

COLLINS, LINDA.

INTERVIEW

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

Field Worker's name Grace Kelley, Investigator.,

This report made on (date) January 13, 1933.

1. Name Linda Collins
2. Post Office Address Henryetta, Route 2
3. Residence address (or location) At Tulsa Thlocco Town
4. DATE OF BIRTH: Don't know age, born after the Civil war.
Month _____ Day _____ Year _____
5. Place of birth Born in Cherokee Nation but a Creek Indian
and a full blood Indian without any negro blood.
6. Name of Father Don't know name of father.
Place of birth _____
Other information about father He died 2 months before
Linda's birth.
7. Name of Mother Susan Harjo Place of birth _____
Other information about mother Sister to Jim Bullet, who
lives two miles east of Summit, and who is over a hundred
years old.

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 _____.

An Interview with Linda Collins
Henryetta, Oklahoma.

Widowhood of a Creek Indian.

Mother told this to me and I know it is true as she was made a widow by the death of my father about two months before my birth.

After the husband was buried the wife was taken to the home of his people. There was a little house in the back yard that was just large enough to have a bed and chair in it. She was put in there and guards were kept at the door to keep the widow from coming out. One of the husband's sisters or a woman relative of his looked after her. Her hair was not combed but every day her head was looked over carefully to see that she did not get lice.

She was not allowed to go to any kind of gathering for four years. After four years had passed she was taken to a social gathering in some home. If there was a brother of the dead man living he married the widow. If not the next of kin or a man was picked out by the husband's people for her to marry.

When the wife died the husband was treated in the same way by her people.

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Creeks Had Two Wives.

Some of the Creek Indians had two wives when I first realized things--that is, I remember seeing and knowing that two women were the wives of certain men when I was a child.

Clan Kin

Clan Kin were not supposed to marry; it was against the tribal law and that law was enforced then but the younger generation does not pay much attention to the clan kin. In the early days, if two belonging to the same clan lived together and disobeyed this law they were whipped. They were given fifty licks for the first offense, the second time their ears were cut off and the third time their noses were cut off.

Civil War.

I was told that my people went north and remained there until the soldiers brought them back after the Civil War to Fort Gibson where they stayed a while before scattering for their homes. They had a battle on the way north. It was a hard trip and in some places they had to rest a while and go on.

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Green Peach War.

I was just a girl during that war and did not know what it was all about until later. Mother's husband was a soldier at that time. There were the Republican and Democratic sides. He was on the Republican side.

The dogs would bark as the people would pass through on horseback--they wore tassels on their heads and I thought it was funny. They never bothered us but just rode by.

Belief of the "Stomp" Indians.

I am not a Christian Indian so I cannot tell you anything at all about the histories of the Churches. But I can tell about the Stomp Grounds.

I live at Tulwa Thlocco town--just north of the grounds and arbors. It is nine miles straight east of Henryetta on Tiger Mountain.

God Almighty left medicine on earth for the Indians to use. He had blessed it and let us know how to use it through our prophets and old folk. We all know He is living and believe in Heaven.

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Medicine is taken internally as a purgative and is also taken by "scratching." Long scratches are made on the arms, legs and body to let blood out for if you have too much blood in you, you will get sick. It is like taking a blood test. After these scratches are made the patient is bathed in some medicine prepared for that purpose. As long as the medicine is put on them they will heal properly and not become infected but if they are neglected they will become sore and make bad places.

It was an Indian rule or law that the relatives had to put everything that the Indian cherished into the grave with him as it belonged to him. They have quit doing that because of the grave robbers.

Burying in Hollow Trees.

Another tribal law was that all infants had to be buried in hollow trees but no grown persons were buried that way.

Indian Births.

The Indian women used medicine at the grounds every year and so were healthy. Most of them didn't need doctors but if they had a hard time there were women doctors who assisted them. There are women doctors still living.

Jenetta Jacobs lives close to the Hickory Ground Church.

Indian Homes.

In the old times, the Indians lived close to their towns or stomp grounds like we do to this one but most of the old folk have died and the others live on their allotments and are scattered all about.

I think that is the reason that the Christian Indians like to have their homes near their churches.

Old Bed.

I have a home-made bed that is thirteen years old and is made like they were made years ago. At first the beds were made from trees but lately lumber could be bought that made prettier and better beds so they were made from lumber.

Fishing.

My mother and her husband went fishing together like people fish now, only they got fish then and there are no fish now.

When they wanted a good time they got lots of friends to go to the river together. They got Devil's shoe string

and beat it up to get the sap out of it for a medicine that added the fish. After the fish came to the top they were shot with bows and arrows, brought to the bank and the women fried them. It was a sort of picnic and everyone had lots of fun.

Provisions.

They built a small fence, just big enough for a little corn field. There were plenty of squirrel and fish so they didn't need to buy much to eat.

Old Indian Living.

Jim Bullet, my mother's brother, is over a hundred years old and could tell you more about the past than I can. He lives two miles east of Summit and he cannot speak a word of English.