

FRAZEE, EMANUEL D.

INTERVIEW

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INTERVIEW.

BIOGRAPHY FORM  
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION  
Indian-Pioneer History Project for OklahomaField Worker's name Augusta H. Custer.This report made on (date) July 16, 1937.1. Name Emanuel D. Frazee.2. Post Office Address Geary, Oklahoma.3. Residence address (or location) 109 N. Cheyenne.4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month November Day 26. Year 1853.5. Place of birth Jasper County, Illinois.6. Name of Father John Frazee. Place of birth Lawrence County, Illinois.Other information about father Farmer. Died in Okla. in 1910.7. Name of Mother Sarah Elizabeth Frazee. Place of birth Jasper County, Illinois.Other information about mother Died in Illinois in 1876.Mother of eleven children, eight boys and three girls.

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 7.

Augusta H. Custer,  
Interviewer.  
July 16, 1937.

An Interview With Emanuel D. Frazee,  
Geary, Oklahoma.

I arrived at Judson post office on Christmas Eve in 1895, coming from Sarcosis, Missouri, to El Reno on the train. I was met by my brother-in-law, Alonzo James, and George Cox. They were driving a team of ponies to a spring wagon and we drove all day in drizzling rain from El Reno to Judson.

There was not much to the roads, just two furrows plowed and no grades at all. All the natural hills and inclines had to be gone over.

There were many large herds of cattle roaming about the country. These belonged to big cattlemen. The settlers or homeseekers did not own more than seven or eight head of horses and cattle together. The homesteaders lived in small log houses or dugouts. All trading was done at El Reno, the nearest railroad town.

Ed Barclay was the postmaster at Judson. They owned a small store and this was quite a community center. The mail arrived every Wednesday and Saturday, if the weather and conditions of the roads did not prevent. The mail came from El Reno to Barclay's store and then to Judson.

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One of the amusements of those days was shooting matches. This was conducted in several different ways, sometimes they would shoot for turkeys, and charge twenty-five cents a shot. Then again they would put a price on a turkey or rooster and the men would chip in and pay equal amounts and the best shot would get the game. There were always some good shots at these shooting matches. The rule was to shoot off hand, that is not use a rest and not take a long time to sight.

At picnics there would be matched horse races and sometimes foot races. There was some betting but not much money changed hands as no one had any great amount of ready cash at this time.

Ball games were not so common then, there was not a ground fixed up for that and not many good balls and bats to be had. Everyone was a whole lot more sociable then than now, if we wanted to have a good time someone would suggest that we get a crowd together and go to some home. The first thing was to get a fiddler. I had two brothers who could play and they were usually ready to have some fun. We would stop at any houses that we passed and the family would usually be glad to join the gang and

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we would just walk in on the family and start dancing. These houses were often one room houses, but the small amount of furniture would be moved out of the way and the party went merrily on. There was one man in the neighborhood whom some of the boys like to make the butt of their jokes. He was "shining up" to an old maid in the community and he took her to a dance one night. When they were ready to go home he did not examine the buggy and the young woman kept sliding down on his side of the buggy. The road was not sidling enough to cause this all the time. After the young woman was safely delivered at her home and daylight

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came so that the buggy could be looked over it showed that the boys had taken the front wheel off of her side of the buggy and placed the hind wheel from the drivers side in its place, this caused the buggy to tip over toward the driver.

At box suppers, which were another form of amusement, there was great rivalry shown, boys would try to get the box belonging to some other fellow's girl and that would cause him to bid more, sometimes than he could afford, to get his girls box. Usually this was taken in fun but

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sometimes there would be a fist fight back of the school house, and some black eyes as a result.

One night at old man Tonkinson's house there was a dance and Lillie Tackett was there. She was a girl 13 years of age and weighed 135 pounds. This made her a large girl for her age. I tried to get her to dance but she never had danced and refused. But with the persuasion of her mother and sisters she got on the floor and danced her first and last set.

There was not much game in the country when I came but my brothers who came two years before me killed some deer.

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I used to go fishing. We had the best luck fishing at night. We would build a camp fire near the shore so that the light reflected in the water and used angle worms, small fish, or frogs for bait. Sometimes small dip nets were used, but this was against the law.

I never had much luck hunting bee-trees, though some would be lucky enough to get plenty of honey from this sport.

There was a settlement of Mennonites who were here before I came and they were the first to raise wheat in large enough quantities <sup>and</sup> to have thrashing machines.

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I was working for a thrashing crew one year and when I went in to get washed for dinner I asked for some hot water as my hands were greasy. They said that I might have some hot water and gave me some in a pan, then the bunch of women who were helping to cook for the thrashers wanted to play a joke on me, so they told me to set the pan down, take a bucket, and go for some cold water as they needed some water. I did this and when I came back they had moved my pan of hot water and placed a pan of gravy just where I had set the wash pan. I was anxious to get washed and grabbed up the pan of gravy and started outside to wash. They never have forgotten that gravy deal to this day and sometimes someone reminds me of it.

I worked for \$1.00 a day and my board, and usually had ten or fifteen acres of corn planted on a piece of rented land. I tried batching but I was not much of a cook and then it was too lonesome.

I was an old bachelor so long my brother, Henry, would never miss a chance to tease me about some girl. He was the type that had a good time with all the girls of the neighborhood but never got serious with any of them.

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Finally, he seemed to be paying more attention to Mattie Scott than he had to any of the others and one day I asked him why he did not marry. He said that he did not have any money to marry on. I told him that if he would marry Mattie I would buy the license.

About a week later they had decided to marry and had quite a wedding at her father's. Just as soon as the ceremony was over and friends were congratulating them I stepped up and gave her some money to pay for the license. This caused an uproar among the crowd.

One time I was elected Justice of the Peace. I did not seek the office and before I could resign there were two cases to be tried and a couple to get married. I got to Watonga as soon as possible and turned the office over to someone else.

Ed Cooksey and Adeline Misner were paying some attention to each other and her mother objected very strenuously to the proceedings. As time went on and her objections did not seem to have any weight she began to insist on their getting married but they were in no hurry. One day they were all at a neighbors and the young couple were going to walk home together. The mother did not like

this arrangement so she walked to, and scolded them for a long time without their paying much mind. She became angry and grabbed up handful of sand and threw on Ed. He was too polite to make her stop by force so he had to take it. This aroused Adeline and she went home with Ed and stayed all night and the next day he went to Watonga to get his license and they were married.

The Literary Society was held every Saturday night, at the Richland school house. There was a lot of talent among the neighbors and most every one would take part in a play or dialogue, sing or play on a fiddle or guitar.

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There seemed to be a newspaper needed to complete the program. There was no one who wanted to be the editor. Some of the neighbors got after me to edit the news, but I was always bothered with bashfulness and told them that if I did write it I could not get up and read it. So we compromised and I was to write the paper and someone else was to read it, and not let it become known who was doing the writing. This proved to be one of the funniest things on the program and was carried on for three years without the majority knowing who was writing up the jokes on the people of the community.

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