

DIAL, N. B. (Mrs.)

INTERVIEW

4963

238

INDEX CARDS:

Greer County
Mangum
Dugout
El Reno
Entertainments
Living Conditions

BIOGRAPHY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for OklahomaField Worker's name Ruth KerboThis report made on (date) July 14 19371. Name Mrs. N. B. Dial2. Post Office Address Mangum, Oklahoma3. Residence address (or location) 411 North Carolina Avenue4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month October Day 14 Year 18745. Place of birth Greenwood, Missouri6. Name of Father E. McBride Place of birth Ohio

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Rachel E. Parsons Place of birth Ohio

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 _____.

Ruth Kerbo,
Interviewer,
July 14, 1937.

Interview with Mrs. N. B. Dial
411 North Carolina Avenue
Mangum, Oklahoma

I came to Greer County in 1893, from Kansas. I came here to be with my sister, Mrs. Louis Dial.

I was married in 1894 to N. B. Dial, and after a short wedding trip to Quanah, we settled on a claim ten miles south of Mangum. Built a dugout 18' x 20' and lived in it for eight years. Finally, Mr. Dial bought a one room boxed house at Eldorado and moved it to our place and placed it in front of the dugout. Our furniture consisted of a bedstead, stove, a few boxes, a couple of cane chairs and a crude cupboard constructed of boards.

Fuel was scarce. We dug mesquite roots and hauled drift wood from Salt Fork River to use as fuel.

Mr. Dial was a farmer. He came to Greer County in 1892, and brought his farming equipment and stock with him. Both were very good considering the times. He raised wheat generally the first few years. We raised our first cotton in Greer County in 1900. Cotton was

- 2 -

awfully cheap, three and four cents per pound. We made fair yields.

In 1904 we built our home, and a cistern was dug to furnish water. We had plenty of water on the place but it was not good to drink.

To the early settlers the area south of Mangum was known as "Gyp Hill No. 1," as a result of its school house of that name.

I remember that A. W. Putnam was the first school teacher at Gyp Hill school.

The Friday night literary at the school house was the No. 1 social event of the week during the school months.

Settlers also enjoyed parties and fish fries. Fish fries were held at Turkey Creek and on Elm River. These parties were not merely family affairs. The entire neighborhood would go. Men seined the fish from the waters, and the entire group enjoyed a dinner of catfish or drum, prepared by the women.

I have seen Salt Fork River at the flood stage many times. We did not think so much about driving off into the raging waters then, and often times the settlers would have to take their wagons out by pieces if they were.

- 3 -

fortunate enough to get them out at all.

Sometimes their teams would be lost. But there were no bridges and that was the only way we had to cross. The first bridge in the country was built on Salt Fork south of Mangum. I don't remember the date when it was built, but I remember it was several years after we came. For weeks at a time, settlers were unable to cross the river to reach Mangum. For four years, settlers south of Mangum got their mail at Martha.

Although Indians occasionally penetrated to this area from the Kiowa and Comanche reservations, I don't recall any Indian scares during our early day experience.

Many women could shoot a rifle with as true an aim as a man. The first time I fired a gun I shot the tail feathers from a hawk, whether by accident or design. My family complimented me on my marksmanship, although, of course, the feat must have been accidental.

The first rural mail carrier in the district south of Mangum, was John Talley.

We wore dresses with big puffed sleeves and the skirts were five or six yards around the bottom.

We moved to Mangum in 1919. Mr. Dial still looked

- 4 -

after his farms until his death in 1933.

I have spent all of my life here since 1893 except for short visits to other states.

Neither droughts nor sandstorms are peculiar to this decade. Both were common in the early days of Old Greer.

Droughts in the early days, however, were not as severe as in recent years. We thought they were not so severe because we did not expect as much as we do today. The sandstorms, however, were like those of recent times.