

STICKLE, VERA BLAND

INTERVIEW

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

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Field Worker's name Mary D. DerwardThis report made on (date) July 16, 1937 19371. Name Vera Bland Stickle2. Post Office Address Tulsa, Oklahoma.3. Residence address (or location) 1743 South Gary Ave.4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year 18885. Place of birth Tulsa.6. Name of Father J. C. W. Bland Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

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

7. Name of Mother Sue Davis Bland Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_Other information about mother Half Creek Indian

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.

Mary D. Dorward

Field Worker

July 16, 1937.

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VERA BLAND STICKLE  
A biographic sketch

From a personal interview with the subject.  
(1743 South Mary Ave., Tulsa, Oklahoma.)

Vera Bland Stickle, daughter of Dr. J. C. W. Bland, was born in Tulsa in 1888, in the rear of her father's drug store at what is now the corner of 2nd and Main Streets. The home in which the Blands lived stood at about what is now 311 South Main, but her mother was afraid to stay alone so she was staying at the drug store when Mrs. Stickle, her first child was born. The house still stands but at a different location, it now being on West 3rd Street. The house of Minnie Davis Offut, a sister of Mrs. Bland, stood next to the Bland home, at the corner of Fourth and Main, where the First National Bank building now stands. Back of the houses were the orchards which extended east as far as Boston Avenue. Mrs. Stickle recalls when her aunt would try to spank her boy she would have to chase him all over the orchards before she could catch him.

EDUCATION

Mrs. Stickle attended the Presbyterian mission school in Tulsa for her earliest schooling. Then the Blands

bought and moved to the old Parkinson place in Red Fork.

From that time on she went to school in Red Fork where

her teacher was Cornelia Radcliffe (Mrs. Robert Fry).

The Red Fork school was a mission school and in order to

be maintained by the church there had to be ten Indian

children who attended free of charge. White children

paid tuition of one dollar per month per child. The school

was under the supervision of Alice Robertson who used to

make periodic visits of inspection. When one of these

visits was due we used to study and work for days in prep-

aration.

Mrs. Stickle later attended Cottey College in Missouri,

Spaulding College, a girls' seminary in Muskogee, and Henry

Mendall College after it was moved to Tulsa. Mrs. Stickle's

mother had attended Spaulding College when it was known

as Harrell Institute, the same man, Robert Brewer, being

president when Mrs. Stickle attended and when her mother did.

Mrs. Stickle recalls that while she was in Spaulding

a circus came to town. The girls of the school were

forbidden to attend the circus because Brother Brewer didn't

think it fitting that they should go to such a place, so

a few of them slipped off and went anyhow. Reaching the


circus grounds they saw Brother Brewer's daughter Jess before they were scarcely seated.

#### RED FORK AND TULSA.

Red Fork at that time was much more of a town than Tulsa was. There was a nice little frame church where Dr. Kerr used to conduct Sunday School on Sunday afternoons, riding over from Tulsa on a bicycle. Mrs. Fry, the teacher, was also superintendent, organist, and teacher for the Sunday School, besides being her own janitress.

The church had been entirely by donations made by the cowboys. The girls of the church would give oyster suppers to which the cowboys would come and make a donation. The church edifice is no longer standing but the bell is now in the possession of Owen L. Bland of Red Fork, an uncle of Mrs. Stickle.

In those days there was nothing but woods between Tulsa and Red Fork, with not even a road- just a trail. Mrs. Stickle used to ride horseback to Tulsa. When she came to the river, if the river was high her horse would wade to a certain point and then would swim the channel. The horse knew that spot better than Mrs.



Stickle did and when she stepped down Mrs. Stickle would lift her feet and riding habit up over the horse's neck until they came out of the water. Sometimes the young people of Red Fork would walk to Tulsa, following the trail to the river and then crossing the river on the railroad bridge. As Mrs. Stickle says, "I would never have dreamed of letting my own children cross on that bridge but in those days we thought nothing of it."

#### REMINISCENCES OF DR. BLAND.

Dr. Bland came to Tulsa in late '84. He had been graduated in medicine from Washington University in St. Louis the preceding year. He had heard of Tulsa, decided to come here, and had reached Arkansas City when his money gave out. He was able to secure a skiff and in that he came down the Arkansas River to Tulsa.

Dr. Bland was the first licensed physician in Tulsa and was commissioned to license other physicians to practice in this town. He opened a drug store at the corner of what is now 2nd and Main Streets.

In 1887 Dr. Bland married Sue Davis, half-breed daughter of William F. Davis and Arlie Yahola Davis (full-blood Creek Indian woman who made the journey over

the Trail of Tears) whom he had met at a New Year's party.

(Mrs. Stickle has a tintype picture of her mother in the dress she was wearing at the party when she met Dr. Bland.)

Mrs. Stickle said, "I sometimes think that next to a preacher a doctor does about as much good in the world as anyone. My father used to answer calls from forty miles away, riding horseback when the weather was too bad for a buckboard. If there was no money for medicine he would ride back to town, buy it himself and then return with it."

Dr. Bland brought in the first oil well drilled in the Tulsa territory. It was on the premises of his place in Red Fork and the date is a matter of record. Despite popular belief to the contrary Dr. Bland had sole interest in the well. The well is still in the possession of Mrs. Stickle and is on her mother's allotment.