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Mary D. Dorward  
Field Worker  
May 10 & 11, 1937.

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Interview with Mrs. Frank C. Godwin  
113 E. Brady. Tulsa, Oklahoma.  
Born in Illinois.  
Father-Wilson S. Trotter  
Mother-Sarah E. Cantrell Trotter.

Mrs. Godwin is the daughter of Wilson S. Trotter and Sarah E. Cantrell Trotter.

We came to Indian Territory in 1886 when I was three years old. My parents are probably unique among pioneers in that both my father and mother are deaf mutes who in spite of their handicap had the courage to emigrate to an undeveloped country, settled principally by people of a different race. Father had lost his hearing at the age of seven following an attack of mumps, while mother was three when scarlet fever left her without her hearing.

Born in Indiana Father had at an early age been taken to Illinois where he grew up, met, and married my mother, Sarah Cantrell, the two then moving on to a farm in Kansas. But fuel was scarce in Kansas and Dad had a hard time getting wood to burn. He has often told us children how he had had to burn his corn in the stove. An Uncle of mother's had gone to Indian Territory and married a Delaware Indian. Letters from him told how plentiful wood, game, etc, was and how easily a living could be made, so after a year in Kansas we Trotters came on to Indian Territory.

Father came first, in a covered wagon, arriving about the first of May, while the rest of us followed by train the latter part of the same month. We settled in the neighborhood where uncle lived, about six miles north of Tulsa along what is now Lewis Road, near the Bird Creek crossing and on what was afterward the farm of Clay Payne.

EARLY HOME IN INDIAN TERRITORY

Here father cleared a place for our home which at first was a one-room log cabin. It was furnished with a table and a few chairs which father, a carpenter, had made, and the dishes and stove which he had brought in the wagon. Later he built an addition which was a one-room frame with an attic room upstairs. Usually such two-room houses were built under one roof but with quite a space between the two rooms, this space serving as a porch where in summer the family meals were served. Our two rooms, however, were not under one roof.

Our water supply came from a well which father dug. He fenced in his land with rails which he split himself. The fencing was necessary because we were surrounded by open range and cattle roamed everywhere.

Our purchases of food and clothing were made in Tulsa where father always marketed his produce and could exchange it

it for the things we needed.

#### EARNING A LIVLIHOOD.

From the first Father had no trouble in earning a living. He farmed and raised a great many melons which were easily marketed in Tulsa, quite a little settlement even at that time. He also grew corn for the cattlemen, especially Bill Halsell. Frequently instead of having the corn delivered Halsell would have the cattle driven over to our place to feed.

#### GAME AND FRUITS.

The nearby woods abounded in quail, deer, squirrels, rabbits, and wild turkeys. Each evening a flock of wild turkeys would come walking past our house to feed from the grain which was scattered for the chickens and stock. Father always had us children be especially quiet so as not to frighten the turkeys, and would throw out extra grain for them. They never became tame though and always went back to the woods to roost. There were wild geese, too, that would sometimes settle on the wheat field and just about strip it.

Father used to seine for fish in Bird Creek near the falls. I well remember his coming h me once with a catfish

that weighed forty-five pounds. He had fastened its gill to the saddle horn and its tail swept the ground. Another time he brought home a huge turtle which he could not span with his arms.

There was always an abundance of wild grapes and wild plums, which mother dried or canned. She also used to dry beans and corn for winter use.

#### PEST

Mosquitoes were bad in summer. As a protection against them mosquito netting was hung from the ceiling down quite close round the beds, and gathered full so as to further entangle the little pests.

Outlaws too were frequent pests, not to raid us but to demand food. Uncle had cautioned us never to refuse to feed them and they would never molest us. Since they always paid well we did not mind a great deal but it was not always convenient at the moment to accommodate them.

#### CHEROKEE STRIP OPENING

When the Strip was opened in '93 Father made the run and secured a claim. To hold it would have meant leaving his family in order to homestead it. It seemed

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best to him however to stay with his family so he let the claim go.

#### REMOVAL TO TULSA

The land on which Father lived and farmed could, of course, never be owned by him. He had only a deed of possession from the Indians giving him the right to use the land. When the Indian Allotments were made by the Dawes Commission his land was allotted to Clay Payne. This of course meant that we had to surrender possession so in '92 we came to Tulsa. We first lived in a house situated right in the middle of what later became Main Street, at Fairview Avenue. When Main Street was opened through, we had to move again. This time father bought land on East Brady which was then just field of stubble. He built a house into which we moved in 1898 and in which mother and father still live, at 117 East Brady.

#### EARLY SCHOOLS,

My brother and I attended school first at the old Presbyterian mission school, at Boston and fourth. Later I attended a private school on the north side conducted first by Minnie Robinson and then by Lizzie Price.

RECREATION

Aside from Sunday School and church about our only recreation in the early days was a walk to the old 'Frisco roundhouse which then stood west of town toward the river. When later it was moved to Sapulpa we young people missed it greatly.

ATTITUDE OF INDIANS.

The Indians were always especially friendly to Father. His inability to speak seemed to endear him to them. Then, too, he talked by the sign language as they did and while his language was different from theirs he soon picked up their signs and could easily talk with them. So what had always before been a bad handicap proved among the Indians to be an asset.

RELICS

Father still has the paper or deed giving him the right of possession to the land he farmed.