

INDEX CARDS:

Cherokee Nation
Tribe-Cherokee
Cherokee Emigration
Living Conditions
Civil War Refugees
Honey Creek
Marriage Permit
Amusements

Interview with
Mrs. Joanna Jones nee McGhee,
128 K, N. E., 1/2 Mrs. Thos. Walker,
Miami, Oklahoma.

Mannie Lee Burns, Interviewer
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Grant Foreman, Director.
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My mother was Susie Beck, a Cherokee, and the daughter of
Charlotte Downing and Ellis Beck and she was born in Georgia.
My father was Albert McGhee.

I do not remember the dates of their births.

REMOVAL TO INDIAN TERRITORY

My mother was about twelve years old when they were forced
to leave Georgia and I have heard her say that before they left
their homes there that the white people would come into their
houses and look things over and when they found something that
they liked, they would say, "This is mine, I am going to have
it", etc. When they were gathering their things to start
they were driven from their homes and collected together like
so many cattle. Some would try to take along something which
they loved, but were forced to leave it, if it was of any size.
The trip was made in covered wagons and this made many of the
women sick, but they were forced along just the same. When
they reached streams and rivers, they did not want to cross
and they were dragged on the boats.

Grandmother always remembered it and I have often heard
her say, "Some day you will be taxed out of your homes here

just as we were".

THE NEW HOME.

The country, when they reached here, was a wild one and no place to live. The prairies were covered with tall grass the timber was big and thick, there was lots of wild game, such as turkey, deer, wild pigeons, prairie chickens. Squirrels and rabbits were numerous. The folks began looking the country over and from the fact that they were supposed to draw rations to live on the first year they did not want to get too far away, so they settled on the Long Prairie near where my mother married my father, Albert McGhee, later.

When my grandparents reached here, and after selecting a location, the men set about building their families a shelter. With plenty of timber available they began to cut logs and would, when they had enough for a house, help each other put them in place. These were at first often daubed with mud and anything that they could devise was used for a roof. The women began to gather berries and wild fruit, but could only dry them for winter use. They did get a little seed so tried to raise what they could the first years and each year became a little easier. Life was

3

hard in those days, no stoves, no lights, only the fireplace to cook on with a skillet and lid, and maybe a grease light.

Looms were made and also spinning wheels. These the women used to spin the yarn for the home use and weave the cloth used for clothing, in the home. They were making the best of it and trying to make homes for their families, adding to their crude one and two room log houses as they could, clearing more ground each year and getting more stock on the range around them until the War came.

THE CIVIL WAR.

After the war was on, parties were always coming and trying to get the men folks into the war, often killing them if they would not join. Grandfather Ellis Beck, with others, made their way to Texas leaving the women behind, not thinking it would last so long. My grandfather died in Texas, though some money from him was sent to his family here.

When men would come to our house and ask if there were any menfolks there mother would not lie but would say "They have gone south".

Food was scarce and sometimes when they would have a dinner ready for us the soldiers would ride up, see it and eat it, leaving us without anything. The chickens were kept under the house and if we wanted one we would have to crawl

4

under
The house and get it.

Mr. Brodie kept the mill and sometimes the women would make him give them some meal when they did not have any. He had a hog that had been fattened by running around the mill, and the women folks were needing feed so badly that they, including Rachel Smith who had a bull dog trained to kill hogs, killed Brodie's hog. After they had done it he told them, "I don't have any meat, will you give my family some?" They did give them a piece. Another time I have heard mother tell of the women forcing another woman who had been hiding her apples to divide with those around her. Sometimes the women would knock down a poor old cow kill and skin her.

Times grew so hard that several of the women with their children started to Texas to the men, but I do not remember the reason they did not get there. I do remember hearing my mother tell of stopping on the road at big fine houses that were deserted. Sometimes they would stay for weeks at one of these till something would cause them to move quickly. We children would draw pictures on the walls in these houses. My mother, who had married Albert McGhee, would often put dresses on Dave McGhee, who then was about fourteen and her husband's youngest brother, and he would play with the girls to keep him from being found by the Bushwhackers.

5

I have heard grandmother say that she helped lay out a dozen men during this time.

MOTHER'S FAMILY.

Mother was married three times, first to Albert McGhee and they had four children. Next she married Alfred Halfbreed and had one son, Webster. Later she married Mr. Riley who had a store on Grand River prairie. I do not remember his name, but he had a son Jack. He built mother a new house and he owned lots of Texas cattle. She stayed here until she went to the toll gate on the Illinois River to care for her mother and Iran Beck, who lived with her mother and who was blind. Grandmother and mother had kept the gate when I was small and most of the days when I was not being boarded out or sent to school were spent here.

SCHOOL DAYS

When I was nine years old, mother sent us children to Mrs. Butler's and Mrs. Snail's to board and go to school at the Butler School on Honey Creek. She paid our board with yearlings. Our first teacher was Mrs. Wade. From there we were sent to Mac's Mission for three terms and boarded at Cecelia Tiger's about a quarter of a mile from the school. After that we went back to the school on Honey Creek.

6

MARRIAGE.

When I was eighteen I married Jerry Hanna. He had to get twelve signers for us to marry. We went to live on Cowskin Prairie where I had a nice three room frame house with a stove, and a fireplace for heat. How different from the way my mother had to live, for I have seen her gr^{it} enough meal for breakfast and then have to cook it on an outdoor fire. Often for supper she had to cook a big pot of mush, besides having to wash with a battling stick.

We had four children, and life was pleasant, as we had a nice home and good neighbors. When we wanted a quilt quilted we would cook a big dinner and invite the neighbors in to spend the day and they would finish the quilt that day. I pieced my first quilt when I was fifteen, and it was blue and white.

We had good times at the dances, which were square dances. The neighbors would help peel apples to dry or to be made into butter. They helped out pumpkins for drying, though by then we had cans for our fruit, and five gallon jars for the pickles and so did not have to dry everything as mother and grandmother did.

We had church and Sunday School on Sunday.

My husband died when I was twenty-eight years old and later I married John Jones and we had three children. John died

JONES, JOANNA nee MCGHEE.

INTERVIEW.

6720

7

thirty-four years ago and I continued to live at Dodge

till all the children left there. Thirteen years ago

I came to Miami and have made my home with my daughter

Emma since then.