

LONG, WILLIAM.

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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) September 17 1937

1. This legend was secured from (name) William Long

Address 111 N. Walnut, Commerce, Oklahoma

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

If Indian, give tribe Wyandotte

2. Origin and history of legend or story From memory and from his tribesmen.

3. Write out the legend or story as completely as possible. Use blank sheets and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached 12

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Nannie Lee Burns,  
Interviewer,  
September 17, 1937.

An Interview with Mr. William Long,  
111 N. Walnut, Commerce, Oklahoma.

My father, a Wyandotte Indian, was born in Sandusky, Ohio, June 30, 1829. My mother, Kathrine Long, nee McConnel, a white woman, was born April 15, 1852, in Platte County, Missouri. Mother was father's second wife and there were twelve children born to them. I, the oldest of the twelve children, was born May 21, 1869, in Wyandotte County, Kansas.

#### Civil War

During this time my father continued farming and so did not take part in the Civil War nor did the family suffer any hardships from it. During the last Spring, after the battle in Kansas City, the Union soldiers, moving southward, engaged in a battle at the Baxter Springs in Kansas with the men under Quantrill and a number were killed. Continuing this way, their next encounter was in the Hudson Bottom, two miles east of Ottawa, near where Tom King and Able lived. Five Union soldiers were killed here.

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These men were taken with them to what is now Bland Cemetery, south of Ottawa, where they were buried and the graves covered with large stones. These graves were responsible for the location of Bland Cemetery.

Their next encounter was at Blue Mound, two miles south of Miami, when the Quantrill scouts were concealed on the top of the mound and the Union men were camped on the southeast side of the mound. The scouts fired on them, killing six. This was their last encounter in this county but this same body of men afterwards took part in the battle of Pea Ridge in the Spring of 1862. I have picked up shot and traced marks on the old trees left from the encounter in Hudson Bottom. There were four men in this county later that served under Quantrill. Two of them were Nick Cotter and Frank Whitewing. Forty-five years ago my father and others going to Muskogee, camped on Cabin Creek and picked up some old shells. It has been only a couple of years since an old bomb was ploughed up on that field, exploding and killing a man.

When the Bland Cemetery was fenced afterwards, my

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father was on the committee and the line ran through the five soldiers' graves and Father insisted that the line be changed to include them.

Early Life in Indian Territory

Father moved his family here in 1874, choosing for the new home a site one and one-half miles north of the Twin Bridges and south of Ottawa. Here he built a large log house of one room, a shed room and an attic. This house is still standing, in a good state of repair, and lately my brother has returned to this county and is now repairing the house to live in leaving the log part as it was.

One evening, when I was a boy I was alone at the house and a cyclone passed over and I stayed in the house afraid to go outside though I did go upstairs not wanting to be buried in the wreckage, thinkin<sup>g</sup> here that I would be on top. I could feel the logs weave and raise but they withstood the storm, seeming to settle back into place. The fences and the buildings around were destroyed as were many trees.

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Boyhood Days

Our early life was similar to that of others trying to make and build a home in the new country. We hoed and cleared land and planted it. Most of our clothing was made at home by the women. I mean they made it all, but later they bought some of the cloth. We raised most of what we ate, at first little but corn, beans and pumpkins, each year adding a little. Most everything prepared for winter use was dried at first as we did not have jars as they have today.

Schools

Then we had two Mission Schools here, both established by the Friends or Quakers; one at Ottawa and one at Wyandotte. Both were close as we lived near the tribal line between the Ottawas and Wyandottes. I would attend at Wyandotte one year, then miss a year to help at home and my younger brother would attend that year. Being the two oldest children we were needed at home; so until the other children were large enough to help at home, he and I took turns going to school. I reached the eleventh grade here. The Government was paying the

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Quakers \$169.00 per head for each of us for each term and they were to board, feed, clothe and teach us. During our first years the "eats" were very short. As a Sunday "extra" for dinner we had gingerbread. For Sunday supper we had two slices of lightbread, either with or without molasses, and water from the well. Continued complaint about the quantity and quality of our food and clothing led the Government to take over the school and then we had plenty to eat.

#### The Poncas

I remember when the Poncas were brought here. They passed our house on their way. I was eight or nine years old and I was afraid of them. Five or six soldiers were riding in front. After them, riding two and two, the Indians came on their horses. To me they were wild looking dressed in their blankets. There were few women and children among them, and when there were children they were riding behind. Some carried bundles. I should say there were not more than one hundred and fifty of them, for the line was not over a quarter of a mile long.

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Following them were more mounted soldiers and behind the soldiers came the grub wagons. They camped and were guarded on Jackson's prairie until the Soldiers' Barracks were built south of Baxter and north of Sunnyside Schoolhouse. They were brought here from the western part of this state as prisoners of war. As time passed the soldiers became easier on them and gradually some returned to their kinsmen west of here until not many were left, when all were returned. While here they were fed by the Government. The summer they left, they were raising a corn crop which fell to the needy Quapaws in whose country they had been staying.

The soldiers would attend dances given in different homes. They would drive down to Labadie's, in what is now North Miami, also to Johnnie Wadsworth's, near Peoria, and other places. The young men here did not like them to come as they took their girls away from them and danced with them.

#### The Nez Percés.

There were not many Nez Percés and they were not here so long. Mrs. Long's father was Richard Sarahas, a Wyandotte,



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born in Kansas, who came at an early day with his parents and settled two miles west of Seneca, Missouri. He married Polly Hunt, a Cherokee girl, whose parents came from Carolina and had settled near Coody's Bluff. Mrs. Long said the Nez Perces wanted her when she was a baby. Her father had gone to Colorado prospecting for gold and her mother was left alone with her two children, a boy, who was fifteen months older than Mrs. Long, and Mrs. Long, who at that time was about a year old. The Nez Perces had seen Mrs. Long and a party of them would come to the house in the morning and stay all day. At first they asked Mrs. Long's mother to give her to one couple of them, saying she looked like a child they had lost. The mother refused and then they tried to buy her. They were again refused, but still they came each day <sup>and</sup> would insist on holding her and playing with her. ~~Mrs. Long's mother~~ was afraid to leave the house when the Indians were there. At night she would place an axe beside her bed. It was a happy day for Mrs. Long's mother when the Nez Perces were moved from this county.

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I remember the Modocs. I was fifteen or sixteen when they were brought to this country. They were also Prisoners of War and were brought from Oregon to Baxter Springs by train where they were unloaded and hauled by wagon to their location near the state line, on the east and north of Seneca, Missouri. There were not many young men among them. They were mostly old men, women and children, those they captured after the war in Oregon.

The men who did come were badly scarred, one so badly that he was known as Scar Face Charlie. The Government looked after them also and issued them rations once a week.

One of the Modocs got into trouble with the Superintendent. ~~The Friends had been very active among them~~ after they came here and many of them had been converted to the Friends' religion. The Indians thought a great deal of them and as Doctor Kirk, one of the leading Friends, was principal of the Wyandotte Mission then, news was brought to Wyandotte of the trouble there. Thinking that they could reason with them, four of the women from the Mission

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decided to go and see the Modocs. Mrs. Kirk, the wife of the Superintendent, their daughter, Ethel, Lizzie Test and Zonia Jackson, with Frank Long and myself as drivers, started. We drove an open three-seated hack. We went to the Seneca Agency first to find out about it and to learn which way to go. We found the Indians gathered at the church house when we arrived. The ladies were able to get things straightened out that day so we returned home that evening.

#### Wampum

There are two kinds of wampum. One is wampum beads which are of an ivory color about the size of a pipestem and hollow from a half an inch to three-quarters of an inch in length and are used as currency and also as ornaments as the ladies use a string of pearls. The other, the beads used in belts, is a much smaller bead and is first placed on red flannel, then this is put on buckskin and the other side of the buckskin is also covered with flannel. These belts are from two inches to fifteen or eighteen inches in width, the "Wampum Belt" of the

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Wyandottes being about a foot wide and about five feet in length, and this is the Wampum that is read. I have heard wampum read three times. When I was quite small east of Wyandotte just east of the John Coon place. They talked all day but I did not pay any attention to what they were saying. This was a history of the Wyandottes. The second time was at Allen Johnson's place. This was the history of the treaty made with the Catholics in Ohio. The beads are either in lines up and down, although I have seen one where the story is told by the different figures made in beads on the belt. Silas Armstrong, the Chief, gave the belt to his wife, and Hooley Bell, the Chief, told me that he put it in the Masonic Institute in Washington, D. C. I also heard the belt read at the General Council of the Wyandottes and the Chippewas in either 1889 or 1890.

Silas Armstrong died at the Indian School in Wyandotte. John Winney lived two miles east of Tiff City, just on this side of the state line. He gave forty acres in Council Hollow to the Friends and they built a church there. Winney

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was very active in an early day here after his conversion to the Friends' faith and made many trips with the Friends' Minister and Missionary, Jerry Hubbard. The Council Hollow Church building constructed then is still used by the Friends. A missionary and his wife are still maintained there.

In 1889, I was sent to Carlisle, Pennsylvania, to the Indian School, learning the trade of blacksmithing and farming. After my return home, while working on the farm for a time, I drilled water wells with Mark Trazier. When I was twenty-eight, I entered the government service at Wyandotte as Assistant Industrial Teacher. My salary was \$15.00 per month besides my board and clothes.

My wife at this time was also employed at the Wyandotte School as Industrial Teacher. At first she had attended a subscription school taught by Bert Walker in their home neighborhood near Seneca, and later her parents sent her to Wyandotte where we both attended school at the same time in a small log house. When she was twelve years old, her mother being a Cherokee they moved one and a half miles

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west of Fairland to the Cherokee country where they were enrolled. We were married at the School May 7, 1889.

#### Later Life

From Wyandotte in 1901, I went as blacksmith to the Seneca Nation, then back to Wyandotte as Boys' Advisor. Next we went to the Otoe Reservation, and from there to Santa Fe, New Mexico. The last nine years of my service I served as blacksmith for the Guapaws. I, being 65, was retired in 1934, and since that time my wife and I have resided here in Commerce. We had two boys and two girls; the boys are still living.