

CUNNINGHAM, ALPHA. SECOND INTERVIEW

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BIOGRAPHIC FORM  
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION  
Indian Pioneer History - West from Oklahoma

CUNNINGHAM, ALPHA.

SECOND INTERVIEW

#4148

Field Worker's name Mildred B. McFarland

This report made on (date) May 17, 1937.

1. Name Mrs. Alpha Cunningham.

2. Post Office Address Edmond, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) 7 East Main Street.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month June Day 4 Year 1890

5. Place of birth Burden, Kansas.

6. Name of Father Solomon Smith Place of birth Tennessee.

Other information about father Born March 6, 1828.

7. Name of Mother Caroline Smith Place of birth Missouri.

Other information about mother Born August 4th, 1851.

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 \_\_\_\_\_.

CUNNINGHAM, ALPHA.

SECOND INTERVIEW

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An Interview with Mrs. Alpha Cunningham, Edmond.  
By - Mildred B. McFarland, Interviewer.  
May 17, 1937.

I was born in Burden, Kansas, in 1890, and came to Tonkawa, Oklahoma Territory, with my parents in 1899. Gabe Parker, a Choctaw Indian who helped to make the State seal of Oklahoma, lived near us. He was also president of Armstrong's Academy, an Indian boys' school at Durant. It was the oldest Choctaw Indian school and is now torn down.

I taught the first little country school after Statehood at Holder. It was in the middle of a cornfield. I stayed with an Indian family named Stewart. The man, Cal Stewart, was a notorious character. He was always drunk and I was told he had killed several men. He was quite wealthy, and employed a number of cowboys. He would always have one of the cowboys clean the school-house and build the fire.

I had some Indian pupils who were twenty-one or twenty-two years of age. One little full-blood Chickasaw boy was named Blanche Wallace. He never talked but was an excellent pupil. He would bring me small gifts with a

note attached, "To the Little White Woman".

This school lasted six months. The children had to bring their own drinking water. They brought it in whiskey bottles. Most of the children chewed tobacco.

One evening I heard a gun shot close to the school. I was told by Mrs. Stewart that it was a signal for the Indian cowboys they employed that the man who sold them whiskey had arrived and was hidden in a certain arroyo. They would all go down and proceed to get drunk. Then a terrible time followed.

My next school was located at Marsden. This was in the same county as my first school at Holder, but I taught an altogether different class of people.

I still own the lots in Oklahoma City that my husband's father bought when the town lots were sold. They are located just across from the Santa Fe Station where the Yellow Cab station now stands.

Mrs. D. W. Gamble, a cousin of mine living in Oklahoma City, won a claim in a lottery. She knew Quanah Parker and Geronimo and Crazy Snake.