from there on the Frisco to Tuskahoma. I am in possession of a picture of the old school house which burned four years ago. One of the girls who attended the school at the time, ~~has owned~~ the land where the school stood. I cannot recall her name. At the time I attended there P. J. Hudson was Superintendent and Nell Warefield was Principal. The old deckie cook was known and called by all "Old Aunt Rose". She occupied rooms near the school. The Superintendent and Principal occupied rooms in the school building. The school was located on the

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prairie and there were many Indians living all around. The council house was two and a half miles from the school. It seems that most of the Indian children who came to the Indian school and those which were full bloods always had "tattle" on the last of the name, and this could be dropped. Since I am one-quarter Choctaw my clothes were furnished while in school.

After I returned to my home at Tannehill prairie and was married to Mr. Tannehill I attended a few of the Choctaw Indian affairs. My marriage license was written in the Choctaw language.

Besides being the first settler on Tannehill prairie Mr. Tannehill also had the first ranch in that district.

He handled about fifteen hundred head of cattle a year.

At this time the grass was wet high and cattle ran out on the range. I could go to my front door in the morning and see from thirty to forty deer playing on the prairie.

The prairie chickens were thick. The quail had nests in the yard. The wolves were plentiful and we were bothered with them catching the hogs.

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My husband traded with the full blood Choctaws; the way they traded was not unusual but was only in the usual custom.

We had no school here at Tannehill until after statehood. We attended the church meetings called the Zion Church.

I have attended the Choctaw Pashofa dances which were for the sick. Their ceremony was performed by dancing around the patient's bed. The ceremony was held indoors there would be a big fire in the fireplace, and each time they would go around they would stir the pot of pashofa that they would have boiling on the fire. No white person was allowed in the circle.

I have also attended the Choctaw camp meetings which would be held weeks at a time. They would have a big fire which everyone would come on and each day someone would donate a beef which would be distributed about the camp.

We had no bridges, toll roads or ferries. The only toll bridge I remember was across Perryville Creek, near the old Civil War battlefield.