

GARRETT, LILLIE M.

INTERVIEW

9211

220

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

221

#9211

GARRETT, LILLIE M.

INTERVIEW

Field Worker's name Ethel Mae Yates

This report made on (date) November 10, 1937

1. Name Lillie M. Garrett

2. Post Office Address Elk City, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) Box #354

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month June Day 6 Year 1875

5. Place of birth Texas.

6. Name of Father Hugh J. Langshaw Place of birth Canada

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Emaline Langshaw Place of birth New Jersey.

Other information about mother _____

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 _____

GARRETT, LILLIE M.

INTERVIEW.

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An Interview with Lillie M. Garrett, Elk City, Oklahoma.
By - Ethel Mae Yates, Investigator. S-149
November 10, 1937.

There were three families came to the Indian Territory in 1895 from San Angelo, Texas, to Duncan. There were Sam Riley and family, a Mr. Green and family and my father, Hugh J. Langshaw. We brought two hundred head of horses, one chuck wagon and two other wagons. I drove the chuck wagon part of the time and rode horseback and drove stock part of the time, and stood guard one night. We were three weeks making this trip as it rained on us a good portion of the time, and when it was raining we would have to stay in camp. We gathered our wood as we traveled along, cooked on a camp fire and slept in wagons. We came up what was known as the Chisholm Trail. We crossed Red River near Henrietta, Texas, between Ringgold, Texas, and the Indian Territory. When we got to the river it had been up, so the man that was there to pilot people across thought it was best to drive the stock across first to pack the sand. I was driving the chuck wagon and as it wasn't heavily loaded they thought it was best to drive it across first; the water almost ran into the

wagon. I was driving a high spirited team and when we struck the quick sand things began to rock and the team got scared and began to run, one of them getting one of his traces loose. The man on horseback got scared and began to yell but I told him to just keep steady, that I would make it all right. So we made it across. The other wagons were very heavily loaded but we all made it and not a one got stuck. We came on up the Chisholm Trail. It was about four blocks wide and in places the trail would be worn down until it would come up to the wagon axle. On this trip we had two balky teams and we would very often have to put four horses to one wagon and pull them to the top of the hills, and then sometimes after they had got the wagons to the top one team would run backwards down the hill instead of going down the right side. We made it just fine about being disturbed, except for one night. This night we camped near Guthrie and there was a commotion in the night; the horses got scared and pulled backwards jerking the wagon and waking us up. We found that the ropes that held the wagon sheet down had been cut, and the handbag of one of the women

GARRETT, LILLIE M.

INTERVIEW.

#9211

3

had been taken but there was no money in it, and we didn't lose any money either. We had about a hundred dollars with us but had it packed down in a box under the over-jet. We went on to Duncan and there we camped. Mr. Garrett, my husband, and my father went over to the Cherokee Outlet and made the Run and set down their stakes. However, my husband sold his stakes for \$10.00 and came back to Duncan, and we went back to San Angelo, Texas.

We went back over the Chisholm Trail and crossed Red River at the same place, but bogged down in the quicksand this time and had to go to a farm house and get two mule teams and it took both teams to pull us out of that place.

Father made the Run in a wagon. There were lots of people who made the Run on horseback and ran over lots of good land. Father saw this good land that hadn't been staked so he set down his stake. Some of them came back and saw what good land it was and tried to run him off. He had fought through the war and knew what hard knocks were, so he got some logs and fixed him a place for protection and stayed there and guarded his claim. He slept between those logs at night with his gun at his side, and

GARRETT, LILLIE M.

INTERVIEW.

#9211

4

though he almost had several battles over this claim, he was never shot at and he toughed it through until he could file on it. He then moved on it in a little half dugout and he kept it and lived on it most of the time. Father and Mother are both dead now and are laid away in a little cemetery called Glencoe, just two and a half miles from this home; we children still own this home.

My husband and I stayed in Texas until 1897, when the children and I came to Stillwater by train. My husband came over-land and brought our things. He went to Guthrie and filed on a homestead, sight unseen. It was in the Red Hills, three and a half miles south of Cheyenne, right at the head of Snaky Bend Canyon. We came from Stillwater down here in a covered wagon and I drove a buggy. We forded the Canadian River near Bridgeport. The river was up but I drove across with our baby in my lap. I thought we would just have to fall off in the river when the water almost ran into the buggy. We made a half dugout on our place by digging in a bank. Two sides were dirt and two sides were logs with a tent top. We got to our claims on October 25, 1901, and wintered there. In

GARRETT, LILLIE M.

INTERVIEW.

#9211

5

the spring we put in a sod crop and then went to Stillwater so my husband could work to get money to live on.

When we first came here our children walked to Needmore to school, three and a half miles south of us. Their dog always went with them and one evening they were later than usual getting home. I went up on a hill to see if I could see them. They and the dog were running and the coyotes were after them. I had my Winchester with me so I shot at the coyotes and turned them and the children got home safely. We were afraid to send them to school any more on foot so we got them transferred to Cheyenne and they went to school in a buggy. We also had our share of snakes and varmints. One morning when we got up we had a possum in the kitchen and one night something was on the bird cage. It was dark, and thinking it was a cat, I slapped at it and it jumped right down on me and I found out it was a big old snake.

Another inconvenience was lack of water. We had to carry it from a spring down in a canyon and it was uphill all of the way. Just as quickly as we could we made a larger dugout - a pit in the ground and walled it up with

logs, then covered it with logs and then sod. Made it with a chimney in the back end.

I wish I had my Winchester now that I brought here with me. I always carried it with me in the daytime and slept with it by my bed at night as my husband was gone most of the time and the children and I were alone.

Our place was a very poor one and we couldn't raise much of anything on it. My husband had to be away from home most of the time to earn enough money to live on, he being a brick and stone mason by trade - so when Elk City was organized we sold our claim and came to Elk City and bought some lots. Mr. Garrett helped build almost all of the first houses in Elk City. When we first came here we had some grand times going over on the Red River hunting plums and fishing. We camped out and stayed two and three days at a time.

I have two silver teaspoons and a teacup that were owned by my great-grandmother over one hundred years ago, and a bowl owned by my mother over seventy-five years ago.

My husband is dead and is buried in the Fair Lawn Cemetery in Elk City and I am living on the place we bought and built thirty years ago.