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INDEX CARDS

Cherokee Nation  
Tribe-Cherokee  
Living Conditions  
Schools  
Ranching  
Intermarried Citizen

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LEGEND & STORY FORM  
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION  
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field worker's name Nannie Lee Burns

This report made on (date) June 14 1937

1. This legend was secured from (name) Mrs. Frank B. Brown nee Sarah Fields

Address 500 I. St. NW, Miami, Okla.

This person is (~~male~~ or female) ~~White~~, ~~Negro~~, Indian,

If Indian, give tribe Cherokee

2. Origin and history of legend or story Memory

3. Write out the legend or story as completely as possible. Use blank sheets and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached 0

INTERVIEW WITH SARAH FIELDS BROWN

FIELD WORKER, NANNIE LEE BURNS.

JUNE 14, 1937

JUST LIVING.

My grandmother, Julia Cochran McGhee, was a full-blood Cherokee and was born in Georgia before their removal to the Indian Territory. She died in 1863.

My grandfather, Ambrose McGhee, also a Cherokee Indian, was born in Georgia and my grandparents were married in Georgia where my mother, Eliza McGhee, was born and who died when she was forty-eight years old and is buried in Cowskin Prairie. My father, George Fields, a white man, was born May 25, 1847, in Kentucky and came to this country before the Civil War. Father came with his parents who settled in Laddison County, Arkansas, at an early date.

I, Sarah Fields, a one-half Cherokee, was born on Cowskin Prairie near Dodge, August 28, 1865. My husband's parents were Garland and Susan Brown. My husband, Frank B. Brown, was born in Lewis County, Missouri, July, 6, 1864, and came to the Indian Territory in the spring of 1882.

CHILDHOOD DAYS.

Our first home was a double log house with an entry between the rooms. Father cut the logs and with the assistance

of neighbors built it. It was located at the Big Spring, east of Dodge and was called the Big Spring Place, where I was born. Our truck patches and fields were fenced with homemade rails called worm fences. All our outbuildings, which were crude affairs, were made of logs, and from the fact that when I was small we spent our winters at Grandpa Fields' in Madison County, Arkansas, returning in the spring and making a crop and returning the next fall to his house, we did not have the amount of stock and poultry around us that some of the neighbors had.

The trip to grandfather's usually took three days. We drove horses and went in a covered wagon. Father liked to tease us children and one day he sent us to a house about ten in the morning to ask how far it was to Vance Waldon's and when the man came out, it was our grandfather and he said, "Why don't you know where your grandfather lives?" Father had stopped the team down at the road and was laughing at my brother and me. I was about ten and my brother two years younger. After the winter with grandfather Fields, we would return home and then would begin a busy time.

#### LIFE AT HOME.

The children had to carry water to start the hopper

which had been filled with wood ashes and covered through the winter. This was to furnish the lye to make our supply of soap, and how much easier this was when I have heard mother say that they had used the wood ashes on the battling bench in washing their clothes. At another time when they were out of salt, I have heard her say that she dug up the dirt in the smoke house where the salt had stood and boiled the dirt to get the salt. I have dropped corn and covered it with a hoe but usually father used a horse to cover it. He would put a chain around a big rick and drag it down the corn row. Then our bean, sweet potato, pumpkin, squash and other patches had to be hoed.

We buried our sweet potatoes under the floor just in front of the fireplace in a pit and I was the one that had to go into it and bring them out. I was afraid of the iron worm, they were so big.

Before we were through hoeing, came the berries, wild ones to be picked and dried, later the apples and peaches, sometimes we would dry as many as two meal sacks of each. Every time of the year was a busy one but always a little fun along with it for we had our parties, singings, Sunday

School and preaching. The neighbors were friendly and we would help each other with the work, such as apple peelings, etc. We walked wherever we went when young; as father thought that the horses belonged in the field and should rest on Sunday and though he sometimes rode one, none of us children did.

Our coffee mill was small and sat on a cup between our knees.

Corn had to be shelled to be taken to mill, the wheat had to be taken and in return you got flour and shorts and you would get a sack full of meal or flour. Always good measure.

One incident I remember Mother came in with a piggin of fresh milk and set it on the floor till she could make a place to set it on the table and when she turned to lift it, a cat was drinking the milk; she picked up the cat and slung it against the floor and killed the cat; then she took the cat and hung it on the fence. A few days after that her soap barrel sprung a leak and she remarked that "I have always heard that it was bad luck to kill a cat". The children had heard that a cat had nine lives and we watched it to see if

It would come alive again.

The fall days were busy ones getting everything gathered and put away.

#### SCHOOL DAYS.

I was eight years old when I started to school. I went to the Cave Springs School which was a frame building. Everything was furnished, our books and pencils, slates, etc. Lew Alberty was my first teacher. Father was anxious to have us go to school and later sent me to the Female Seminary at Tahlequah but I only stayed one term. He tried to hire me to return but I found it too far from home and was homesick. Miss Wilson was in charge and that woman was everywhere at once.

Mr. Hitchcock, the father of Rainey, organized our first Sunday School at Cave Springs. The Cherokees have always taken an interest in education and how well I remember the talks that the three local Cherokee trustees would give us children when they visited the school.

#### LATER MOVES.

When I was twelve, we moved to Kennison on Cabin Creek and then to Arkansas not far from Grandfather's and while



living here father and my brother, Jeff, were hauling rails near the Hilderbrand Mill when the team ran away. My brother was killed and my father had his leg broken.

I have fished in the millrace there but never liked the numerous water moccasins that were there. After this we moved back and settled one mile south of Fairland, now the Chastain place which my sister Lizzie now owns. I have two sisters, Lizzie Chastain and Anna Curry, both living, and three brothers, Fleas, Bill and George, and my father who is ninety and lives with my sister.

#### MY HUSBAND.

In the spring of 1882, my husband came with his brother Kent who had taken a ten year lease on some grazing land from Old Jimmie Lamer, two miles south of Fairland, that is of where Fairland now is as at that time there was no Fairland. The brother shipped down four carloads of red short-horns and brought two horses and two mules with him. They built a good three room frame house and he spent the summer breaking prairie and fencing what Mr. Brown says was about 150 acres. The cattle grew fat but died when warm weather came.

There was one store where Afton now is, Crowel's. Audrain

assisted by Percy Walker had a store and Post Office at Prairie City, now Ogechee. I traded with them 55 years ago. "Where did I first meet my husband?" I was at Old Aunt Martha Evans, sitting with her and had my lap full of green tunggrass which I was eating when he and Dennis Chastain rode up. I had been keeping company with Dennis. After we were married, Dennis came along one day when my saddle girth had broken and fixed it for me and told me to tell Brown to take better care of me than that as he had stolen me from him and he laughed. We were married June 20, 1864. Here Mr. Brown interrupted and said, "I had to get twelve signers who were Cherokee citizens to get a permit to marry her. I got thirteen, and only one person that I asked refused me and that was Riley Copeland. He said 'I will not consent for any white man to marry an Indian.' I have never liked him since. Then I went to the home of T. J. McGhee, the clerk at Dodge. He was not at home so I followed him to Southwest City and got the license that cost me \$12.00. Came back and we were married at her home by a Methodist Minister, Ed Byrd. Jay Smith who lives south of Miami and who was staying there and going to school was at the wedding.

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## OUT HOME.

We lived at the place that his brother had built and he farmed some, also broke prairie for my father and Frank Lamar. There was quite a settlement of the Lamars south of where Fairland now is, though at the time the present town-site was only a prairie and I, Mr. Brown, have cut the prairie grass where the present town stands. We had a pair of oxen, Buck and Meld. Frank would get me into the wagon holding their heads till I was fixed, then start them on the run and jump in as they passed him and we were gone. He drove with a black-snake whip. One trip, I especially remember. We heard that John McGhee's wife had died at Kennison about thirty-five miles away. We started early and when we reached there, we learned that she had been buried the day before; so the next morning we started home and I believe it was the coldest day I have ever seen. It was in January. We stopped in a sheltered place and heated rocks to put in the wagon at mother's suggestion and after we had gone away, I smelled smoke and found that the rocks were so hot that they had burned my dress. My husband to keep warm was walking and running besides the steers. Aunt Jane Harlan who was with us looked at my husband

and saw that his ears were white and said "Frank, your ears are frozen." That night even the chickens froze. We had near neighbors in the Frank Lamar, the Jimmie Lamar and the James Peyton families. Wild turkeys and prairie chickens came in droves. Often you would see 10 or 15 deer together. Antelopes were numerous, and the coyote killed and stole our chickens and turkeys:

#### OUR NEXT HOME.

In 1891, the dry year, I traded for and moved to the place three miles west of Narcissa, that I allotted for my wife and children though we had lived for a short time near Afton when I was drilling water wells. I have drilled wells all over this county. At first we only had one room and a side room but I added four rooms and improved this place and here we lived till twenty years ago. During that dry year, I had out 200 acres of corn and I did not get a bushel, so, disgusted with farming, I sold out and moved to Miami, where since then I have drilled in the district here and three years in Kentucky. We had six children four girls, Addie, Lizzie, Effie Eliza, and Stella; and two boys, Garland and Jess, all living and we have eighteen grand-children and four great-grand-children.