

CUNNETT, IDA

INTERVIEW

#9352

381

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

CUNNETUBBY, MRS. IDA.

INTERVIEW.

9352.

Field Worker's name John F. Daugherty.

This report made on (date) December 1, 1937.

1. Name Mrs. Ida Cunnetyby.

2. Post Office Address Davis, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month _____ Day _____ Year 1885.

5. Place of birth Hock Creek in Chickasaw Nation.
Southeast of Sulphur, Oklahoma.

6. Name of Father Cyrus Gilbert Place of birth Indian Territory.
Other information about father Farmers.

7. Name of Mother Lucy Alexander Place of birth Indian Territory.
Other information about mother _____

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 5.

John F. Daugherty,
December 1, 1937.
Investigator.

An Interview With Mrs. Ida
Cunnetubby, Davis, Oklahoma.

My father was Cyrus Gilbert, born in the Chickasaw Nation on Blue River. Mother was Lucy Alexander, born near Berwyn in the Chickasaw Nation. Father was a farmer. There were five girls in our family. I was born on Rock Creek, southeast of Sulphur, about 1883. I attended the Indian schools at Sulphur and Davis, during the first five years of my schooling. Then mother died and father sent me to the orphan's home at Lebanon, east of Marietta.

This was a home for both boys and girls of the Chickasaws and Choctaws. Our sleeping rooms were upstairs, and the classrooms and dining room were on the first floor.

The girls helped wash dishes and iron and a woman was hired by the Chickasaw Government to do the laundry. A negro and a white woman did the cooking. There was a Superintendent of Public Instruction who was appointed by both houses, who devoted his time to visiting the Government institutions and this was one of the

-2-

institutions which he visited. These institutions were supported by the Chickasaw Government through the United States Treasury. A sum of \$50,000.00 was paid to the Chickasaws semi-annually for the support of their schools. This money was the interest which accumulated on investments in United States bonds.

Chickasaw politics were very exciting at times in the early days. My father has told me of a fight between two parties in 1880. Ex-governor Harris was being run by one side and B. Barney was on the opposing side. Harris had served four terms as Governor. He was a very popular Governor, and peace prevailed throughout his four terms. Governor Overton got possession of the returns before Governor Harris was installed and cancelled enough votes to elect Mr. Burney, who was a member of his party. After this, Governor Harris decided he would never again run for office. It was then that Governor Harris put in a grist mill on Mill Creek, where my father always went to have his corn ground into meal. It was impossible to buy meal at the stores. Everybody had a Tom Fuller patch and raised corn for their meal. Flour

-3-

was very scarce and very high, so nearly everybody used corn bread. Biscuits were a rare treat.

Grandmother told me of an exciting adventure she had with the Comanche Indians near the Arbuckle Mountains when she was a girl. She and a neighbor girl decided to ride to another neighbors' house, about five miles away, one day to do some sewing. There were very few sewing machines in those days and when a woman was fortunate enough to own one, the neighbors for miles around would use it.

It was a beautiful clear fall day, and as the two girls rode along they saw a herd of horses being driven by one man, whom they thought was the slave of the people to whose house they were going. The girl suggested that they race with this man as he drove the horses. No sooner was this suggestion made, than they were off at full speed. To their horror they soon discovered they were not racing with a slave, but with a Comanche Indian. They turned their horses around in an effort to retreat. The Indian gave a yell and a host of Indians appeared. The girls looked back and to their amazement they were

-4-

being followed by this band of Comanches.

Grandmother wanted to jump from her horse and hide in the underbrush near the trail, but the other girl wanted to go on and try to outrun them to the house. Finally Grandmother felt that the best thing to do was to get off of the horse. This she did. The horse continued to run, and Grandmother crouched in the underbrush near the trail. The Indians rushed madly past her. The material which she was carrying fell to the ground as she jumped and the other girl dropped hers at about the same place. As the Indians raced by they stooped from their saddles and picked up the cloth. Grandmother was so frightened that she hardly dared to breathe. The Comanches continued their chase after her girl friend and as she entered her home they shot and killed her. Grandmother was indeed glad that she had left her horse. They took both the horses as they left.

Grandmother said that many a night she has heard noises near her home which she thought were made by the Comanche Indians. She would awaken all her children and they would flee to the woods for protection. The

CUNNETUBBY, MRS IDA.

INTERVIEW.

9352.

-5-

Comanche raids were much dreaded by the Chickasaws. When the Choctaws and Chickasaws separated, after coming to the territory, the Choctaws gave the western part of the land allotted them to the Chickasaws, because they were afraid of the Comanches who were their neighbors on the west. The Chickasaws received better land, but the Choctaws didn't have to fear the Comanches. They are too far away to be bothered by them.

Indians had no marriage nor divorce laws. When an Indian boy decided that he wanted to live with an Indian girl he built a little log cabin, and if he got the consent of the girl, they went and lived together in this hut. If he became tired of her, he left and sent her away and took another girl to live with him. When the boy became angry and parted from his wife, no amount of persuasion could induce him to return to her.

I am the mother of twelve children. I have lived in Murray County all my life. My parents are buried on Guy Sandy Creek, southeast of Davis.