

FETTY, MYRTLE HART.

INTERVIEW

9729

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

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INTERVIEW.

#9729

Field Worker's name Augusta H. Custer.

This report made on (date) January 18, 1938

1. Name Mrs. Myrtle Hart Fetty,

2. Post Office Address Canton, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) East Main Street.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month June Day 2 Year 1872

5. Place of birth Missouri

6. Name of Father T. J. Snodgrass Place of birth Iowa.

Other information about father Farmer.

7. Name of Mother Mrs. S. F. Snodgrass Place of birth Kentucky.

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 Ten.

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Augusta H. Custer,
Investigator.
January 18, 1938.

Interview with Mrs. Myrtle Hart Fetty,
Canton, Oklahoma.

My husband, two children and I came from Nashville, Kansas, to Oklahoma in 1895. We drove a team of mules to a covered wagon. We brought with us some household goods, a few chickens, one gray pony and three cows. We milked the cows and had all the sweet and sour milk that we wanted and made some butter. We located fourteen miles southwest of Canton. We followed the Washita trail part of the way but I cannot say where we came into it or when we left it. We got our mail from Cantonment. Sometimes we would get it once a week and sometimes it would be longer than that. There were scarcely any roads. People just got the direction and struck out across the country. I am about an eighth degree Cherokee and I never have been afraid of the Indians.

We built a dugout on the claim and lived in it two years. It was warm and dry and others were living in dugouts so I did not mind, as it was as good a home as most of my neighbors had. We lived near the Big Nose

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Indian camp and I often went down there.

One time I had a false face and the Indians had never seen anything like that. I kept it under my wrap until I got to the camp. A lot of the women and children were out near a well, drawing water. I turned my head and slipped on the mask; the women screamed, pulled their shawls over their faces and were really scared. Minnie Black was not a very large girl at that time and she does not like me yet for frightening her so with that false face. The older women took the mask and some even put it on and did not hold any ill feeling toward me.

One time I took some friends to the Indian camp to see some shawls and we had been there quite a while, ^{and} one of the older women had gone into another tepee to get some things to show us. My friends who were with me were sitting across the tent from me. One of them called to me to look behind me. There was Minnie Black with a gun pointed at me. I was not frightened and said, "Oh, she would not shoot me; she is only having some fun? When

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the older woman returned she scolded Minnie and made her show me that there was no load in the gun. She did not want me to be angry with them.

In two years we built a log house by standing the logs on end like posts, daubing them up with mud. This one-room house was much better than the dugout as we had more room and it was lighter. I papered the walls with newspapers and many times I have heard centipedes crawling behind the paper. The paper did not fit close to the logs and if I would look close I could see a centipede crawling; then, I could sometimes kill it with the stove hook. A centipede ran across my lip and part of my face one time while I was lying down but it did not poison me any more than a mosquito would have done.

We dug a thirty foot well and had seventeen feet of water in the well. It was surely good water, soft to wash in and cold in summer. Mr. Hart bought me a washing machine. It was the hand power kind in which a lever turns back and forth over the top of the tub; this

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turns a small flat disk on the bottom of the tub, that swishes the clothes around in the water. One time I was washing and thirteen big Indian bucks came to the house; they wanted to see how the machine worked. They wanted to run it and I let them take turns; by the time they were all satisfied, my washing was almost done. Then they went into the house; I had been washing out in the yard. They looked all around and I knew that they wanted something and finally they made signs; I gave them some matches and they went away.

We raised a great deal of corn and as we did not have enough stock to eat that much corn; we sold it to other people, and fed some of it to their stock which would come right on our place. We got fifteen cents a bushel for the corn.

The Indians would borrow coffee and sugar but I always found them good about paying back although some people complained that they did not. The Government issued the Indians many dishes and cooking utensils but they did not care for these things, taking them and

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trading them off to, the white settlers for almost anything.

We killed many deer. One time we had some deer meat which was very fresh and we gave a little boy a piece of raw meat. While he was eating it the blood ran down from his mouth to his shirt. His grandmother who was taking care of him got some water in her mouth and she had an old dirty rag; she would squirt some of the water on his shirt and then wipe it with this dirty rag. It was surprising how much water she could hold in her mouth. She kept at the job until she had the blood all off.

At one time I worked nine weeks in the Indian School at Cantonment as a seamstress. While I was there I had my first experience with head lice. Susie Ponca was one of the older girls and she noticed that a girl named Josephine had lice. Susie offered to help Josephine get rid of the lice but Josephine would not let her. The boys laughed at Josephine about the lice and all the children knew about it before the matron did. I went up in the

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dormitory and was going to sit down on Josephine's bed when the girls told me not to sit there. I did not know why but the other women said the bed would have to be looked over. Sunday morning all the children had to go to Sunday School. While they were gone we went up to Josephine's room and found plenty of lice. When Josephine came back she was told to take her bed and throw all the bed clothes and mattress down the fire escape. All beds were examined but no lice were found, just a few bed bugs on some beds. Then all the children's heads were examined and Mrs. White, a Cheyenne Indian, looked them over; she did not find many lice but every girl had to wash her hair in vinegar and coal oil. Josephine was left until the last. Josephine's head was just as full of lice as it could possibly be and the lice were actually piled up on top of each other. The back of her head was full of sores from those lice. Mrs. White took a sheet and tore it into four squares. Two corners she would pin around Josephine's neck and two other corners she would pin to her own waist. Then she took a fine comb and combed the lice out. This was in the days when all

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Indian girls wore long hair. The parents did not like to have the girls' hair cut. Mrs. White could see those things crawling up on that white sheet and would comb them back to the center. She used all four squares, then she bathed Josephine's head in coal oil, then in vinegar, and a new set of bed clothes was issued to Josephine. When she went back to her people to stay a while, they cut her hair and when she returned to school, it was never so much trouble again.

I used to ride a pony sideways with a rope halter, carry some eggs and butter to the store three miles and trade for coffee and sugar. My husband was known as a good provider and I was thought to be a good cook. We did not have as scanty a living as some because we always had milk and butter. At least it would not be long at a time that we would be without food. I canned wild grape juice, dried wild plums and put up anything that I could for winter use.

We sold eggs for 3¢ a dozen, butter for 10¢ a pound and we bought the first 25¢ worth of beans that was passed

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over the counter of Scott's store at Fonda. Mr. Scott kept a store and post office, thirteen miles southwest of Canton.

When I was only eight years of age I bought my mother a small majolica pickle dish and put it on a Christmas tree for her. In some way the name either came off or this dish was changed with another woman's Christmas present and Mother did not receive her dish. I saw the other woman have it and I cried until someone told about it and Mother got it back. I have this dish now and this is how it looks.

This dish is forty-two years old, that is, I have had it in the family that long.



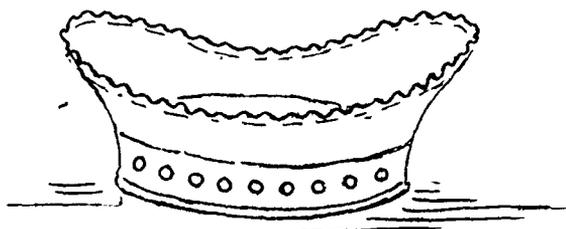
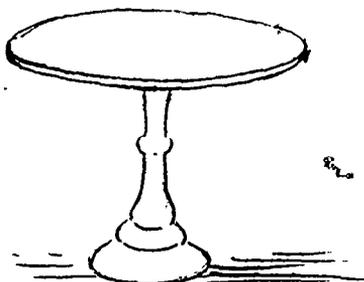
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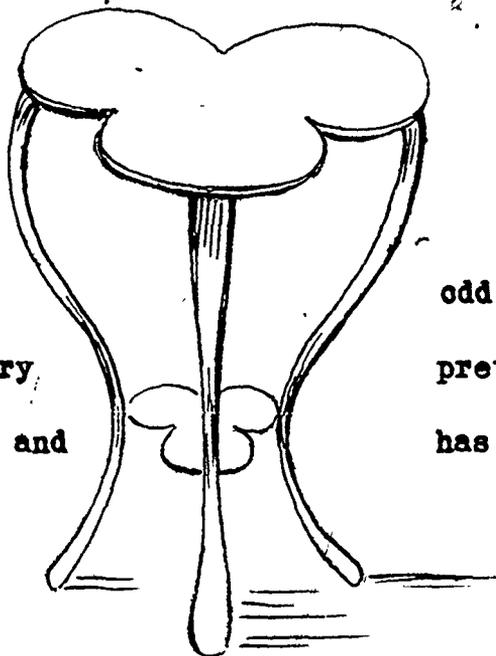
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This glass cake stand was one of my mother's. It is about fourteen inches high and fourteen inches in



diameter across the top. This glass dish is quite an unusual dish and it is at least sixty years old as the cake stand is also.



This table is very good polish and for.

odd shaped cherry pretty. It has a has been well cared

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I have four children who are married and have homes of their own; I am trying to get a small home paid for in Oakwood. I am a good practical nurse and work in homes when I can. Mr. Hart died in 1931 and in 1936 I was married to Mr. Fetty in Daytona Beach, Florida. I am undecided as to whether to return to Florida or not; I like to be in Oklahoma where my children are near me.