

WEAVER, MATTLE J.

INTERVIEW

#8885

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BIOGRAPHY FORM
 WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
 Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma #8885

WEAVER, MATTIE J. INTERVIEW.

Field Worker's name Zaidee B. Bland

This report made on (date) October 15, 1937

1. Name Mrs. Mattie J. Weaver

2. Post Office Address Altus, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) 320 West Cypress

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month April Day 3 Year 1866

5. Place of birth Benton County, Missouri

6. Name of Father Jacob Cunningham Place of birth Missouri

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Elizabeth Moreland Place of birth Missouri

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 _____.

An Interview with Mrs. Mattie J. Weaver, Altus.

By - Zaidee B. Bland, Field Worker.

October 15, 1937

Mr. Weaver and I came to this country for homesteading purposes in the Fall of 1886 when the crops were all gathered we sold all our personal belongings and feed that could not be loaded into two wagons and loading our wagons, hitching two mules to each wagon we turned north.

We had our wagons loaded with all my bedding, consisting of quilts, spreads, feather beds and feather pillows, with the necessary linens, wooden bedsteads, a dresser with a mirror, chairs, a dining table, and a Singer sewing machine, white China ware including all my glasses. I packed my dishes into tin tubs. I had any number of tin pans but most of my cooking vessels were of iron. I had an iron teakettle and wash pot.

We brought enough cured meat to last us the year, besides sausage, lard and preserves. My peach preserves as well as all my jells of all kind were packed in stone jars.

We were one week on the road.

We had our Christmas dinner in Vernon, Texas. We had camped in the wagon yard. Mr. Weaver decided we would lay over the day so set up my little cook stove and then went up town and got everything he thought we would enjoy, including bread. I have no remembrance of a better meal or one I enjoyed more in my whole life.

We came on north to a beautiful grove of Elm trees. There was a well in this grove and by looking closely you would observe a door in the bank of a ravine on whose banks these trees grew. Some one had tunneled back into the bank of Navajo creek and were living in the rooms so fashioned. We asked permission to camp under these trees and look around for a location and permission was given.

Mr. Weaver set up our tent and made things as comfortable and convenient as he could for me and then began to look around for a location. He found one just a half mile away from our camping place. He made location for one quarter for a homestead; one

quarter for purchase and went to Mangum to file legally. That land was our home all the days of Mr. Weaver's life and I still own this one-half section of land.

I paid out the purchased quarter to Oklahoma Territory at the rate of thirty-three and one-third dollars every year for four or five years.

All our supplies had to be hauled from Vernon, Texas.

We only dug three feet into the ground, build-
ind up the walls with lumber the rest of the way.

The walls were covered with white domestic. I had glass windows in two sides of the place making it well ventilated and light. The floor was dirt. A vestibule was built over the door for protection from the weather and so the door would swing free and you could walk out of our house upright, as I can walk through my door right now. Our dugout was fourteen by thirty-six feet.

We dug a well and began to break sod for our 1887 crop.

We put out peach and plum trees at once and they grew nicely.

There were lots of wild plums and grapes on the sand hill north of us which we enjoyed.

There was a little red bug which was referred to as the chigger that was a terrible pest. There was no way of getting these chiggers off of the body except by picking them out with a needle and bathing with salt in the water. A little black bug called a Texas flea was the worst. You could not sleep if there was a one on your body for they seem to travel everywhere over you. You could shake them out of your sheets and I used Oil of Cedar on our underclothes. These fleas did not like the smell of oil.

Being alone while Mr. Weaver went for supplies and wood was my greatest hardship while he lived.

We were allowed to get all the dead wood from the Indian Reservation we wanted but Mr. Weaver usually tried to get all the wood he hauled this side of Otter Creek which was considered to be in Texas.

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After the first few crops he always hauled crops from Vernon laying up our years supply in the summer.

When he would start to Vernon I would watch until he was just ready to go out of sight when he would wave and I knew it would be three days and nights before I need expect to see him again even with good look which he did not always have.

Sometimes there was a snow storm; some time high water would delay him but I never failed to watch the road in the day light hours and listen in the night for his coming.

We helped build the first school building at Navajo which building was also used as a church.

The Missionary Baptist Church was the first church ever organized and I am the only surviving member of the group of fourteen who helped in organizing the church.

This was always a beautiful country and there were not many storms. There were lost of sunshiny

days and in the spring the mirage was beautiful.

The mountains are beautiful in sunshine or rain.

Someday, no doubt, our granite will be used largely for building purposes for it takes a very high polish and I understand that in only one other place in the United States is the granite harder and that is the famous blue granite of New Hampshire.
