

WRIGHT, LOTA KEMP

INTERVIEW

#8112

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

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WRIGHT, LOTA KEMP. INTERVIEW. 8112.

Field Worker's name Maurice R. Anderson.

This report made on (date) July 27, 1937. 1937

1. Name Mrs. Lota Kemp Wright, (negro).

2. Post Office Address Pauls valley, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) West town.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year 1876.

5. Place of birth Cherokee town, Chickasaw Nation.

6. Name of Father John Kemp. Place of birth Mississippi.

Other information about father Deceased.

7. Name of Mother Nancy Kemp. Place of birth Mississippi.

Other information about mother Deceased.

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 3.

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Maurice R. Anderson,  
Field Worker.  
July 27, 1937.

An Interview with Mrs. Lota Kemp  
Wright, negro, Pauls Valley, Okla.

I was born southeast of old Cherokee Town in the Chickasaw Nation in 1876. My father settled at old Cherokee Town in 1869; he was owned by a man named Kemp before the Civil War.

My mother was part Chickasaw Indian. My father came from Mississippi with the Indians or was brought here as he was owned by a white man who had an Indian wife.

I remember the first school I went to; it was a log school house called Hopewell, a few miles northeast of old Cherokee Town. I was five years old when my father started me to school.

My sisters had been going to this school a few years before I was old enough to go.

The colored people living around there used this school house for a church house on Sundays. I remember old Cherokee Town when I was a small girl; there were two stores there and the postoffice was in one of the stores. There was a blacksmith shop and the hotel and boarding house were in a big log building. There was a stage barn there where they could

change horses and there was a ferry at old Cherokee town.

A white man ran this ferry and it was large enough for a wagon and four head of horses to cross at one time; this white man charged a certain sum for a wagon and team to cross the Washita River.

I have heard my father say that they used to have to ford the Washita River before this man built the ferry. I have heard my father say that he used to have to take the corn to Mill Creek to the corn mill, but after a man named Zach Gardner built a corn mill on the Washita River east of Pauls valley, it was much nearer for him to take the corn to the Gardner mill.

People did not raise very much stuff in the early days when I was a small girl.

My father would have a small patch of corn which he called his Tom Fuller patch and he raised some cotton too.

My mother had a spinning wheel, and I have watched her spin cotton and she made our clothes until I was a large girl. We children would pick the seeds out of the lint, so that she could spin it. My father would put in a few acres of cotton and I have seen the stalks grow taller than a man's head.

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There were several Indians living around old Cherokee Town. When my father first came to old Cherokee Town there was only one trading post, and the Washita River was lined up and down the banks with Indians. There were large camps of them at the big springs around on the prairie east of old Cherokee Town. The Government issued beef to the Indians. In the early days around Cherokee Town, when anyone killed a deer and had more meat than he wanted for his family he would give what was left to his neighbors. There was a creek about a quarter of a mile from our house. I used to take corn down on this creek and feed the turkeys and prairies chickens and I finally tolled them right up to our yard. There were about twenty-five prairie chickens in this flock I fed. My mother caught several of them and clipped their wings and they stayed around the house just like our chickens do today.

Mother had the first tame turkeys in that part of the country. I remember she used to get six or seven eggs a day from them.

I now live in West Town at Pauls Valley.