

THOMPSON, IDA GILLEY. INTERVIEW

#8777

317

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

318

Field Worker's name Ethel B. Tackitt.This report made on (date) September 29, 1937Lone Wolf, Kiowa County, Oklahoma.1. Name Mrs. Ida Gilkey Thompson.2. Post Office Address Lone Wolf, Kiowa County.3. Residence address (or location) Lone Wolf (City)4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month September Day 11 Year 18685. Place of birth Van Zandt County, Texas.6. Name of Father George T. Gilkey Place of birth Missouri.Other information about father Confederate soldier in Civil War.7. Name of Mother Mary Coltharp Gilkey. Place of birth Texas.Other information about mother Prominent Pioneer Texas family.

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 5.

THOMPSON, IDA GILKEY. INTERVIEW.

8777

Ethel B. Tackitt,
Interviewer.
September 29, 1937.

Interview with Mrs. Ida Gilkey Thompson.
Lone Wolf, Oklahoma.
Born September 11, 1868.
Father-George T. Gilkey.
Mother-Mary Coltharp Gilkey.

I was born in Van Zandt County, Texas, September 11th, 1868. My father, George Gilkey, of Missouri came to Texas in an early day and was a soldier in the Civil War on the Confederate side. My mother was a native of Texas and belonged to the pioneer Coltharp family. Her name was Mary Coltharp. My mother's father owned the noted Van Zandt County Coltharp Flour and Saw-mills of that time.

In 1885 my father moved to the Chickasaw Nation and settled at Courtney Flat which was just a little settlement on a farm owned by a white man called Dad Courtney. He had a right in the Territory on account of his wife being an Indian.

I had been married to Thomas Jefferson Thompson and we did not come with Father then but he kept writing us about the Chickasaw Country and in 1888 we decided to

THOMPSON; IDA GILKEY. INTERVIEW. 8777

- 2 -

move here, so we came on the train to Saint Jo in Montague County, Texas, and Father met us there in a wagon and brought us to his home at Courtney Flat.

We crossed Red River on a cable drawn ferry boat as there was a great deal of water in the river. Dad Courtney ran the ferry boat. In dry times Red River could be forded; I have often waded across the water at such time.

When the floods came I have seen it miles wide washing down trees and everything. At one time a flood came and on the Texas side some people had built houses and cleared land down in the Red River valley and were living there. The water kept getting higher and the people were forced to get their stock out and leave their homes. Their houses were washed away and some of their trunks were later found lodged in the tops of trees down the Red River. These places were never built back.

When we moved to Courtney Flat there were two stores there. The post office was in one of them and

THOMPSON, IDA GILKEY. INTERVIEW.

321

8777

- 3 -

Zack Cooper was postmaster. There was a black-smith shop and a drug store in Courtney when we first lived there.

John Eubanks owned a cotton gin and my husband went to work in the gin.

My father lived in a half dugout which was back there a few years ago. We lived at father's for a while, then my husband built a one room log house for us, the house was chinked and daubed with mud. We had a fine well of water but for washing there was a place on John Eubanks farm where everybody went to do the family laundry.

At this big spring were tubs and pots which were let all the time and everybody was welcome to use them. There was also a battling block and paddles or battling sticks to be used by everybody.

A battling block was a big tree which had been cut off to about the height that would be easily reached by a woman usually about three feet and the top of the stump was made smooth or perhaps it was a block hauled to the

THOMPSON, IDA GILKEY. INTERVIEW.

8777

- 4 -

place if there were no trees near the spot.

The clothing was soaked and the home made soap was well rubbed into them and then they were laid upon this battling block and the battling sticks or paddles were applied to them until they were well beaten and the dirt came out.

Few rubbing or washing-boards were used then.

The clothing was then rinsed and hung out on the bushes to dry.

The opening of Old Oklahoma took place while we lived at Courtney Flat and there was much excitement about it. My husband did not make the run for he thought there would be so many people that he would not get any land and so he kept on working.

Many people went from our community but Miss Jodie Eubanks who was the daughter of my husband's employer, John Eubanks, was the only one I knew who made the run of 1889 and got a claim. Jodie Eubanks located her claim, then came back home and was married and she and her husband went to live on it.

THOMPSON, IDA GILKEY. INTERVIEW.

8777

- 5 -

Courtney flat had a small school-house, which was also used for church services, and was settled by industrious farm people; few Indians lived there and those who did were much like the white people.

We went back to Texas after three years but we were not satisfied and came back to Oklahoma. My husband died at Ryan and I came to Lone Wolf which has been my home for several years.

I have known Oklahoma pioneering for fifty-two years.