

WHITE BEAR, MINNIE.

INTERVIEW

#4624

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

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Field Worker's name Augusta H. Guster

This report made on (date) June 24 1937

1. Name Minnie White Bear, Good Moccasins, Cheyenne Indian

2. Post Office Address Geary, Oklahoma, Pumpstation Road, Route #3

3. Residence address (or location) Two miles north of Geary

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

5. Place of birth Oklahoma

6. Name of Father Short Teeth Place of birth Oklahoma

Other information about father Cheyenne Indian

7. Name of Mother Molly Curtis Place of birth _____

Other information about mother Half French and Sioux

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 _____

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Augusta H. Custer,

Interviewer

June 24, 1937

Interview with Minnie White Bear
Cheyenne Indian of Geary
Pumpstation Road, Route #3

My mother was part Sioux and part French and my father was a Cheyenne Indian. Mother's name was Sioux Woman and Father's name was Short Teeth. I went to school at Darlington and learned to speak English both at home and at school. Then when I married I learned the Arapaho language. My husband's name is Bird White Bear and he is an Arapaho Indian.

Marriage Customs

When an Indian boy wanted to marry a girl he would go to the home of the girl and do work for her father. He would water the ponies, get wood or help hunt. Then his parents would give presents to her people, such as meat, hides or something to eat. After this had been going on for two or three years the young man's parents would take a bunch of ponies and go over to the girl's house and one of her relatives, usually a brother, or if she did not have a brother a cousin or uncle on the mother's side, would tell him "all right" and they would select some of the ponies.

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Then after a while his parents would go over and get the girl, take her to their home and give her blankets, shawls, dresses and groceries. If they told her to keep any certain thing she must do this, but if they did not, any of her relatives could have any of the gifts. The girl's family could also make a present to his family if they wished but if they did not want to, it was not necessary.

They would get a Medicine Man or Medicine Woman to give them a blessing and wish them well. Then the girl would go into the young man's home as his wife.

There is an Indian word for the carrier in which the babies were carried but there is no alphabet and I do not know how to tell you, as I can not spell the word as there is no sound that represents the words.

Also the form of conveyance which consisted of two poles attached on either side of a horse long enough to drag about five feet on the ground. This conveyance has a pole or canvas fastened across it for someone to sit on, or else extra blankets are placed on the poles and dragged from one place to

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another. This conveyance had a name also but I know no name for it in English nor any way of spelling the word.

This is a story about my mother-in-law in the battle between General Custer and Black Kettle. The soldiers came into their camp and everyone had to run for his life. My mother-in-law succeeded in getting onto a horse. She saw her little brothers running and sometimes they would fall; she had a saddle on her horse, made of horns, and the horn of the saddle was built up or by placing the horns higher and fastening them tight and there was also a higher place at the back of the saddle the same as in front. This woman also had a lariat hanging on the horse. This had a loop on the end. She told her brother to step in the loop, he did and she did not check the horse, but rode on as fast as she could. She caught the boy and helped him to swing up on the horse's back of her. On they went as fast as the horse could go. When she stopped she found that the rough horns on the back of the saddle had split the skin on the stomach of the boy.

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She tore the sleeve out of her dress and bound it around her brother's waist. He was very ill but recovered.

When I was a young child and until I was grown I respected my elders and did not "sass" them or think of disobeying their wishes. Other boys and girls were reared the same.

Jerked Meat.

The Indians prepared meat which would keep for months and which was easy to carry with them and was good to eat either cooked or uncooked. This is the way they did it. The meat was sliced and hung on a line to dry in the sun. The pieces were small and left long enough to dry thoroughly. Then they were put in buckskin or canvas sacks and kept for future use.

This meat could be pounded between two stones or on a smooth log, and eaten with bread or it could be boiled in water or fried after being pounded, in grease.

Indians think that they do not have anything to eat if they do not have meat. They are always hungry on a vegetable diet.

