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BURNETT, JOSEPHINE INTERVIEW.

#4414

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INDEX CARDS

Old Oklahoma-1895
Home-Dugout
Sac and Fox Reservation
Sac and Fox Customs
Railroad-Cushing
School-Primrose

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

Field Worker's name Jasper H. Mead

This report made on (date) June 16, 1937

1. Name Mrs. Josephine Burnett

2. Post Office Address Chickasha, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) 227 South 7th.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month May Day 8 Year 1892

5. Place of birth Missouri

6. Name of Father Edward Fickle Place of birth Missouri

Other information about father Killed when 22 years of age.

7. Name of Mother Belva Hinsely Place of birth Missouri

Other information about mother 65 years of age-still living.

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 3 pages.

Jasper H. Mead,
Field Worker,

An Interview with Mrs. Josephine
Burnett.

by
Jasper H. Mead.

My name is Mrs. Josephine Burnett. I was born in southern Missouri, May 8, 1892. I was only three years old when my father was killed, and he was only twenty-two years old. His passing left mother and three of us children, and mother couldn't stand to live there where he got killed, so she took us three children and moved to Oklahoma. She traded a piece of property in Missouri for a homestead in Oklahoma, one mile north and a half mile east of Cushing. There was a dugout on the place but no well. This dugout was built about three feet in the ground and about four feet out, the part above the ground being built out of logs, the top covered with logs and covered also with heavy tarpaper over which there was about four inches of dirt. The dugout was twelve feet wide and about eighteen feet long with one door in the front, and a large fireplace in the rear, covering nearly the whole back end of our dugout.

We had to haul our water from a spring about one-half mile south of where we lived. We had an old gray horse and sled that we used for this purpose.

The Sac and Fox Indians were located around Cushing

at that time, and many a time they have come to our door and asked us if we had a fat puppy. They told us kids they were good to eat, but we didn't believe it.

Along in 1897 and 1898 smallpox broke out among the Indians and they died by the hundreds. The men would go around with just their shirts on and the women with nothing on but a blanket thrown around them, and they would creep around on the banks of the Creek and underneath the trees, sick enough to die, and they did die. Mother told us kids that they buried anywhere from twenty-five to fifty in one hole. We four had them pretty bad too, but it seemed like the smallpox hurt them worse than it did us.

We kids never were afraid of the Indians, but there were outlaws around there that would do anything, and they was sure enough mean. I have seen them ride around our house and take high powered rifles and shoot through the top of it, and we were looking to get killed any minute. They would even take twelve or fifteen of my mother's chickens and pick every feather off of them and then turn them loose. We would dig post holes and set posts all day until late at night; the next morning when we would get up there wasn't a post to be found. These are some of the pranky things they did, but now

they were sure enough outlaws and sure enough mean.

In 1902 the Santa Fe Railroad was built through Cushing, Oklahoma. It was the first railroad, but later on there was another one came through. I can't remember what the name of it was.

The closest school from where we lived was three miles and the name of it was Primrose. My first school teacher's name was Charlie Suman.

Back to the railroad again. I never shall forget Cushing because every evening everybody would go down to the depot to watch the train come in, and stay until it left. Sometimes it would stay an hour or two. Along about that time, we had lots of fun, and lots of good times. Young folks don't know what good times are now days.