

VALLIERE, VIDA

INTERVIEW

#12047

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LEGEND & STORY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

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Field worker's name Nannie Lee BurnsThis report made on (date) Nov. 3 19571. This legend was secured from (name) Mrs. Vidá ValliereAddress Quapaw, Oklahoma.This person is (male or female) White, ~~Negro~~, Indian,If Indian, give tribe Wife of Quapaw Indian.

2. Origin and history of legend or story _____

Gathered when living with her husband in Jackson, Mississippi andLine Bluff, Arkansas.3. Write out the legend or story as completely as possible. Use blank sheets and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached 6

WILLIAMS, W.D. ...

Wanda Lee Burns
Field Worker
11-3-3

An interview with,
Wanda Lee Burns, Sapaw, Okla.

My parents came to the state of Arkansas when they
were young people from the east of states.

I was born in Hot Springs, June 24, 1912. I was
raised in the city of Hot Springs, Arkansas.
My husband's father, Frank Williams, the oldest son of
the present Sapaw, was born in what is now Cherokee
County, Kansas, on Dry Creek, July 20, 1853.

My husband, his son, William W. Williams, was
born at the Williams home, four miles east of Sapaw,
August 8th, 1911. He was raised in this county and
spent most of his school days here in the early session
schools.

William came to Pine Bluff to visit his aunt, who
had married my uncle, and while he was visiting
here and she married at Chariton, Arkansas, June 24th,
1924. My husband's father was a full blood Osage and
his mother, Alice Williams, was a half blood Osage. His
parents were married in 1860.

My husband was born on the Frank Williams farm,

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now owned by Clarence Clemens, which was at one time the old Government farm. The Valliere home, a one and one half story house, was built in 1888. It had one large room downstairs with a fireplace and an attic above, and a shed room. Some of the old trees, blackjacks and cedars, are still standing. Nearby was a large lake which was a favorite fishing place. The farm was prairie and was planted in corn.

The first school was started in this house and my husband's mother was the first teacher. Later, after the establishment of the Catholic Mission School south of Lincolnville, she became a teacher there.

Some of the old cabins of the Quapaws in Mississippi were still standing in 1921. They were one room buildings of logs.

The Quapaw way of burying was to dig a trench of sufficient length and breadth for the body and across this trench to place poles. The body was then placed on these poles and left and in time the poles gave way and the body dropped into the ground below. The Quapaws never covered the bodies.

The Quapaws were industrious people and the women farmed and raised Indian corn, tomatoes, cabbage, lettuce, Indian turnips, and today when you find an old village site that is not covered with pines you will find these things

still growing wild there where they used to raise them in their fields. The men spent their time hunting and fishing.

All property belonged to the wife and the children took their name from her and belonged to her clan.

A new born baby was first taken to a stream of water and washed and then wrapped in a blanket.

The Quapaws wore blankets of their own make. Their shoes were of the birch bark as were their canoes.

The women wore many beads of bright colors. These were made of clay and were very heavy.

The men wore turkey feathers in their hair, not fastened to a band and arranged in order but stuck as they chose in their hair. They were careful to pick up all the larger and better feathers of the turkey.

Wash Day

The Quapaw women would have wash day about once a month and when it came it was observed by the whole village. The Quapaw women would take their clothes and blankets to a running stream of clear water and they used a sort of a mallet with which to pound the dirt out.

Lottery

We found much pottery in the various hotels and business houses that had been made by the early Quapaws.

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The pottery is carved and painted. There are pitchers, jars, water jars and vases; some of the jars are about three feet high.

We visited one old lady who had a large collection of pottery and she told us that the pottery was much prized by the older people and they were interested in the making of it but that the younger people did not seem interested and they were forgetting how to make it.

Marriage.

Each man was allowed to select his wife and when the selection was made and approved, then came the wedding ceremony, which included a feast, and a part of the ceremony was for the man to extend his blanket and wrap the lady in it with himself, thus signifying their marriage and his protection of her.

Wild Game.

Wild game was plentiful in those days and even when we were there the wild game was still plentiful in the sections not pine covered, which were called the *cañon* areas.

We found many bows and arrows still used and some of the modern quapaws are good marksmen. The arrows had feathers on them.

Fish was a large part of the food of the Quapaws and it was caught in the rivers.

Worship.

The Quapaws in Oklahoma have reversed the time of their worship as when they were living in Mississippi they worshiped at sunrise and at sundown on the day when they began their fast, which lasted until noon of the next day, after which came the feast. The eating of the roasted corn was then recognized as a part in their ceremonies.

Pine bluff

Five miles in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, is a place across the road from the old Indian cemetery. Since the Quapaws left their cemetery has been almost empty it is a covered site surrounded by pine trees. Among these trees you can still find thousands of arrow heads are still to be found and we also saw some small Indian statues.

There is a large cemetery three miles south of Pine Bluff.

Some of the houses built by the Quapaws were still standing and among these was the old Gardene home, which is a double log house built in the Southern style, with a chimney at each end. The old dirt chimney was still

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standing at one end but the chimney at the other end had been replaced by a brick one. The foundation is of cobble stones. There is an old story told in connection with this place stating that money was buried there by the former owners.