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INDEX CARDS

Munn, Robert A.
Physicians--Oklahoma Territory
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Life and Experiences of a Pioneer Physician

DR. ROBERT A. MUNN.

Story given by Mrs. Walter Banks, his daughter, 325 N. F St.
to
Miss Ella Robinson, Field Worker.

My father was born in Jackson, Tennessee, 1852. His parents were John and Mary Munn. They moved west coming to Arkansas and locating near Little Rock, in the small town of Argenta. When he was a little child he attended school there and at El Paso, Arkansas. Deciding to take up the medical profession as his life's work, he entered college at Conway, Arkansas, where he got his pre-medic course with his other college work. Finishing there he began practicing with an older physician at Argenta. After a year or so he entered Vanderbilt University at Nashville, Tennessee, where he graduated.

He was married to Miss Lenora Harkrider in 1875. He began practicing in Johnson County, Arkansas, and was employed as physician by a lumber company in southern Arkansas in the most malarial section of the state. When his wife and child became alarmingly ill, he quickly made arrangements to leave seeking a healthier location. Mrs. Munn had the clothing prepared for herself and baby to be buried in in case they died on the journey. They made the journey in a two-horse wagon coming through the Indian Territory. He was seeking a location on higher ground and traveled on until they reached Edmond, Oklahoma. He located in the little town of Arcadia, near Edmond, and began the practice of his profession. He was appointed postmaster there and his wife was his assistant. She attended to the duties of the office and also managed a small stock of dry goods and millinery. He, giving his time entirely to his practice. It was there they had their first introduction to Oklahoma cyclones. While they never had their own house blown from over their heads many of their neighbors did and they were called upon to relieve suffering, the suffering of the cyclone victims. Sometimes as many as would pass over within 24 hours. As nurses were not available my mother was

his dependable assistant in cases of distress. In 1897 they moved to McAlester, Indian Territory, where he engaged in the practice of his profession. He was appointed ~~instructor~~ physician for the penitentiary and had to be present in an official capacity at all the hangings. A negro man and woman and one white man were hung while he held that position. Medical supplies were scarce and had to be secured so he was thrown upon his own resources largely for his supplies. He made splints of thin pieces of board taken from boxes found in stores and heavy cardboard which he used for broken bones. He also was obliged to practice dentistry as there was no resident dentist there. As his office was always in his own home my mother, as she had always been, was his assistant, being called in his office often. As the country road through the rough mountains did not permit of traveling in a buggy, he did a great deal of his work riding horse back. He often traveled nearly all night through a blinding snow storm for which perhaps he would not collect a cent but his incentive was to relieve suffering and to fulfill his duty to his fellow-man. Although many thousand dollars were lost from the fact that his patients were unable to pay all they owed he was able to accumulate enough for a comfortable living. He was intensely interested in all the affairs of the Methodist Church South of which he was a member and in spite of the fact that he was a busy doctor always had time to give to the church. He served on the board of Stewards for a number of years and was a member of the building committee when the Phillip's Memorial Church building was erected. He opened a hardware store which he was connected with for several years but left the management of it to others. My mother died in 1924. He continued to practice until shortly before his death when he went to Ocala, Florida to visit his daughter Mrs. W. F. Dunkle driving all the way alone. He died in Ocala Decem ber 10, 1925.