

MARTIN, GRANVILLE A. (CURMIE) INTERVIEW 12849

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LEGEND & STORY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

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MARTIN, GRANVILLE A. (CUNNIE). INTERVIEW.

12849.

Field worker's name Nannie Lee Burns.

This report made on (date) February 1, 1938. 1938

1. This legend was secured from (name) Cunnie Martin.

Address Rt. 2, Miami, Oklahoma.

This person is (male or female) White, Negro, Indian,

If Indian, give tribe Cherokee.

2. Origin and history of legend or story _____

3. Write out the legend or story as completely as possible. Use blank sheets and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached 9

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Nannie Lee Burns,
Investigator,
February 1, 1938.

An Interview With Cunnie Martin,
Rt. 2, Miami, Oklahoma.

Our great-great grandfather, Joseph Martin, came originally from Bristol, England, and settled on a plantation near Charlottesville, Albemarle County, Virginia. His son, Joseph Martin, was born about 1740 at the old home in Virginia and married Susannah Fields, a Cherokee lady. Joseph was active in the Revolutionary War, first serving as a Major and was then promoted to be a Lieutenant Colonel in 1781, then was elected Brigadier General of North Carolina in December, 1787, and was commissioned Brigadier General of the 20th Brigade of Virginia by Governor Light Horse Harry Lee in December of 1793. His son, Joseph Martin, was a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1827 and also served as the first Chief Justice and also Treasurer of the Cherokee Nation.

My father, Joseph Lynch Martin, was born in Georgia August 20, 1820. He served as committeeman from the Delaware District at the Fort Gibson Council, October 26, 1840,

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and later served in various capacities under Stand Watie in the Confederate Army among the first offices being that of First Lieutenant of Company D. His son, Dick, and my half brother served under Stand Watie during the Civil War.

My father was married several times but my mother was Jennie Harlan who was born April 8, 1849, in the old Goingsnake District not far from Tahlequah and she entered school at the old Baptist Mission. Her teacher at one time was Carrie Bushyhead Quarles. My parents were married July 21, 1870. My father is buried in the old Military Cemetery at Fort Gibson and Mother died at Greenbrier, November 6, 1928.

FATHER'S EARLY DAYS.

Father came with his parents at a very early day to the new Indian Home; we were among the Old Settlers or you may say "Immigrants." My father was always interested in livestock and for this reason at a very early day settled on the west side of Grand River east of the present town of Adair. There was more prairie land for

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grazing here than farther south and even before the coming of the Ottawa Indians to the Indian Territory in 1870 my half brother, Dick, grazed large herds of cattle in this country between the Neosho and the Spring Rivers. Father's home was farther down on Grand River and the large numbers of cattle that he would be driving each year no doubt led to his acquiring a half interest in the ferry on the Military Road east of Miami across the Neosho. This ferry after the coming of the Ottawas was purchased by Moses Pooler and during the last years of its existence is always referred to as Pooler's Ferry.

Father's old home on Grand River was a large double two-story log house with a veranda across the front and between the two houses which were built along the lines of the old Southern homes. Around in the rear were the numerous log cabins that were occupied by his darkies. Among the darkies was one who was only a day older than my father called Old Nelson Martin whom my grandfather gave to my father and who grew up with my father and Father kept this negro as long as he chose to stay with him. Since I have been grown, one day when buying cattle, Joe Bengé

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said to me, "Cunnie, there is an old darky, named Aunt Junie, living not far from where we are who' used to belong to your daddy. Would you like to stop and see her?" We stopped and after the joy of seeing one of Marse Martin's boys had subsided, Aunt Junie asked me if I had a boy named Joe and when I told her that I did have she gave me a quilt top that she has pieced herself and told me that it was for him. For many years after the War some of the darkies stayed around and worked for Daddy and those who did not choose to stay would still come to him for advice and help when they were in need.

In those days all of the weaving, spinning and knitting was done in the home. The flax was carded, spun and woven into the linens that were used in the home, both for clothing and for household linen. After the wool was sheared from the sheep it was cleaned and if a color was desired the wool was colored by using the barks of the different trees for the different colors. The wool of black and white sheep was mixed to make a gray color. The wool was then carded and spun by the darkies and then the cloth was made into the different garments. Well, I also

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remember my first store bought suit. I was seven or eight years old when my father purchased me a suit, a pair of boots with embroidered tops and a new hat.

I had no own brothers and only two sisters and there was so much riding to be done to look after the cattle and the large drove of mules that my father raised that I soon learned to ride and from the time that I was 12 years old, I made a full hand on the range and went with the other hands to the round-up each year.

Sometimes we would start as far south as Red River and then work back north and by the time that we got to the home ranch, we would have a drove of cattle ready for the market which, before the coming of the railroad to Baxter Springs, Daddy had to drive sometimes way up in Kansas or Missouri to the railroad. He drove his mules to St. Louis, Missouri, each year to sell them. There was some farming done at home each year and I remember the old fields though I never took much interest in farming as I was always in the saddle and have always owned a good cow-pony. Even when I moved to Miami in 1926, I brought my old white pony with me and kept him until he died here. Once when we

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were dipping some cattle that had been brought across the Texas Line, near a full blood settlement school house, the teacher brought all of the pupils to watch us dip the cattle and asked us why we were doing it.

Wild game was plentiful in those days and easy to get but I had little time to spare for hunting and the same was true of fishing, but one of the memories of that time is, in the dusky night, especially in the warm spring nights, seeing a little canoe or boat drifting down the still waters of Grand River with a torch light made from the burning of a pine knot shedding its light from the front end of the boat. Standing erect in the boat were usually two men who with a gig were intently peering into the water watching for a fish. The two men watched, one on each side of the boat, and if there was only one man he stood farther to the front and looked on both sides. When he saw a fish he aimed at it with the gig which he held in his hands. If he was a good marksman the gig would penetrate the fish's body and this gig was attached to a line. Now came the landing of the fish. Sometimes there was one man in the rear of the boat, who with a pole placed

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directly in front directed the boat but he had to be very quiet in his movements.

Once when I was quite a small lad, a party of the Quapaws from up here came down and camped on Grand River not far from home. They lived in their round tepees with their tall poles extending through the roof. How strange it looked to me a small boy and an Indian, too, to see them camping there in the snow and coming and going each day hunting and fishing.

The great prairie fires that would sweep the country when the tall grass was dry were very dangerous. We had always to be on the lookout for these fires as sometimes they would be miles wide and would burn through the range destroying everything in their paths. A prairie fire was dangerous as it would burn the buildings and also when you saw one coming if you could not put it out you would have to drive your cattle out of its path or across a stream of water. Father sent his women folks south to Texas during the Civil War. When he and some of his friends returned after the war and went to his home, he found a stranger living in the old house. He rode up to the house

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and tied his dogs to a hackberry tree that was standing in front of the house. Then they went in and that night they invited the occupant to go hunting with them. He never returned and I do not know what became of him but Father took possession of the place.

My mother's father was Nelson Harlan who with his brother went across the plains to California in 1849. Grandfather, after some time, returned to his family but his brother died of the cholera. My father also made the trip to California but did not stay long.

Before I was born January 14, 1876, Father had built a new frame house across the valley from the old home and here I was born and lived until the house was destroyed by a cyclone in 1903 or '04. Father was seventy-one when he died and I was fourteen at that time so after that I spent most all my time in the saddle and attended school but a little while at a time. Mother made her home up over the hill from where I lived after I married Lola Mayes, the only daughter of Wiley B. Mayes and Mrs. Margaret McLaughlin nee Gillis, Mayes. We were married November 2, 1902.

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Interview with Mrs. Cunnie Martin.

My father, Wiley B. Mayes, was born in Flint District, April 15, 1848, and was educated at the old Baptist Mission and here he and my husband's mother were schoolmates. My mother was a white woman born July 13, 1859, in Illinois. My parents were married February 11, 1879, and I, their only child, was born January 11, 1880, and when I was only three years old, January 19, 1883, my mother died. After some years I was sent to the Female Seminary to school where I remained several years. During the time that Samuel H. Mayes was Chief, there was a vacancy as Girl's Matron at the Cherokee Orphan Asylum, which was offered to me and I, needing to work, accepted and remained here four years until I married. My father saw his share of pioneering in the early days. When a young man at one time he freighted overland with oxen for Mr. Linsey who had a store at Choteau. He hauled the freight from Baxter Springs, in Kansas. Later he turned his attention to farming.