

INDEX CARDS

No Man's Land
Tyrone
Subscription School

ENGLAND, MARY E. INTERVIEW.

Form A-(S-149)

90

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

Field Worker's name Augusta H. Custer.This report made on (date) July 19, 1937.1. Name Mary E. England.2. Post Office Address Optima, Oklahoma.3. Residence address (or location) Five miles south of Optima.4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month April Day 13 Year 1864.5. Place of birth Genterville, Missouri.6. Name of Father H. B. Fore Place of birth NW Missouri.Other information about father Died 1917.7. Name of Mother Mary Fore Place of birth North West Missouri.Other information about mother Died 1912.

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 3.

Augusta H. Custer,
Interviewer.

Mary E. England of Optima, Oklahoma,
Five miles south of Optima, Okla.

I came from Liberal, Kansas, to Cimarron, in a covered wagon with my husband and children on July 1, 1887. On the ^{8th} day of July we went on a claim two miles east of Tyrone. There were no improvements in any part of this country except a well for stock which had been drilled by the railroad company. They were surveying a railroad and this proved an inducement to get settlers from Oak City, Kansas.

We had many privations and every one was in sympathy with his neighbor as each one understood just what the other fellow had to endure. These people wanted their children to have some education and I volunteered to teach a subscription school. They wanted to pay me \$1.00 per month per pupil but I did not see how they were to get the cash. I realized their condition and said I would teach for .50 cents per month per child, as I thought that I would come nearer collecting .50 cents than \$1.00 per child. I had about twenty-five pupils and nearly as many varieties of school books as pupils. They brought just any kind of text books that they might happen to have.

-2-

There were no adopted text books in those days. It was a great assortment since I come to think of it. But of course writing and figures are the same always. There is no change in these subjects except in the method of teaching. Well, when it was time to collect for my work, the settlers had no money and I had taught four months. I received one pig, six chickens, some beef from one family and a quarter from another, and all the cash I ever received from that school was \$2.00.

I also taught the first school ever taught at Green Valley. It was not for the money we worked in those days but from the joy of doing some thing for our fellow man. I have seen some of those boys and girls grow to manhood and womanhood and realize that if it had not been for my efforts they would perhaps not have been able to read or write. I do not begrudge the time and effort, Many of them have proved to be a friend in time of need.

Indians.

When we lived down southeast of here, in the early days in the early spring there would be great caravans of Indians from the Cherokee Nation who would pass by our house on their way to Colorado to spend the summer. For

-3-

days they would straggle along, every one on horseback, one two and three in a group. Sometimes they would stop at the house and trade or beg some coffee, flour, or sugar. We never thought of being afraid of them.

In the fall they would come straggling back, passing along in a string as they had in the spring, on their way back to the Cherokee Nation to spend the winter.