

McCORKLE, ALICE

INTERVIEW

10425

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MCCORKLE, ALICE.

INTERVIEW
BIOGRAPHY FORM

Form A-(S-149) 10425

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WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Augusta H. Custer

This report made on (date) April 14, 1938 1938

1. Name Mrs. Alice McCorkle

2. Post Office Address Geary, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) 109 North Arapaho

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month April Day 23 Year 1860

5. Place of birth White County, Tennessee

6. Name of Father J. C. Shepherd Place of birth Virginia

Other information about father Pioneer

7. Name of Mother Jerusha Hamlin Shepherd Place of birth East Tennessee

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.

Augusta H. Custer,
Investigator.
April 15, 1938

Interview with Mrs. Alice McCorkle,
109 N. Arapaho, Geary, Oklahoma.

I am the wife of John McCorkle who has been paralyzed for four years. My husband came to Oklahoma from East Texas in 1905. Six of our children and I came on the train. The eldest boy came through with his father and drove a team of ponies to a covered wagon. There was another family who came through with my husband and son. They had four covered wagons. We landed at Kingston in Marshall County. We looked everywhere for a house and could not find one. It was a month before we finally found a shack of two rooms and eighteen of us stayed in this place for over a month. Then Mr. McCorkle rented a place from Jim Founds, a big cattleman. There was a log room and a boxed room built on as a shed. We put a partition in this shed and had three rooms for our family. I am the mother of eleven children but some of them died when they were small.

My husband planted corn, cotton and oats as others did but he was the pioneer wheat grower of that section. Mr. Founds owned a thrasher and had been taking it over north and east to thrash, but in a few years when they found that wheat grew well there, they kept the thrasher at home. One year Mr. McCorkle

leased a section of land from a man named Ross. He broke sod for Mr. Ross of Madill. This land was planted to row crops and the land that had been cultivated was sown to wheat.

There were many timber wolves and coyotes. We were serenaded every night by coyotes and the timber wolves killed many small calves. Any chickens that strayed a hundred yards from the house did not get back. After a rain storm when the yard would be muddy the tracks of the coyotes would be all around the door. In fact it was hard to "keep the wolf from the door." Sometimes Mr. McCorkle would catch the little puppies and bring them home. They made nice pets but the children would become attached to them and would not want to have them killed and they became nuisances.

I was very much dissatisfied when we first went to Oklahoma. There were no schools and no churches at first. No place of amusement for the people old or young. In a few years there were both schools and churches in Kingston three miles away. Some other towns were eight miles away and we had to go to them in a big wagon but it was worth the effort to see other people and to hear the preaching and singing. There were some Indians where we lived but not as many as there were at Tishomingo. Some of the people who had been there longer than I had said they

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thought the country was becoming quite civilized, but it did not seem that way to me. There was an Indian woman, Judge Atchison's wife, who had the Indians meet with her, quite often and they had religious services. I asked her one time to let me know so that I might come. She pretended not to hear me. I asked her the second time. Still she did not answer me. I then said, "Now I know that you hear me and know what I said." She just shrugged her shoulders and did not answer. There were Indian schools at Lebanon but I never had a chance to go to visit them.

I was told that before we came to Oklahoma the Indians made a raid on Holland's Ranch. They chose the light of the moon to make their raids. There was a stockade between Madill and Lebanon where the white people took refuge from the Indians. The Hollands had only one horse and when they got news of the Indians being on the war path, Mr. Holland took his wife and three children and went as fast as he could to the stockade. Mr. Holland said that a young man had come from Missouri riding a fine mare. He thought so much of this mare that he would not trust her in the corral with the other horses that had been ridden into the stockade. Inside of

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the stockade there was a large building roughly built which had a fireplace in the side of the room. This man from Missouri took the saddle off his mare and left the bridle on her. He found a hole in between the logs of the room near the fireplace and sat down there to hold on to the reins so that the Indians could not steal the mare. He fell asleep and when he awoke he still held the bridle reins but the bridle had been slipped off the mare and she was gone.

We had to make as much of our clothing at home as we could.

I was taught to card and spin thread and yarn and then to knit stockings for the members of the family. I knitted the stockings that I wore when I was married. They were of fine cotton thread and had fancy stitches. We cooked for several years on a fireplace. When it was thought necessary to have a doctor it took hours until he could be sent for and could get to the patient as he would come on horseback.