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By Nannie Lee Burns, Field Worker.
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June 18th, 1937.

THE FLOWER LOVER

My father, Anderson Lane, a New York Yankee, came to Illinois when quite young.

My Mother, Fannie Lane, was born and reared in Illinois, where she and father were married.

I, Cora Mae Cotter, nee Lane, was born in Illinois, Green County, November 6, 1866. There were nine children, and all have passed on, excepting two brothers in California, and myself.

THE EARLY KANSAS HOME.

My parents made the trip overland in wagons drawn by horses and reached our first home near the old town of Neutral City, in Cherokee County, the day I was three years old.

Our first home was one room log with a shed room, log stable, and no trees in sight.

Prairie chickens, wild pigeons, turkeys, coons, opossums, and skunks were plentiful. I remember going with my uncle to his traps that he made of cornstalks to trap the prairie chickens.

Another memory of those days was helping father build a sod milk house. This we placed on the north side of the smokehouse. You take the plough and cut the sod in strips about a foot wide and they are from three to four inches thick. To cover your framework, you place several layers of these sod strips, one over the other. Our room had wooden door frames, and a wooden door, and it sure was cool.

After twelve years we moved to Neutral City where we lived three years and the first two years that we were there, mother had the Post office. It was discontinued and then we had to go to Asbury, Mo., for our mail. We went to Waco or Galesburg, Missouri, to mill.

In August of that year, father and mother came to the Indian Territory to look around and liked it so much that they rented from Mrs. James Allsup, her farm, one mile from the present town of Wyandotte. When they returned home they brought with them a large stalk of corn to show us the size of the corn raised in Indian Territory, and didn't it look big beside those raised there in the Kansas wind!

In October, I came down with father when he came to put in the wheat.

THE INDIAN TERRITORY HOME.

We moved down in December, and as Mrs. Allsup's daughter, Zenia Jackson, was teaching school that year four miles north of where Miami is and she wanted to stay with her daughter, Mrs Allsup let us move into her home which was a nice five-room frame house. After school closed the next summer, we moved into the tenant house which was a two-room log with a log stable and we lived here two years. Miss Jackson saw my music instruction book and asked me to sell it to her, saying that it was just what she needed to teach Frank Moore, the son of J. K. Moore, music.

THE FIRST SUMMER.

The first summer was a pleasant one for me, I enjoyed my music and learned to second and liked to dance as well.

Flowers grew so much better here than in Kansas and there were many new ones that I found around us in the hills.

I helped mother with the home work and worked occasionally in the Jerry Hubbard home when Hanna Jackse,

nee Crippen, was away. This was a pleasant place to stay, for no matter how much we had to do, Aunt Mary, his wife, would not let us work in the afternoon. Then to me it was amusing to see the older Indian couples coming to their house to get Mr. Hubbard to marry them; and sometimes they would have grown children with them, but the Indian was progressive even then, and willing to adopt the new ways coming to them.

Uncle Jerry was a busy man holding services all over the present Ottawa and Delaware Counties besides teaching for a while. I was staying in their home when their daughter Edna joined the church, and the next morning at breakfast he said to me, "Coe, I have you to thank for Edna joining the church". I would have joined the Friends but mother wouldn't let me because they did not baptise. So later I joined the Methodist church. Aunt Fannie Lane is remembered by many of the older people for her help in the early Sunday schools here.

MARRIAGES.

On April 4th, 1888, I married James Cotter, a Wyandotte Indian. My husband was born in Quandarie, now Kansas City, April 25, 1849.

His father, Frank Cotter, was born in Toronto, Canada,

in 1813, and had a strain of French in him. They moved to the Wyandotte Country in 1870, and had settled just north and west of the present town of Wyandotte,

His mother, Mrs. Frank Cotter, was the first person to be buried in the old Wyandotte grave yard, and his brother, Bernard, was buried twelve days later, being the second person. This is on the land now owned by Dee Hollis, and I am told that he has piled up the stones and ploughed up most of it.

I carried stones from our hill and placed them around our lot and the next time that I was there, the stones had been taken and placed around another lot. Then I set out flowers around the graves and these, too, were moved to another part of the cemetery, so I tried it again.

My husband was 39 when I married him and had been married before to Georgia Ann Wallace. They had one child but it died when small.

At that time he was like most of the men, he liked to run around, dance, drank some, and was on the Indian Police Force under the Wyandotte Agency for eighteen years. At first, he received \$5.00 per month and later they raised him to \$10.00. Later he was a U. S. Marshal for three or four years, and served under Darrow. He was with the posse officers when they were looking for the Wycliffs but was not

present the day that Gilstrap was killed. At the time of his death, it was on the radio and in the Joplin Globe that he was the oldest living Indian Ex-Marshall.

When we were married, the Agency was northwest of Seneca. We were married by Col. Summers, the Agent. Though Uncle Jerry was always teasing me, saying: "Coe, I only have one more license left and I am saving that for you".

(HOME LIFE)

My husband never did any farming, so the year after we were married, my father moved on a part of the place and did the farming. I had my garden, flowers and fowls. In the spring father would plough and harrow my garden and then it was turned over to me. Dad lived on the place twenty years.

Our first home was a log house south of the Wyandotte road, about where Ernest Thompson has built his home. The folks lived west of us towards the river. Then when it was discovered that the first allotment was so big that there was not enough land to go around, we gave up where we were living and in 1902 Pa helped us to build the two front rooms of the old house on the hill north of where we lived and west of the present Wyandotte, or rather it is

now the Seneca Indian School.

In the second allotment, they were allowed 160 acres each, so we took 80 acres on the hill where we built and kept eighty in the bottom near the river where Pa lived.

(FLOWERS)

As soon as Pa and Ma settled there, they (especially Ma) began to set out flowers. The folks would slip in and steal them and she would then put out some more.

I had not had many till we built our new house on the hill, then Mother gave me a start of all she had and from that time I have always had lots of them and have spent much of my time among them.

About 1932, the Agent at the school told my son, Mont, who worked at the school, that they had an appropriation to buy flowers for the school grounds and suggested that he would rather buy from me than from the catalogue. I told Son to tell them to come and I would give them some. I gave them a tub of Jonquil bulbs, besides rose bushes and other shrubs, and seeds, and have at different times since then given them other flowers.

When I sold the place after my husband's death, three

years ago, Mr. Kaggy, the present school Superintendent, came and wanted to buy my flowers for the school and he paid me \$24.30 for them. Since I gave them the first flowers, I have never gone to the school that I have not seen some of my flowers. The last time I was there, one of the teachers came in with a big pink rose and said: "Grandma, here is one of your roses".

(EARLY WYANDOTTE)

Wyandotte used to be at the foot of the hill, north of the present location. The commissary was about the size of our smoke house as I remember; there were two dormitories; the sewing room was upstairs where I used to visit the seamstress, Marian Lawrence. These with a few schoolrooms, the kitchen and dining room and a few small buildings for the teachers comprised the group. They burned wood and the boys had to carry the wood to each room, all of which were equiped with wood stoves.

The Robitailles had the post office in their home; Keyzers, who rented a house belonging to Robitailles, lived in that; then there was the section house; Elridge Brown had a small house, and the log house that Dick Brown lived in, that was east of where Carltons now live.

My husband helped to lay the Frisco track through

when the Railroad was built.

(THE FAMILY)

We had six children, all of whom are living. They were, Naomi, Milton, Geneva, Elizabeth, Frankie and Mont. Milton was night watchman at the Mission. Mont is now electrician at the Winnebago, Nebraska, Agency.

The rolls closed in 1888 so I, nor any of our children secured any land, and, as I stated before, my husband never farmed or worked so when the farm did not bring us enough to live on, we would sell a little piece of land, This was quite frequent after Pa was gone. When I sold the home place I only had twenty-five acres where the house stood.

When the old Mission buildings at the foot of the hill were torn down in 1910, we traded a calf to Ben Johnson for part of the lumber, including ceiling and weatherboarding and built our kitchen of it and at the same time added an attic above the front rooms.

My children attended as day pupils the Mission schools till the Wyandotte City School was built in 1907.

When the Mission buildings were being rebuilt and moved to the hill, a colored man worked as a helper there and how the children were all afraid of him!

Crippen built the first saw mill and later equipped it to grind wheat and corn.

Pa's wheat and ours was the first wheat to go through the mill. From our home, we could see the sun shining on the rollers as they turned in the water before they housed them in.

(LATER DAYS)

My husband died at the old place, December 1, 1933, and I came to live with my daughter and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Philip Peacock, here in Miami, after selling my home. They are very good to me, and she likes to have me here with the children when they are gone, but I do miss the old place and the flowers.

Mr. Cotter's mother was Elizabeth Nugent and she was born in Sandusky, Ohio.

Times have changed since I came to live in this country. Then there were lots of the Indians who could not speak English and now Maggie Coon who lives two miles east of Wyandotte is the only one of the Wyandottes who does not speak English, though I have heard her curse her horse in English, so perhaps she could talk if she wanted to.

LEGEND & STORY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

#7632

Field worker's name Nannie Lee Burns

his report made on (date) September 24, 1937

1. This legend was secured from (name) Mrs. Jas Cotter

Address 301 B N.W., Miami, Oklahoma.

This person is (male or female) White, Negro, Indian,

If Indian, give tribe _____

2. Origin and history of legend or story _____

From Memory

3. Write out the legend or story as completely as possible. Use blank sheets and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached _____

Supplement to Manuscript #6316

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#7632

An Interview with Mrs. James Cotter, Miami, Oklahoma.

By - Nannie Lee Burns, Field Worker.

September 24, 1937.

THE FLOWER LOVER

My Rabbit Boys

When I lived on the hill west of the Seneca Indian School at Wyandotte, so many years, Saturdays, especially in the winter, were looked forward to by me and my little boys at the School. Knowing that they grew homesick for their homes in the hills, I asked the superintendent to allow them to come to our place on Saturdays and allow them to hunt rabbits. Each Saturday one would see them coming in small groups from the school. Sometimes they would stop at the house and talk to us and sometimes they were in such a hurry that they would race through the yard and barn lot and out on the hill with their long sticks and begin beating the bushes. When it was snowy, they had pretty good luck, but whether it snowed or not they enjoyed it and after they had had their hunt most of them would come to the house. I always kept a supply of papers, story books, etc., and here they would

THE FLOWER LOVER.

#76380

spend hours reading and talking with us.

Our visits were not limited to the rabbit hunters for we also had a persimmon grove and the girls would come there on Saturdays and Sundays and often visit with us.

Those were happy days for us and my boys and girls never bothered or touched a thing on the place and never left any gates open.
