

FOWLER, FRANK

INTERVIEW

8239

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

**FOWLER, FRANK.**

**INTERVIEW.**

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Field Worker's name Ruth Lee Gamblin.

This report made on (date) August 9, 1937.

1. Name Mr. Frank Fowler,

2. Post office Address Snyder, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) \_\_\_\_\_

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

5. Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

6. Name of Father \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Other information about father \_\_\_\_\_

7. Name of Mother \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

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 4.

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Ruth Lee Gamblin,  
Interviewer,  
Aug. 9, 1937.

An Interview With Mr. Frank Fowler,  
Snyder, Oklahoma.

FIRST TRAIN INTO FREDERICK.

When the northbound Frisco freight reaches Snyder, Oklahoma, August 14, 1937, after passing from Vernon, Texas, thru Frederick I will have made my last run completing more than 35 years service with this road. I was a brakeman on the first train into Frederick about May, 1902, from Vernon. With the exception of a short time when on a passenger run and for about three years when a yard man. I have been passing thru Davidson, Frederick and Manitou daily ever since. I have traveled an average of 100 miles daily from Snyder to Vernon and return, together with distance in switching about 36,500 miles a year or 1,167,500 miles during the 35 years.

During all the time I have never been in a wreck that required the service of a wrecker train to do as much as put a box car back on the track. The only vacation I have taken was to see my parents each year. My father at Tucson, Arizona, past 91, died more than two years ago, and my mother over 92 passed away last May.

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I will be given a pass to ride over other lines twice a year and over the Frisco whenever I desire and I am going to do some traveling after I retire. I own a farm eighteen miles west of Oklahoma City. My family moved on it last February and I will join them August 14. I also own some residence property in Snyder where I have lived since working for the Frisco.

The first train came into Frederick in 1902 from Vernon. Mrs. Rachel Mullenex is the only person known in Frederick now that came as a passenger on this train. She is now 97 years of age. Before we had a train everything was hauled by wagon across the river. Mr. Joe Curtiss, who has the Curtiss Cafe, worked on the railroad or helped lay it. We even had to go to Vernon on horseback after the mail.

Dad Payne was engineer. He worked for the Frisco until he reached 70. Then he retired on a pension and lived in Enid until he died a few years ago.

The fireman was E. H. Early, residing at Enid and now an engineer for the Frisco.

The conductor was B. F. Lane, who built one of the first residences in what is now Frederick, where his family

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resided until he returned to work as conductor for the I. C. Railroad. I believe he now is residing at Water Valley, Mississippi. The residence erected by Lane was bought by Mr. McConnell early in 1903. It was a two-room box structure, 14 x 28 and was located south of the J. M. Smith home on North 12th. The house was later removed to the rear where more rooms were added but the original part is still standing and is occupied.

Another brakeman on the train was Otis Williamson who worked for the Frisco at other points and also the Santa Fe after leaving here. At the time of his death, in February, 1936, he was a Frisco switchman at Arkansas City, Kansas.

I was a farmer and also a deputy sheriff at Vernon, before railroading.

Blackslee, veteran depot agent at Manitou, is the first Tillmanite Frisco employee to be retired according to the federal railroad retirement pension act now in effect. He turned over the Manitou depot last Saturday to J. S. Avord, former Frederick cashier, and left with his wife for a visit in New Mexico. He served with the Frisco 52 years, the last 22 being in Manitou.

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Funds for the pension are obtained from retaining two and three-fourth per cent of the salary of the employees which is matched by a like sum from the employers. This is disbursed by officials in Washington, D. C. I expect a pension of \$100.00 monthly.

The first train into Gosnell, now Frederick, was pulled by engine Number Seven.

For a time on each trip I helped haul from one to ten immigrants or Zulu cars containing settlers and their personal property into this country.