

YOUNG, BEULAH SMITH. . INTERVIEW

#10436

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

YOUNG, BEULAH SMITH.

INTERVIEW.

10436.

Field Worker's name Ida B. Lankford

This report made on (date) April 15, 1938

1. Name Beulah Smith Young.

2. Post Office Address Cardell, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) Star Route

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month February Day 8 Year 1882.

5. Place of birth Hood County, Texas.

6. Name of Father Dave Smith Place of birth Missouri

Other information about father Merchant

7. Name of Mother Anna Russell Place of birth Missouri

Other information about mother Housewife.

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 8

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Ida B. Lankford,  
April 15, 1938.  
Investigator.

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Interview with Beulah Smith Young.

Cordell, Oklahoma.

Born February 8, 1882.

Father-Dave Smith

Mother-Anna Russel

My father, David Smith, made the run when the Cheyenne and Arapaho reservation was opened on April 19, 1892, and filed on a place located one mile east and two miles south of Cordell. He returned home and made ready to bring his family back to the land of the fair God. We left there the 24th of May, and landed here on the place that he had filed on the 29th of June. When we left our home, which was twenty miles from Weatherford, Texas, twelve miles from Gramury, Texas, and two and one-half miles from Buckner, Texas, there were three families and their stock, and their household goods. Each family had a covered wagon, which held all their belongings such as bedding, clothing, cooking utensils, and food and family. There were five in my father's family and two in my grandmother's, and five in John Mitchell's family. There were 350 head of cattle, forty head of horses and about sixty head of sheep. When

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we left Texas, several neighbors and their families prepared lots of good things to eat and went with us as far as the Brazos River; there we all ate dinner together. The river was up and we had to ferry the wagons and sheep across; but the cattle and horses swam the river. Our neighbors returned to their homes and we three families set our face toward the unknown land and we never saw any of our friends again. We met and over-came many obstacles. There wasn't room to sleep in the wagons, so we slept on the ground under and around the wagon, and sometimes we would have to set up in the wagon all night when it was raining or storming. Sometimes we would sleep in a school house. The rain and storms bothered more than anything else, as the men had to ride around the cattle all night. Once when it was storming and raining very hard the cattle stampeded and we had to camp there until they were rounded up, that is all the cattle which could be found. Not all were found. The women drove the wagons and men looked after the cattle. My mother drove a span of mules to our wagon. My grandmother drove a span of mares and Mrs. Mitchell drove a ycke of oxen. One day when it was hot, and we had not

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crossed any stream of water for several hours, we came to a small stream and Mrs. Mitchell's yoke of oxen went right into it. There was no way of stopping them. They sure had a time getting the wagon back up on the level. Anyway the oxen got to stand in the water quite a while. When we came to Pear River, it was very narrow and shallow. I remember holding to the stirrup of the saddle on the horse my mother rode across the river and I waded all the way across. When we got across, it was late in the day, and we camped close to a man's house by the name of King. That night a terrible storm came up and it stormed hard all night, and Mr. King came out and invited all the women and children to come in and spend the night in the house. Oh! how nice it was to be in out of the storm. Next day Pear River was up, and a man and horse drowned in it.

Well, the next river we came to was Red River at Doan's Crossing. The river was up and had been several days, so we camped there a few days and the river went down enough that my father thought if he drove the cattle and horses across first, that it would pack the sand enough that the

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wagons could cross without much trouble, which they did.

The next place we came to was Navajo, where my father's brother lived. We rested two days and then we started on.

The next river we came to was the North Fork of Red River and it was up, but not so bad but what my father thought we could make it across, and we did, but the mules went under all but their heads and some kettles and pans that were in the feed box of our wagon floated out. After we got across North Fork we came on this way and when we got to Big Elk Creek we saw our first Indians and their teepees and paposes. When we were almost to our homestead we saw our first dugouts.

We arrived at our new home on a beautiful day the 29th of June. We camped under a large oak tree until my father could make us a dugout, which was the most comfortable thing we had been in for days. The one he made was called a half-dugout. It was dug in a hillside and you could walk into it without going down steps. He build up the front with logs and covered it with logs and bark and hay, then dirt and then put new hay on the floor and by that time

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the weather was getting hot, but our dugout was cool and comfortable. That summer this part of the country was so beautiful, just as far as you could see was a cold sea of grass, and so many wild flowers and every stream of water had trees on each side of <sup>the</sup> bank. Now they are almost all cut down. The first winter we were here, we had a sure enough blizzard and the snow stayed on several days, but we were comfortable in our dugout which had a fireplace in one end and we could get plenty of wood by going to the creek for it. We were located between two creeks which were about a mile apart. The north creek had a good spring of water in it that was not so gyp as the south creek.

One day late in the fall, we heard turkeys gobbling and, of course, we all ran out of our dugout to see where they were. My uncle was driving a bunch of wild turkeys down the valley toward the creek. Before they got away we had enough turkey to have a thanksgiving feast. There were also lots of quail that we trapped whenever we were hungry for birds, and prairie chickens by the thousands.

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The first Kaffir corn that my father raised, he cut it and stacked it in iron ricks and the prairie chickens steal the grain off; sometimes those ricks would be black with them. There were a few deer here then, and we had venison sometimes.

H. D. Young had a little store at Cordell. We could get surplus supplies from him, but everything was so high. All supplies were shipped in from El Reno and not even a road to go by. You got the general direction and started out. The first fall we were here my father went to El Reno, which is about 100 miles from here, for supplies and things we would need through the winter. He was gone two weeks and was not loaded very heavily either. When he got back to the creek about a mile from where we lived, he unloaded and crossed the creek, carrying the things across. He said that that was the way he had to do several times on the way back from El Reno, as there were no crossings on any of the creeks and the banks were so steep the team did well to pull the empty wagon across.

We were often visited by Indians and they always wanted something to eat and sometimes they wanted to buy "wahoo."



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which was beef. The Indians never molested us, but once we heard that they were on the warpath and were bothering up about Arapaho, but the government quieted them before they killed anyone. I remember the first camp meeting our community held. It was at Center Point, held by Brother Grogan in the summer 1893. The house was half dugout, finished out with sod. The next meeting was the next summer under a brush arbor on the creek west of Cordell, held also by Brother Grogan, Livie Grogan's father. Lots of people had houses made of sod. They were cool in summer and warm in winter. When my father got ready to build our house, he hauled the lumber from Chickasha, which is about 100 miles from here. It was the nearest railroad point. We hauled enough lumber to build a three room house and porch. The house is still standing. We were really proud of our new house.

Most of the school houses were build of sod or were half dugouts finished out with sod and the favorite pas- time for the young people in those days was singing. We would meet at someone's house and sometimes the home would

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boast an organ, and how we did enjoy singing and we rode lots horseback. When a family could afford a buggy, they were really up in style.

Little by little, the country grew and better homes were built. We have better schools, too. Towns grew up where there had only been post offices and grass was plowed under, trees were chopped down, drouths began to come, and sandstorms raged.