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BLACKBURN, TILITHA JANE. INTERVIEW 9183

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

BLACKBURN, TILITHA JANE.

INTERVIEW.

9183.

Field Worker's name Mildred B. McFarland.

This report made on (date) November 18, 1937. 193

1. Name Tilitha Jane Blackburn.

2. Post Office Address Edmond, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) 1029

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month January Day 7 Year 1868.

5. Place of birth Ironton, Missouri.

6. Name of Father Thomas Jefferson Vance. Place of birth Farmington, Missouri.

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Isabella (Gooden) Vance. Place of birth Farmington, Missouri.

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 _____.

BLACKBURN, TILITHA JANE.

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Mildred B. McFarland.
Investigator,
Nov. 18, 1937.

Interview With Tilitha Blackburn,
Edmond, Oklahoma.

I was married in May of 1889, and moved from Missouri to Iowa, on a farm. My husband and I were young and we wanted to own a home of our own. Rumors of the golden opportunities in Oklahoma came to us. We decided to try our luck, so, giving up our rented farm in Iowa, we came to Oklahoma in 1891. We bought a relinquishment on a claim two miles east and one mile north of Spencer.

There was just a hole in the ground, with poles and sod covering it. We saw we could not live in that, and, as we still had our crops to harvest in Iowa, we went back. We were allowed six months leave. We hired a man to dig a well on our place while we were gone. We harvested our crops and made preparations for our new home. When time came for us to return, we chartered a car and brought our furniture, a team of mules, four milk cows, two yearlings, two dozen chickens, a turkey gobbler and hen. We also brought farming implements and enough grain for our animals

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to last several months. We pitched a tent, and lived in that until we could build a house. We bought native lumber at the mill and built a one room box shack. We put a floor in the tent and used that for a kitchen.

The ground had never been broken and all we had that year was a small garden.

Our first real crop was corn, oats and kaffir. That was about the third year. The fourth year we planted some cotton and set out about thirty acres in fruit trees.

There was plenty of wild game. Nearly all of our neighbors raised a patch of cane to make sorghum. We always butchered a hog in the fall and made our own sausage.

The neighbors organized a literary society, and these were held every two weeks at different homes. We never left our children in care of someone else those days. We would all fill the wagon beds with straw and stop by for our neighbors and their children. Our Sunday school would hold picnics and quilting bees. The men would all help one another to gather in their crops and husk their corn.

The school house was about two miles from our place. We also held our church and Sunday school there. My husband

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taught school there for about thirteen years. I can't remember the name of it. At first there were only three months of school a year, but finally this was increased to nine months.

Everyone those days seemed to be so different from what they are now. Each one always tried to help the other person. There was plenty of hard work, but everyone seemed happier and willing to help one another.