

JARBOE, W. C. (Mrs.)

INTERVIEW

4600

INDEX CARDS:

Greer County
Old Frazier
Altus

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

4600

Field Worker's name Virgil CourseyThis report made on (date) June 25 19371. Name Mrs. W. C. Jarboe (Anna Ferguson)2. Post Office Address Altus, Oklahoma3. Residence address (or location) 601 N. Lee4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month June Day 4 Year 1867

5. Place of birth _____

6. Name of Father William Anderson Place of birth Mississippi

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Sarah Stoval Place of birth Mississippi

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 suggestions on subjects and questions. Continue on blank sheets if necessary and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached 8.

Virgil Coursey
Interviewer
June 25, 1937

Interview with
Mrs. W. C. Jarboe
601 North Lee
Altus, Oklahoma.

SKETCHES OF PIONEER LIFE

The rhythmic pounding of horses feet and the swishing of head-high sage grass against the wagon were hardly audible above the bawling and bellowing of a herd of frightened, frenzied cattle which were surrounding and following the little caravan headed west through the old Wagoner Pasture of Oklahoma.

I sat in the wagon holding the reins, and beside me, pressed close to my side, was my little son, two years old. I was afraid we would be crushed and stamped by a wild stampede of cattle. Any way one looked there was a vast expanse of grass, miles and miles of it, melting away into the horizon, and there were herds of cattle as far as the eye could see.

Presently my husband wound his way among the cattle and rode up to the side of the wagon. He assured me that there was no danger from the cattle, and that no harm

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would befall us and I felt less fearful.

In the wagon were our household goods, behind came our cattle and horses which comprised all our worldly possessions.

We were headed for the plains of Texas, but we never reached them. This was in 1891, and we came west after a short stay in the eastern part of Oklahoma. Formerly we had lived in Dallas County, Texas.

Late one afternoon an evil looking cloud appeared. We knew a storm was brewing, and made every effort possible to prepare for it. We tied the tarpaulin down tight across the wagon and chained the wagon wheels. A little boy came up and explained that his mother, living about a half mile away had seen us camping here, and knowing that there was a woman and a baby, felt apprehensive concerning our safety, and asked that we come up to her house and stay until the storm was past. I did not go, and we had a bad storm with lots of wind. I later became acquainted with this woman. She has always held a choice spot in my heart and our close friendship lasts today. She is the mother of Henry Kimbell, and resides

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in Altus. Her beautiful spirit in showing concern in some mere travelers was exemplary of the spirit that prevailed in those days.

My nephew, who was sixteen or seventeen years of age, joined us here, and we camped for a number of days. He had drifted down the creek one day fishing. I was at the camp, baking bread. Just as the bread was about baked an Indian rode up and got down from his horse. He looked around and seeing that I was alone, proceeded to raise the lid to my oven. Without hardly realizing what I was doing I threw back my head and screamed as loud as I could. The Indian dropped the lid, slowly mounted his horse and rode away. My nephew heard my cry. He thought the baby had fallen in the water, and came running as fast as he could. In reply to his questions all I could do was to point and say, "Indian". All that could be seen of the retreating Indian was his red blanket flapping in the breeze.

We settled about four miles south of Altus. This was the year of the flood, and the town of old Frazier was being moved from near Bitter Creek to the present site of

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Altus. We bought one of the small houses that were being moved and used it on our place. We homesteaded one hundred and sixty acres, and later bought another quarter section for a dollar an acre with five years to pay.

Mr. Jarboe was one of the leading men in the founding of Altus. One old man recently said that he admired Mr. Jarboe because he never quit fighting. He had a contract with the government and carried the mail from Vernon to Mangum for some four years.

In about 1902 the Methodist Church was organized here, and services were conducted in a school house. I was a charter member of this organization.

Mr. Jarboe and E. E. Russell built the first telephone line from Altus, to Mangum. This was the first telephone system in this part of the country.

I made a trip to Mineral Wells to visit friends, and stayed several weeks. That must have been some thirty years ago. During my absence Mr. Jarboe remodeled and redecorated the house. We were living here in Altus at that time. The night we returned from the trip we found the house brilliantly lighted with electricity. I thought

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then, that our home was the most beautiful place I had ever
seen.