

GUINN, LILLIE SMITH

INTERVIEW 9017

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

Field Worker's name Ida A. Merwin

This report made on (date) October 23, 1937

1. Name Lillie (Smith) Guinn

2. Post Office Address Perry, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) East Delaware Street

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month March Day 5 Year 1880

5. Place of birth Woods County, West Virginia

6. Name of Father Henry Smith Place of birth Ohio

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Ida (Prince) Smith Ashby Place of birth Wood County, West Virginia.

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 3.

Interview with Lillie Smith Guinn
Perry, Oklahoma

Investigator - Ida A. Merwin
Indian-Pioneer History, S-149
October 23, 1937

I came to Oklahoma in March, 1890. I was only ten years old and my mother was a widow and was keeping house for Grandpa Prince, her father, who was a widower.

My grandfather, mother, two uncles, brother and I came from Filmore County, Nebraska, making the trip in three covered wagons, bringing with us two cows, which we led behind the wagon, some pigs, chickens, furniture and provisions. We located in Logan County, about three miles south of the small town of Marshall and about sixteen miles from Hennessey. Marshall at this time consisted of two or three business places.

Grandfather bought land as he was anxious to secure a home. He had been a renter in Nebraska and thought he could get a home in Oklahoma and feel more free.

He broke sod the first year and planted kaffir corn, broom corn and castor beans.

My mother was married to Q. T. Ashby and he made the Run in the Opening of the Cherokee Strip, making

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the start from the south line at a point near Stillwater.

Mr. Ashby was on horseback and staked a claim in Section 4, Township 21, Range 3 East.

During the race, while crossing the low and fertile lands near creeks, he encountered many Sojners who were already on the land and had camps established.

Mr. Ashby was quite anxious to get land along some creek but found it impossible as the settlers already there would order him to move on and the land he secured was about two miles from the Black Bear Creek.

We moved to the land in about two weeks after the run; it took five days to make the trip from Grandfather's home in Logan County.

We lived in a tent and during the Winter we built a sod wall around the tent, covering it with clapboard which had been hewed from logs.

There was no school until the third Winter, then, a box building was made but it did not have any floor - this was done by donation and the seats were furnished by the pupils or their parents and were made from limbs of trees and brush, bent to make the shape and a board

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nailed to this for the seat. My step-father, Mr. Ashby, gave the land to build the school-house on; it was on the southwest corner of the farm.

The books that were used were what the children had brought from their former homes.

A widow, who lived in the district, was the teacher and was paid by donation. During the first years while Mr. Ashby was breaking the sod and raising the first crops we experienced some terribly hard times. I, being a girl about fourteen then, realized it as much as the parents did.

Many times we ground kaffir corn and used it for bread and parched wheat to make coffee.

We lived in this tent and sod house for several years, then we built a two room frame house.

Ben Cravens often stopped at our place and would make himself at home, helping himself to anything there was to eat. Mother and I would be so scared we could scarcely talk. On one occasion he was looking through the opening that answered for a window and the trail to Pawnee went by our house and he seemed to be watching

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that trail. / He had several guns strapped on his body and I was so afraid that finally I asked "Mr., did you ever kill anyone?" His answer was, "No honey, I am only after the cattleman and his money."

During 1893, while living in Logan County, Mother and I raised quite a nice bunch of turkeys and after we had established a home on the claim we went back to Grandfather's place to sell them and after selling our turkeys Mother got me a pink fascinator. In those days fascinators were used during the Winter as wraps for the head instead of hats. We also got some worsted material to make me a dress and I was proud. I was beginning to go to parties and dances with the young people and with these new things I really felt dressed up.