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

Field Worker's name Alma D. McDowell

Report made on (date) May 24 1937

Name Georgia Lee Austin Waincott

Post Office Address Penryn, California

Residence address (or location) _____

DATE OF BIRTH: Month April Day 20 Year 1876

Place of birth Grandby, Missouri

Name of Father Ben F. Austin Place of birth Missouri

Other information about father Cherokee Indian. Died and buried in Neosho

Name of Mother Elizabeth Rice Austin Place of birth Missouri Missouri.

Other information about mother Daughter of General Rice.

is 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 _____

Alene D. McDowell

Interviewer.

May 24, 1937.

PIONEER LIFE AMONG THE SENECA INDIANS
Given by Georgia Lee Waincott,
Penryn, California.

I was married to William Waincott, February 26,
1891 in Missouri.

My father-in-law came to the Indian Territory in
1893 and made the run into the Cherokee Strip. He made
the run on a sorrel, bald faced cow horse and staked a
claim three miles west of Ponca City, on Bois d'Arc Creek.
Two others, Jake Martin and Fred Hartshorn also filed
on this claim. The three of them contested it for
several years and it was still in court when Mr. Wain-
cott died. I understand Martin and Hartshorn later
~~divided the land in this claim.~~

"Old Baldy," the horse which Mr. Waincott rode
in the run, was stuck in the quicksand and nearly died
before he was rescued. One of his hoofs came off. Aft-
er the run he drank too much water, foundered and died.
Mr. Waincott lost his claim and also a good horse in
the run.

I remember a race which Mr. Waincott matched for
"Baldy," with a horse owned by Mr. Lane, a brother-in-law
of Will Rogers which "Baldy" won.

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I went to school with the Rogers children and in later years the Rogers family and our family intermarried.

In March 1894, we came to the Indian Territory and settled on a farm near Ponca City, with my husband's parents. We made the trip from Missouri in covered wagons. We had four wagons, two yoke of oxen, five horses and two milch cows. We brought enough provisions to last us for a year. The supplies were brought in the two ox wagons which did not reach the farm until several days after our arrival there.

Our first home consisted of three tents to sleep in and a two room, slant roofed house, used to cook and eat in. Our furniture was all homemade, the beds were made of 2X4 planks nailed together with slats laid across them and no springs. We used straw beds and feather beds. Our chairs were made of hickory, with cowhide bottoms, similar to cane bottomed chairs.

We were on the road fifteen days and thought we made good time. We followed the wagon trail that came through Bartlesville, and camped near the Bartles Mill one night.

Our land was sod and ^{the} first year we did not raise

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anything. The next year we turned five hundred acres of sod and raised melons. My husband hauled our melons to Red Rock, a railroad station near Ponca City, and also hauled melons for the Miller Brother's Ol Panch. The Graves Cattle Shippers unloaded cattle from Texas at this station, and grazed them in the Osage hills. One night a big storm stampeded the cattle and it took them three weeks to round them up. Some of these cattle located as far away as Eldorado, Kansas.

The chief crops in that locality were corn and wheat. The majority of the farmers raised wheat and I cooked for harvest hands through the entire wheat harvest. My husband and his brother herded cattle for the Graves Cattle Shippers and were away from home most of the time, leaving me free to help in the harvest cooking. We pioneered for several years.

SENECA INDIANS

The Seneca Indians were located on their reservation in the southeastern part of Ottawa County and on a strip of the northern part of Delaware County.

Before our removal to the Indian Territory, we lived over the line in Missouri from the Seneca

Reservation. I have attended their various celebrations and dances. Once a year the Senecas celebrated the Green Corn Dance. The roads were rough and we all went on horseback and camped for several days, for these Indians insisted that we stay for the entire celebration. The dance was to show their appreciation and thanks for the fine way in which they had been brought through the winter. Their feast consisted of roasting ears and venison, cooked in a large iron kettle over a camp fire, and they also had watermelons and muskmelons.

These Seneca Indians would string deer hoofs and place them around their knees and ankles to make a noise when they danced. They would pile fruit on a blanket in the center of the group and then all would dance around it. The drum was a keg with a hide stretched over the top and was beaten with a mallet. The chiefs danced the usual Indian dance, but the squaws danced with their feet together and scooted along, first on their toes, then on their heels. They would scoot around the entire circle in this fashion. Their bodies did not move and a pail of water could have been set on their heads and not a drop would have been spilled.

The babies were named once a year; this was also a big celebration and feast. Chief Whitecrow would take the baby in his arms and say something in his native language. He would say this three times and the squaws would then throw back their heads and mumble something; the baby was then named. The feast consisted of conahaney, corn bread and meat. The bread was passed around to each one. They would eat the meat from the kettle where it had been cooked.

Bill Mush, a crazy Indian who lived near us, would go to the cemetery and moan until he could be heard for a long distance. One evening Phillip Binkley, Dick Splitlog, Junge Judge and my husband heard him and went to the cemetery to see what was wrong. He told them he was looking for his grandma. They had to take him home by force.

An Indian family named Bwaberry lived near us. The wife would not talk to anyone. One day she came to my house with her papoose on her back and said to me, "I leave he." She swam the Cow Skin River with her papoose strapped on her back and left. When her husband came home and found her gone he came to our place to ask if I had seen her. He said, "You see my squaw when he leave?"

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I told him what she had said and he wanted me to bring her back and said, "You tell he, I need he." A few days later she returned.

Their baby was sick and they came up and asked me to take care of it. The baby died and as soon as it was dead, they began preparing the death feast. The cooked food was spread on the ground and a table cloth was spread over it. They gave the baby's toys and clothes away, then the food was passed around, each taking their share and then they went home. My present was ten yards of calico, which they insisted I take. I took the food they gave me and gave it to the pig.

If an Indian wanted to vomit they would scrape the bark up on a peach tree, put it in a glass of water and drink it. If they wanted a pain to go down they scraped the bark down.

Liza, an old Seneca woman, who claimed she was a witch, held a power over the others. She claimed she could make things turn into ghosts. They all feared her.

If the weather was warm the Indians would have a wind dance and would sing the wind song and dance for wind. Sometimes it would last for several days or

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until the winds would blow. They also had a rain dance that was celebrated in the same way.

When they had their war dances, they would usually get drunk and fight. They only wore breech clouts. They would throw chunks of fire from the camp fire, at each other.

When the Indians gathered fire wood, the men drove the team and the women gathered the wood and threw it into the wagon.

OSAGE INDIANS

When the Osage Indians came to the store to do their trading, a squaw would set her papoose outside the door in its cradle until she finished trading. She would spread a blanket on the floor, put her supplies in the blanket, swing it over her shoulder, put the papoose on her back and then they would all go home in single file.

Dave Donaldson, a cowhand who worked with my husband, told of an Osage baby who had died and the body was hung in a tree until it blew away, or the buzzards ate it. The Osages gathered each evening under the tree and mourned for the baby.

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When the Osage Indians married, they would stretch a teepee on each side of the road. She would sleep in one teepee and he in the other. The bridegroom traded all of his calico ponies to her parents for the girl.

I have many friends among the Seneca and Osage Indians and I am proud of my Indian blood.

My father settled in the Indian Territory at Grove, in the early '90's and had the first blacksmith shop at Grove.

I have reared a family of eleven children, of whom nine are still living. They were all born in Oklahoma and the two who are dead are buried in Oklahoma.

I have lived in Ponca City, Pauls Valley, Jennings, Davis, Collinsville, and Bartlesville. While we lived at Pauls Valley my husband followed the occupation of fishing. His biggest catch was a 75 pound cat fish which he sold for fifteen cents a pound.

We traveled all over Oklahoma in a covered wagon and I remember crossing the Arkansas River at Sallisaw on a ferry boat when the river was up. We were driving a wild colt and had trouble getting her on the ferry. We had to tie the wagon bed onto the wagon to keep it from

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floating off the boat. We fished that night and I caught an eel; it frightened me for it looked like a snake. While on this trip I saw a steam boat for the first time.

Two years ago I removed to California where I expect to make my home; however I do not like California. I do not like their language for they say ranch for a five acre truck farm. I think my Indian blood calls me back to Oklahoma.