

MORGAN, LEONA

INTERVIEW

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

MORGAN, LEONA.

INTERVIEW.

Field Worker's name Alene J. McDowell

This report made on (date) August 16, 1937 1937

1. Name Mrs. Leona Morgan

2. Post Office Address Route 1, Bartlesville, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) North end of Santa Fe, Ave. B'ville

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month March Day 27 Year 1865

5. Place of birth Ringo County, Iowa

6. Name of Father J.C. Brooks Place of birth Ohio

Other information about father Buried in Sedan, Kansas

7. Name of Mother Susan Fox-Brooks Place of birth Maryland

Other information about mother Buried in Sedan, Kansas

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 14.

Alene D. McDowell
Research Field Worker
Washington County
Indian-Pioneer History, S-149
August 16, 1937

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Interview with
Mrs. Leona Morgan
Route #1
Bartlesville, Oklahoma

Mrs. Leona Morgan was born March 27, 1865,
in Ringo County, Iowa.

Father - J.C. Brooks was born in 1835, in
Ohio, died in 1909 at the age of 74 years,
and is buried at Sedan, Kansas.

Mother - Susan Fox-Brooks was born at
Baltimore, Maryland, died in 1916 at the age
of 81 years and ~~is~~ buried in Sedan, Kansas.

I removed from Iowa to the Indian Territory
with my parents in March 1884, and settled on
a farm, leased by my father from John Halley,
a Delaware. Land in the Cherokee Nation could
not be bought by white settlers at that time,
and my father took a six year lease on this
place.

Our house was located on what is now Third
street and Johnstone avenue, where the May
Brothers Clothing Store stands. We could stand
on our porch and see the deer drink at the

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Caney river, north of our home. Our west fence was a stake and rider style, and was located where Park avenue now runs, on the west side of the railroad. The house was built of log, and my father built two rooms of rough lumber, with a porch built between the two houses, connecting them. A cypress and blossom apple vine covered the house, making a beautiful scenery.

There were few churches in the vicinity when we first settled here. We attended church in a log house located in Stokes holler, about five miles northwest of Bartlesville. We had no music instruments in the church, and each Sunday we loaded our organ into the wagon and took it with us to church.

In November, 1884, we operated the boarding house for Jake Bartles, located across the road from the Bartles store on the north side of the river, where the transients stayed. We lived there the winter of 1884.

There were no schools here at that time.

In the winter of 1884 my father hauled lumber from Stokes mill, northwest of town, to build the first school house in the town.

In 1885 we witnessed the biggest flood of Washington County history.

In 1886 I married Arthur I. Morgan at Coffeyville, Kansas. At that time he was driving the mail hack. Our first home was a two room box house. The front room was 12'X 20' and the kitchen was 12' square. This house was located on North Delaware avenue, the Keeler and Johnstone store was on the south side of our home and the blacksmith was on the north. We bought this house from Doctor Denbow, Bartlesville's first physician, who was leaving Bartlesville.

Dr. Denbow left here in 1886 and for three years we were without a physician in our little town. In 1889 Dr. Stewart came here, and a few months later Dr. Woodring followed him and practiced his profession until his death about four years ago.

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In 1887 my husband bought the blacksmith shop and employed Mr. Cole to operate the shop. My husband knew nothing about blacksmith business but could see a future for this enterprise. Mr. Cole run the shop for two years, then in 1889 Henry Clay, a blacksmith from Kansas, bought an interest in the business and operated the shop.

While George B. Keeler was visiting in California, he met Harry Jennings, who came to Bartlesville with Mr. Keeler on his return trip and worked for him as bookkeeper. He became a prominent character in the early day history of Bartlesville. He established the first newspaper business in the city, in 1894. This paper was The Magnet, an eight column paper. He later enlarged his business and employed Frank M. Overlees as editor. I have a copy of one of the early publications of this paper. This paper is now known as the Morning Examiner.

When the town was incorporated in 1897, Harry Jennings entered the race against Dr. Stewart, for mayor. Stewart was elected ~~with~~

by a big majority.

I have a picture of the first band organized in Bartlesville, with fourteen members, Mr. Crow, Joe McClintock, Frank Deitz, Otis Gregory, Jesse Overlees, Charlie Skinner, Arthus Morgan, Marion and Clarence Parr. I do not recall the names of the others. This was the K. of P. Band, of Bartlesville, Indian Territory, and their suits were blue with gold braid trimming.

I also have a picture of the first ball team organized in our town. The members were, Johnnie Wheeler, Roy Drown, Bob Duke, Joe A. Bartles, Arthur Morgan, Charlie Rice, Mr. Crow, Charlie Keeler, Mose Hollingsworth and Cla Wilhite. Their suits were grey with navy lettering.

The postoffice had been moved from the Bartles store to Frank Cranes Drug Store, on the South side of the river, located on First street and Delaware Avenue. Dr. Stewart was appointed the first postmaster. In 1899 my

husband, Arthur Morgan, was appointed postmaster. At that time we had a fourth class office, I

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have his first certificate, signed by H. Emery Smith, Postmaster General.

When new Bartlesville was established on what is now Second street and located about three blocks west of the original location, the building, housing the Drug store and post office was moved to the new location of the town. It was then on Second street, the first door east of where the Maltby Hardware store now stands, on Second and Johnstone. It took three days to move the building. That was in 1902.

The Postoffice was next located in the rear of the first brick building, erected by Arthur Armstrong, at Second street and Dewey Avenue. It was then moved to Johnstone avenue, about the middle of the block between Third and Fourth streets, and later to Keeler avenue.

In 1930 or '31 a Federal Building was erected and the postoffice was moved to its present home. Mr. Morgan moved the postoffice each time, with the exception of the last two moves. His second appointment was in 1903 and

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I also have his certificate, signed by President Theodore Roosevelt. My husband ^{SERVED} the office of postmaster in Bartlesville for a period of ten years and when he went out of office, this was a second class office. Our oldest daughter, Ina, worked in the postoffice here for several years, then resigned to enter the John Hopkins Hospital, at Baltimore, Maryland, for nurses training, after her graduation, she worked in the hospital for a number of years.

The first bank to locate here was the Bartlesville National, and was in the first brick building erected here, at Second street and Dewey Avenue. Frank Bucher was the president of the bank.

Miller and Wilson operated a livery barn at the west end of Second street, on the north side, near Keeler avenue. This was a frame building. I have a picture of the livery barn.

In 1891 Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Drum. opened a studio in a tent and I have some photographs they took at that time. They moved to Pawhuska

and a few years later, returned to Bartlesville and established the leading studio here. After many years of service in this enterprise, they sold their business to Fred J. Hays, who now operates one of the most up-to-date studios at 327 Johnstone avenue. Mr. Drum departed this life several years ago. Mrs. Drum resides at 521 Jennings.

When Bartlesville began to expand, we built a new home at 401 Delaware avenue, where we lived for several years, then traded it to Frank M. Overlees for the home where I now live, at the north end of Santa Fe Avenue. At that time, my present home was in the country and was surrounded by a wheat field. A.C. Easter now lives in our old home on Delaware avenue. After we moved to the present location, we operated a green house for many years.

The Methodist church was organized in 1899, in a building located on the northeast corner of Fourth street and Delaware avenue

School was also held in this building and Miss Annis Bixler was the teacher. Miss Bixler later married John Johnstone, an active business man of Bartlesville, and brother of William Johnstone, builder of early day Bartlesville. Mrs. John Johnstone was active in church and social activities, in Bartlesville, until her death about four years ago.

Some of the early day Methodist preachers were, Rev. W. Innis Torbert, Rev. J.T. Riley and Rev. Smith. They preached at our church and also the rural churches of the community.

Some of the early day school teachers of Bartlesville were, Carrie ^{Armstrong} ~~Overlees~~, who became the wife of Frank Overlees, Albert Rupart, My sister, Alice Brooks-Wilson, and Miss Emma Holt of Kansas. Miss Ida Collins, of Kansas, was hired by the Government to teach the Indian children.

The first school house was built on the site of the present Garfield building, in 1897. This was a two room building, erected

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of native lumber. The enrollment soon outgrew the little building and three or four one room frame buildings were built on the same site, to meet the growing population. In 1904 the first brick school house was built at the present location of the Garfield school, Sixth street and Cherokee Avenue, and is known as the Garfield School.

My daughter, Nell, taught her first term at a little country school, west of Bartlesville on Sand Creek.

Bartlesville's first bastille was a little shack on Second street, later moved to Osage avenue, between First and Second streets, it was made of 2'X 6' planks, nailed together flatwise, and was built shortly after the arrival of the railroad.

The first occupants were a couple of fellows, who had lifted the lid, held down by the United States town marshals, in reference to liquor, and had acquired a generous jag, for which the two marshals threw them in the new

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jail. Along in the night one of the drunks awakened from his stupor, and realizing where he was, determined to leave the place. He saw no other out let, so decided to escape by way of the chimney. He accordingly mounted upon the stove, a coal heater, and pulling out the stove pipe, stuck his head into the hole. At that moment the stove fell down, leaving him hanging. His partner then saw him, apparently in trouble, and took hold of his feet with the intention of pulling him down. Somehow, his teeth caught on the side of the hole in the chimney, still his partner kept pulling and jerking. He could not make himself heard. Finally he was released from this uncomfortable position, but had two front teeth less as the result.

We had many entertainments in the old Keeler Hall, and I have an announcement of a "Midget Wedding" that was held, February 9, 1901. These announcements were sent out as invitations to the affair.

I have a programme of the first band concert held in Bartlesville, Indian Territory, February 22, 1896. The band was organized by Professor Nash, who came here as a school teacher, and later interested the townsmen in a cornet band. Some of those appearing on the programme were,:

Address of Welcome---Farry Jennings.

quartette composed of---BeBean, Byron, Brooks and

McQuillan, accompaniment Mrs. E.F. McQuillan.

Recitation---Miss Pearl Stokely, (First wife of.

Albert Rupart)

Recitation---Miss Mitchell, (now Mrs. Fred Woodard of Dewey, Oklahoma.)

quartette number---accompaniment Miss Jennie Cass,

(now Mrs. A.D. Morton of Tulsa.)

The first race track, that I recall, was located on the Harry Lannon place, now known as the Belle Meade Addition, in the southwest part of Bartlesville. Dr. Harrington built a race track at the north edge of town in about 1908.

My father was a Civil War Veteran, and served with the 4th. Missouri Cavalry, in the

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Union
Army. I was born during the Civil War.

My parents celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary at my home in Bartlesville.

I have a rolling pen, my father made for my mother and a coffee mill my mother bought when she started housekeeping. I also have the coffee mill that I started housekeeping with.

COMMENTS:

Mrs. Morgan is very interesting to talk and visit with. She was much pleased to give this story, for she enjoys telling her early experiences. She and her late husband helped to establish the town of Bartlesville. Mrs. Morgan has lived in Bartlesville since her arrival here in 1884, and has never lived outside of what is now the town of Bartlesville, however, her present home was at one time considered the country.

Mrs. Morgan is the mother of eight children, all born in Bartlesville. Four of these children are deceased and are all buried near Bartlesville.

Mrs. Morgan is a dear, (I won't say old lady,

~~For~~ she is active and looks young for her years),^o and is loved and respected by all who know her.^o

She is proud of the fact that her family, the Brooks' and her immediate family, have played a part in the building of the city of Bartlesville.