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Chickasaw Nation

Duncan

Comanche Dances

Field Worker: Thad Smith, Jr.  
April 12, 1937.  
Biography of Mrs. Ruth King (White)  
Maiden name. Ruth Turpin  
518 Choctaw Avenue  
Chickasha, Oklahoma.  
January 5, 1896.  
Oklahoma.  
Parents: Father, W. R. Turpin, Kentucky.  
Buried in Texas  
Mother, Irene Westbrook, Tennessee.  
Buried in Oklahoma.

I was born in the Chickasaw Nation, between Duncan and Velma, a short time after my mother and father moved to Duncan and rented a hotel, which they ran for some time.

I attended my first school in Duncan, and Miss Blue was my teacher. The school was just a frame building, with long benches to sit on, but no desks; when we wanted to write, we went to a table to do our writing.

I remember one time when my two brothers and I were playing, my youngest brother fell in the City well. We were so scared we could not even tell our mother and father what had happened, but finally we showed them where he was. It was a dug well, walled up with rock.

Our school books consisted of the reader, arithmetic and speller. I think our school term was six months.

While we were living there, I remember going to Comanche to the Comanche's annual dance. There were Indians and white people there from nearby towns. The white people made a picnic out of it, and it lasted for about three days. There were foot and horse racing, besides the dance; and the

lemonade was usually made in a big ten barrel tank.

I remember once when they had a show battle. Several wagons were rounded up in a circle, and the Indians rode around them on their horses, with bows and arrows.

Mr. Fugua ran a grocery store in Lawton and as Lawton was off the railroad, commodities had to be freighted in by wagon and team. My father did most of the freighting for Lawton, as it was a very small town.

There were several large cattle ranches near Duncan, when I was there, and the most of the people rode in buggies and surreys.

There was three churches in Lawton, at the time, one was a Baptist, one a Methodist, and one a Presbyterian.

In 1901 my parents and I moved to Lindsay, and my teacher there was named Miss Wimberley.

My mother and father were always friendly with the Indians, and thought a lot of them.

My father did not seem to think very much of the Indian Territory. When the Caddo, Kiowa and Comanche country was opened, he did not even try to get a claim.

The Chisholm trail was about one and one-half miles east of Duncan.

The most of the Indians that I knew, lived in tents, and some of them cooked in what is called a "dutch oven", made something like a skillet, only it was about six inches deep and had a lid. When bread was cooked, coals of fire were put under the oven and some on top.

I have lived in Oklahoma all of my life, and think it a very good state.