

McVIGH, KATE

INTERVIEW

78054

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BIOGRAPHY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

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Field Worker's name Ethel Mae Yates,

This report made on (date) July 28 1937

1. Name Mrs. Kate McVeigh,

2. Post Office Address Elk City, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) 422 West Fifth Street

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month October Day 18 Year 1880

5. Place of birth Moberly, Missouri

6. Name of Father James Murphy Place of birth Ireland

Other information about father was an engineer

7. Name of Mother Bridget Murphey Place of birth Illinois

Other information about mother was a Pioneer widow.

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 5.

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Ethel M. Yates,
Interviewer,
July 28, 1937.

An Interview with Mrs. Kate McVeigh,
422 West Fifth Street,
Elk City, Oklahoma.

My father died in Texas when I was four years old, leaving my mother with six children, the oldest a boy eleven and the youngest a baby six weeks old. Mother had no means of support so she took us children and went to Columbus, Kansas, to her brother's and we came from there to the Peoria Nation in the year 1885. It took us only twelve hours to make the move. In our party were my mother, we children and four uncles and their families, fourteen in all and we all lived in one log house.

The web worms had destroyed our crops in Kansas so we came to the Territory to rent land. We came to Ottawa County and rented land two and a half miles northeast of the place where Miami now is. There was no Miami there then.

We rented land from Mr. W. C. Lykins who later organized the Townsite Company of Miami and we lived on his land seventeen years.

Our nearest neighbor was an Indian family whose

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name was Lovely Vally. The first school I went to was held in an old deserted log house with a shed room. An old bachelor lived in the shed room and we went to school in the other room. There were whites, full-blood Indians and half-breeds who all went to school together.

A little later a school house was built and was called Jim Town and the reason for its name was that nearly all the men who helped build it were named Jim.

W.C. Lykins was a white man but his father being a doctor, through him some way, Dr. Lykins and all his children got rights.

Most of the Indians lived in log houses and farmed a little and the women had to do whatever work was done.

Indians depended on the Government for support. There was a Quaker mission ten miles from Miami where they gave food and clothing to the Indians. The Indians, both men and women, wore blankets and most of them either could not or would not talk.

There was a Catholic church near the mission where we would go to church and we could go over to the mission.

There was no town near us so we had to go to

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Baxter Springs, Kansas, to get our supplies and our mail. Our farming consisted of raising wheat, oats, corn and cattle, and we shipped our cattle to Kansas City.

We lived on the banks of Tar Creek and could go out anywhere and get all the blackberries, black haws, and red haws, plums, grapes and wild cherries we wanted and we raised good gardens. I later went to school in Miami in a Baptist church and Mrs. Lykins was my teacher.

There was a sulphur spring three miles from Miami. The people went there from all over the country to get water and some hauled this sulphur water to Miami and sold it.

Men started to dig and this spring went dry and there is a large zinc mine right on the spot where this sulphur spring used to be.

These Indians were almost uncivilized but never bothered any one. There were hardly any whites in our neighborhood; there were Indians or mixed-breeds.

I played with the Indian children until I grew up but never was in their homes and never knew much

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about their way of living although one of my closest friends was a half white and half Indian girl and she was one of the best friends I ever had. I learned that if an Indian was once your friend he was always your friend and would almost lay down his life for you.

Lovely Vally's mother was a widow and a doctor; she would gather her herbs and roots and make her own medicine. I never did take any of her medicine but an aunt of mine did and thought that it helped her.

We went from Ottawa County to Roger Mills County within four miles of the place where Roll now is. My mother's brothers, my uncles, filed on homesteads and built houses, chartered a car and shipped our stuff and here we farmed; we principally raised feed and stock.

There was a store and post office built soon after we came here and a man named Preston Perkins had charge of both.

We did not find much fruit near Roll, just a few wild plums and grapes and for our fuel we grubbed up
o cherry roots.

My mother came to the Territory in an early day and by the aid of her brothers managed to rear her six children and had such experiences as only pioneers knew,

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but mother is gone now and is laid to rest in the
Fair Lawn cemetery at Elk City.