

FIELDING, HARRY W.

INTERVIEW 4181

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

FIELDING, HARRY W. INTERVIEW. 4181

Field Worker's name John F. Daugherty

This report made on (date) May 26, 1937

1. Name Harry W. Fielding

2. Post Office Address Sulphur, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month September Day 28 Year 1862

5. Place of birth Ohio

6. Name of Father Wilson Fielding Place of birth Unknown

Other information about father Carpenter

7. Name of Mother Nancy McCune Fielding Place of birth Unknown

Other information about mother _____

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 4.

An Interview with Harry W. Fielding, Sulphur.
By - John F. Daugherty, Investigator.
May 26, 1937.

My parents were Wilson Fielding and Nancy McCune Fielding. I was born September 28th, 1862. I came to old Washita north of Davis, from Texas in 1891. This was a good town until they had a big fire in 1891 and they never rebuilt the town. The depot was in such a low boggy place that it was impossible to get to it in rainy weather. So they moved it to the present site of Davis and the town was built here.

I stayed at the home of Mat Wolf near old Washita.. He would accept no pay for my board, and I was permitted to ride a pony to school or wherever I wanted to go. I often went with Mat on his round-ups. I taught in a frame building which was erected in 1892. This was a subscription school. Each child paid five cents per day. We had terms of only three months in the summer.

I remember a big barbecue and picnic which Mat had while I was there. He advertised it to sell some lots but the Indians had a law that no one could sell land

because it belonged to the tribe. A member of the tribe was permitted to hold this land for his own use, but he must not sell it.

Mat got dubious about this law and decided he would not sell any lots. But they had the barbecue and picnic nevertheless. He managed to get an old merry-go-round pulled by a horse.

An old fiddler sat in the center and furnished the music. Everybody had a grand time in those days at any kind of a gathering. There were not many places to go and when people did get together they had a great time.

The second year that I was here I applied for a position in the Chickasaw Government school at Davis. I borrowed a pony and rode to Tishomingo to be examined by Harley at the Harley Institute north of Tishomingo, for a teacher's certificate. The certificate was issued and I was given the position. I was told that I would have much trouble with those Indian boys. They had been very unruly and I was

not very large, so the officials were sure that I would not be able to handle them. But I did not have as much trouble with them as I had had with the white children.

This was a ten months term of school and I received thirty dollars monthly from the Chickasaw Government. There were many more boys than girls in attendance for the Indians thought that girls needed no education. Their place was at home and they received training in home craft at home from their mothers. They expected these boys they sent to school to become the leaders of their tribes. We used any books which the children brought. There was no uniformity of text books. If they were asked to get a certain text they quit school.

I found a mischievous Indian boy much easier to handle than a mischievous white boy. When the Indian is angry he sulks. When the white boy is angry he plans more meanness to torment the object of his anger. I had about twenty-seven pupils each term I taught in the Government school.

I taught a white school after I quit the Indian school. In this school I had eighty-eight pupils on the roll. The schools were not graded. Each child recited his lessons out of his own book. I had Barnes Readers, McGuffeys Readers, Roys Arithmetics, the Blue Back Speller and others. I taught five arithmetic classes at the same time and several reading classes would be reading at the same time. We taught the A. B. C. Method to the beginners. I heard the elementary classes four times each day. There was no time for play during school hours. We had very short recesses and I always played with my pupils during these short periods of relaxation.

I was married March 23, 1893 to Maude Ware.

I was admitted to the Bar in 1895, and have practiced law in Sulphur since 1907.
