

REEDER, FRANCES

INTERVIEW.

#7003

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

7003

Field Worker's name Lula Austin

This report made on (date) July 28, 1937

1. Name Mrs. Frances Reeder

2. Post Office Address Durant, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) 1122 North 3rd.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month February Day 4 Year 1856

5. Place of birth Florida

6. Name of Father John Winburn Place of birth Florida

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Martha Jackson Place of birth Georgia

Other information about mother Relative of Stonwall Jackson

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

Mrs. Reeder came from Collin County, Texas, to the Indian Territory with her husband in 1878, locating near where Milburn is now.

When we came to the Indian Territory Governor Cyrus Harris requested us to pay twenty-five cents a year for a permit. But two years later when Governor Overton took office he charged the white people twenty-five dollars for a permit. Those that had paid Governor Harris and received a receipt were put out when they didn't pay the twenty-five dollars. Many that he put out had had their crops started, but half of them would slip back in as soon as the Indian Police landed them on the Texas side.

After that year we moved to a place near Blue, nine miles from Boggy Depot. Widow Cooper was our landlady. She had us take her stock and care for it, giving us some of the stock for our work.

When we first came here we were taught that the Indians were cruel, and had no soul, but I went to their meetings and heard them sing, and saw the preacher point his hand to heaven, while tears rolled down his cheeks, and my heart melted for the Indian. I had no more hatred and felt they were Christians. They would visit me,

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having their prayers at my house, and singing with me. Their little children would play with mine and they learned to love and trust me. Many times an Indian has walked ten miles to bring me fresh venison because he liked me.

While we were away from home attending camp meeting, eight or ten Indian families camped around our house, waiting for us to come home to see if my husband could find work for them. The house would be open, and lard, honey, and meat in the smokehouse, but they would never bother a thing. Peter Maytubby said to me one day, "Mrs. Reeder, you need not be afraid of fullblood Indians, but let one get a little white blood in him and then you will have to lock up the doors." When we attended the camp meetings we would always kill a beef, goat, or sheep, and distribute it among them.

Brother Hoge and Brother Monroe were two missionaries at Boggy Depot. The Baptists and Methodists had a house together. Brother Hoge was the Baptist minister, and Captain Hester was the Methodist. Each would have a day to preach. Captain Hester was Superintendent of the Methodist Sunday School for twenty-two years. His oldest daughter, Fannie, was a devoted worker in

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his church. She delighted in being with the little children, and teaching them the word of God. Two years after her marriage, she died, and as the end approached she said she was ready to go. Her sister, Daisy, who married Senator Owens, was very haughty.

There wasn't any school near us, so we sent our children to Caddo for a year. Later my husband built a school house and hired Mr. Starks to teach, paying him thirty-five dollars per month and board. He invited all the neighbor children to attend the school.

John Lord, an Englishman of forty-five years, taught a subscription school. For the last lesson each evening, he would have the children sing the multiplication tables, and states.

Bill Johnson was another subscription teacher. He didn't want to teach geography and grammar. He said, "The very idea of teaching that the world turns around every twenty-four hours. If that was true, it would be going so fast that it would turn every one off the earth. If you put a bucket of water on a stump the water would spill. Joshua commanded the sun to stand, and it did. All that it is necessary to teach is reading, writing, and arithmetic."

When Mrs. Robb and Mrs. LeFlore, of Atoka, heard that I was interested in teaching the Indians they supplied me with literature. After Mrs. Robb died, it was years before they would allow anyone to sit in her pew at church. Each year they put a wreath of wheat in her pew.

Robert Hill and I organized the first Sunday school. We always had a large attendance, and each child brought a fresh egg every Sunday. That was their donation, and we sold the eggs to buy literature.

The first sermon I heard, after coming to the Indian Territory was preached by a Methodist missionary. His text was, "Quit like men, be strong." The next was a sermon by Brother Hoge. His text was, "Let the dead bury the dead, follow me." We would walk two or three miles to hear preaching.

Later we moved to Folsom, in Johnson County, where we lived for twenty-five years. Here we operated a store and sawmill. My husband also set up, and operated, one of the first cotton gins in the Twelve Mile Prairie region. His patronage often came from a radius of more than twenty-five miles.