

## NOTES FROM THE DIARY OF SUSAN E. FOREMAN

By Linda Finley\*

## INTRODUCTION

Susan E. Foreman was the daughter of Reverend Stephen Foreman who lived in Park Hill, Cherokee Nation. She attended the Fayetteville Female Seminary, and, upon completing her education here, she taught the Cherokee neighborhood school at Webber's Falls beginning in 1862. Susan's diary is of interest not only because her notes are typical of almost any girl away at school, but also because she continued the tradition of education.<sup>1</sup>

A note on a rural historic project to preserve an old cemetery carried out by the Mt. Comfort Club of Washington County, Arkansas, was published in the *Ozark Mountaineer*, August, 1964. A reference to the Fayetteville Female Seminary is given as follows:

"A little-known burial at *Mt. Comfort* is that of *Sarah B. N. Ridge*. She was the wife of *John Ridge*, chief of the Cherokees, who was murdered in June, 1839, along with his father, *Major Ridge*, and his uncle, *E. C. Boudinot*, because of their consent to the removal of the Cherokees from Georgia and Tennessee to the Indian Territory. John Ridge had met and married Sarah Northrup when he was in school in New England. After his death, she moved her family to Fayetteville, Ark., where she later died. Her chief contribution to the history of northwest Arkansas was that she brought with her, when she moved to Arkansas, a missionary who had been teaching her children in the Indian Territory. This was *Sophia Sawyer*, who founded the Fayetteville Female Seminary, one of the series of schools that gave Washington County an educational reputation that some 30 years later resulted in the establishment of the state university of Fayetteville."

A copy of the diploma of Miss Mary E. Stone, the last graduate of Miss Sawyer's Seminary was sent to *The Chronicles* by the late Mrs. W. R. Holloway of Tulsa and appears here on

\*Linda Finley, a young writer of Dyersburg, Tennessee, makes this contribution of "Notes From The Diary of Susan E. Foreman" from the original diary now in the possession of her aunt by marriage, Mrs. W. T. Finley, of Bacone, Oklahoma. Mrs. Finley (Lulu Lips before her marriage) is the great granddaughter of Rev. Stephen I. Foreman, historically noted Cherokee minister before the Civil War.—Ed.

<sup>1</sup>The "Life of Miss Sophia Sawyer, Founder of the Fayetteville Female Seminary," by Carolyn Thomas Foreman, was published in *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, Vol. XXXII (Winter 1964-1965).

Miss Mary M. Stone  
Last Graduate

Fayetteville, Arkansas, July 4, 1861

Miss Mary M. Stone  
has completed the prescribed course of study at the  
**FAYETTEVILLE FEMALE SEMINARY,**  
and by her attainments and correct deportment is entitled to this

## Testimonial

Ms. Luerelia Lehmann, Principal

Miss Sophia Sawyer  
Founder—1829Miss Luerelia Foster  
Principal

[From print in (Misses) Museum]

### FAYETTEVILLE FEMALE SEMINARY, ARKANSAS

Print of the noted Seminary of Fayetteville, Arkansas, shown on the "Testimonial"—diploma—of Mary M. Stone who graduated at the beginning of the Civil War, 1861.

the opposite page. Mrs. Holloway noted that the photostat is from a small glossy print found in the "Peter Pitchlynn Papers" at Gilcrease Institute, Tulsa, Oklahoma, in April, 1957. On the reverse side of the print appears the following information: "William Quesenbury's sketch of Fayetteville Female Seminary, the only picture of that early institution which is known in existence, presented by William S. Campbell of Fayetteville, Arkansas, — Lucille Price Turner."

Susan Foreman's diary gives insight into the fear and upheaval caused by the Civil War among the Cherokees who themselves were divided into two factions — the Union side and the Confederate. The diary opens with a note on the classes taught by Miss Mary Daniels — physiology, algebra and history — all of these attended by Susan with the date September, 1860. The list of her classmates is given until January, 1861.

—The Editor

#### SUSAN FOREMAN'S DIARY

##### Female Seminary in Fayetteville, Arkansas

Physiology Class, Miss Mary Daniels, Teacher

Miss Mary Kate Anderson	Miss Cammie Lacey
Miss Nannie Bean	Miss Ann McColouch
Miss Mary Bingham	Miss Mary McColouch
Miss Sue Foreman	Miss Lilly Paine
Miss Mary Lou Lacey	Miss Helen Severs
Miss Mary Van Winkle	Miss Hattie E. West

"First part of Physiology not studied, commenced by Jan. 1st by:

Miss Mary Bingham	Miss Lou Lacey
Miss Sue Foreman	Miss Cammie Lacey

September 1860.

Fayetteville, Ark.

Miss Daniel's Algebra Class:

Miss Mary Bingham	Miss Coletia Stidham
Miss Sue Breausley	Miss Josephine Routh
Miss Sue Foreman	Miss Mary VanWinkle
Miss Mat Griffin	Miss Ellen VanWinkle

Finished in January, commenced reviewing. Finished by: Miss Mary Bingham.

Miss Mary Daniels History Class — Universal:

Miss Kate Anderson	Miss Emma Pope
Miss Emma Adams	Miss Maggie Routh
Miss Mary Bingham	Miss Rebecca Rags
Miss Sue Breausley	Helen Severs
Miss Cornelia Berthoff	Miss Mary VanWinkle
Miss Sue Foreman	Miss Hattie E. West

Mary Paine died at the Seminary Jan. 12, 1861.

Time is short, soon these happy days will have fled leaving only their memory fresh in our minds. Oh, how these days will be prized by us, when if we live to be older and see the need of the Education we are here trying to acquire. "Loved" teachers, schoolmates, friends soon will part. Part to meet no more, the chain that has bound us together for so long a time will soon be broken. Oh, may we live so that when we are called from earth, we may again meet in that bright & happier world when there is no more parting.

*Webber Falls School* — April 1862

Mon. 7th Had eight scholars today. From 9 to 10 teach little ones. From 10 to 11 hear arithmetic. Have recess 15 min., hear 2nd readers, grammar, small arithmetic, primary geography.

Tues. 8th Only seven scholars today.

Weds. 9th Only six scholars today.

Thurs. 10th Five scholars today.

Fri. 11th Rained all day today. Had no school.

The days are passing away a little more rapidly than at first. Speed on days you will soon get me home. They don't care for me at home, else they would write to me. I don't care, I shan't care for them a bit. If they would only write to me, let me see they had not forgotten me. I would be happy to take that never to be forgotten ride.

Sat. 12th Another dull, lonely day. A week today since I left home.

Sun. 13th Capt. Clarke came here today. I stayed home and read all day.

Mon. 14th Fourteen scholars today.

Tues. 15th Thirteen scholars today.

Weds. 16th Fifteen scholars today.

Thurs. 17th Fifteen scholars today.

Fri. 18th Fifteen scholars today.

Sat. 19th Miss Emma and Ella came to spend the night and part of the Sabbath. Two weeks today since I left home.

Sun. 20th Passed off very pleasantly.

Mon. 21st Another week began, my third one. Have sixteen scholars today.

- Tues. 22nd Had five new scholars today, making 24, 4 are sick. Met Mrs. Brewer today. She very kindly invited me to come to see her.
- Weds. 23rd. I have 21 scholars today, quite as many as I want.
- Thurs. 24th I have 20 today. B. is sick. Quite cloudy today.
- Fri. 25th Gladder still, today is the last day of the week. I have 21 scholars today. My third week gone.
- Sat. 26th Mrs. McDaniel died last night. I went down to see Mr. McDaniel and Mrs. Coodey & Lou.
- Sun. 27th Stayed home today and slept. Quite lonely today.
- Mon. 28th My 4th week began, I have 3 scholars today. Two months today since Brother was married. If I ever get forgiven for coming down here I'll never leave home again to teach school. Oh that time would fly a little faster, lessen my love for him.
- Tues. 29 I had 22 scholars today, 4 are sick.
- Weds. 30 I have 23 scholars today. Mrs. Drew came this morning.
- MAY Thurs. 1st. Sweet anniversary of other days, would I were a child again. Had 21 scholars today.
- Fri. 2nd Have 17 scholars today. Do not feel very well, shall close school early.
- Sat. 3rd Came home yesterday sick. I have the measles, am all broken out.
- Sun. 4th I feel some better today, the measles haven't all gone in yet.
- Mon. 5th I am not able to teach today, but sent word to my scholars to come tomorrow.
- Tues. 6th Have but 3 scholars this morning. I presume they do not know I am well.
- Weds. 7th I have so many trials today I will have to whip before long. Today heard Fannie Van was to be married.
- Thurs. 8th I have 17 today. How glad I would be if I knew they would send for me Friday.
- Fri. 9th Another week is about closing & I have not heard a word from home yet. I do not know what to make of it.
- Sat. 10th Passed a rather pleasant day today. Enjoyed myself finely, hope I did not do wrong.

- Sun. 11th Spent the day with Mrs. Vann visiting today. Took a ride.
- Mon. 12th Certainly does not care for me or he would have come & seen me. Well he has some one else to love, but that will not be. Got a letter from Pa this morning, Everts brought it.
- Tues. 13th 26 scholars today. Willie Drew brought such a pretty bunch of roses.
- Weds. 14 Everts came by today. I was so glad to see him, poor fellow, looked badly. I have 23 scholars today. I wish I didn't have any so I could go home.
- Thurs. 15th 26 scholars today. Just two months till school is out.
- Fri. 16th I have 23 today. Hope I shall go home next Friday.
- Sat. 17th Spent a very pleasant day. Went riding with E. & C., rode 4 miles.
- Sun. 18th Rather dull today. Felt chilly all day.
- Mon. 19th Here I am at school again. Very dull and lonely, just like my life.
- Tues. 20th It rained so hard I did not go to school today. Sewed all day.
- Weds. 21st The sun shone out in all his glory this morning. Have a few scholars.
- Thurs. 22nd The day has come but to disappoint me. I have 18 scholars today. The river is up.
- Fri. 23rd Another long week before I go home. It may be 6 more. Rainy & cold. Have 16 scholars. I had thought to have been on my way home.
- Sat. 24th Feel lonely and homesick today. Good deal of company here.
- Sun. 25th Mrs. Fowler and Hanks spent the day here, had a fine time, I did.
- Tues. 26th I have but 16 today. They are so irregular it puts me out of heart.
- Weds. 28th I have but 14 today. Two weeks since E was here.
- Thurs. 29th I have but few today. Fannie was married this eve. John came this eve. I'm going home.

*Park Hill, Okla.*

Fri. 30th Am at home today very tired and mad too.

Sat. 31st Company today, been busy all day.

*JUNE* Sun. 1st Went to church today. Met old friends.

Mon. 2nd Company again today. Finished my work.

Tues. 3rd Left home this morn at 8 o'clock, reached here about dark.

*Webber Falls School*

Weds. 4th Have six weeks to stay. Wish it were only 2, I'd be so glad. They will soon roll round. Have only 6 scholars today, others had left.

Thurs. 5th Have 12 scholars today. I am almost sick today, feel very badly.

Fri. 6th Capt. Clarke came today, I detest the man. 12 scholars again today, have 5 more Fridays to teach and then . . .

Sat. 7th Went down to Mrs. Hanks this afternoon. Spent the night with Ella Coodey.

Sun. 8th Came home this morning and went to hear preachings.

Mon. 9th Have 17 scholars today. Have a severe pain in my side.

Tues. 10th One week ago today since I left home. Brother John's birthday today. Feel a little better today.

Weds. 11th 17 scholars today. Wish I knew what to do. I wrote to Pa today to send for me.

Thurs. 12th I have 16 today. I feel a little better, but not well.

Fri. 13th Am invited to a party at Mrs. Vann's tomorrow night. I want to go though I know I'll act awkward there. I have only 4 more Fridays.

Sat. 14th 3 months since brother was married. Mr. Hanks spent the day here till time for us to go to Mrs. Vann's. Had a very pleasant time there, enjoyed myself finely.

Sun. 15th Ella came home with us last evening. We took a ride in the evening.

Mon. 16th Began my school duties again today. Have 18 today.

- Tues. 17th I have 19 today. Mrs. Morgan & Miss Holt visited the school today.
- Weds. 19th 19 today. This morning before I got here the boys had a fight. I whipped one little fellow.
- Fri. 20th I wonder if these next few days will be of joy or pain? 3 weeks ago this day since I went home.
- Sat. 21st I sat up today & sewed & then went to the party. Sat up till light, slept a little, came home & broke the Sabbath.
- Sun. 22nd Went to a dance & what would Pa say if he knew.
- Mon. 23rd Have 19 scholars today. Feel dull from Sat. dissepation.
- Tues. 24th Had 17 today. Wrote home by Mr. Chamberlain.
- Weds. 25th Have 19 today. Very warm & sultry.
- Thurs. 26th Another week is most gone. 18 again today.
- Fri. 27th I have only 13 today. Two more Fridays to stay here. Captain left us today for Park Hill.
- Sat. 28th We went to see Mrs. Brewer today. Got home after dark. Had a very pleasant day.
- Sun. 29th Em Hanks stayed all day with us today. Had a very pleasant time.
- Mon. 30th Monday morning again. Had 14 today. Quite a small school.
- JULY* Tues. 1st I have 16 today. 1st of July. My time here is growing short.
- Weds. 2nd Have a few scholars today. Have but one more Wednesday to stay here.
- Thurs. 3rd I have 18 today. Capt. Vore came and brought me a letter from Pappa this evening.
- Fri. 4th Heard today that Henry Vann was killed. Also that the Feds were at Park Hill.
- Sat. 5th Went to Mrs. Vann's saw Henry buried today. Poor fellow, how I pity them.
- Sun. 6th Stayed home all day. Ella came and stayed till evening.
- Mon. 7th I have 11 scholars today. 9 part of the day.



Tues. 8th I have 10 today. I shall only keep them till Friday. I have so few scholars closed school today. The days are flying rapidly by.

Weds. 9th Captain Vore & Clarke came last night say the Federals were in Tahlequah. Poor me what shall I do. I can't do anything down here.

Thurs. 10th Brother John came yesterday. Everyone is excited here.

Fri. 11th Capt. Vore & John started to Giboon yesterday.

Sat 12th Bid farewell to all my friends down here & start for home.

*Park Hill, Okla.*

Sun. 13th I am at home today. It seems so quiet here. I did not go to church today. How different from last Sunday.

Mon. 14th Been busy cleaning up today & putting things to rights. Wish I could hear Bob H. play the fiddle.

Tues. 15th What a day this has been! The Pins came and took our blacks and our horses and have threatened Pa's life. They say they are bound to have it tonight! They are all around here. They want John too. No one knows the distress I'm in and Pa . . .

Weds. 16th They did not come last night though, I sat up all night expecting them every minute. It was a fearfully long night. Today Charity and Mary talk of going. We poor children will be left all alone. Sarah came and stayed all day with us; The niggers are riding about today looking so saucy. They came and inquired of the blacks, where Pa and John are and when Pa will come in. It is terrible to be in such suspense and misery I endure. I am afraid of the niggers too. Nan's going to stay all night with me.

Thurs. 17th Everything seems to be quiet this morning. Have seen only one nigger pass. I do not feel in quite as much distress today. I'm in hopes that the Federals will get down today so that Pa can give himself up to them. My saddle and Pa's was taken last night from out the shop.

Fri. 18th I am in one continued dread and fear. I am so weak I can scarcely get about. I am in mortal suspense.

August 7th Day before yesterday was another wretched day. In the forenoon we heard that the Southerners were near here and the Pins were nearly scared to death. They all

ran. We rode out to see if it was really so. Saw no one, but heard that they went on to town with a white flag. Just about noon, Mitchell Landers with six men, came as hard as they could and inquired if we had seen any Southern soldiers and then asked where the man was that lived here. They rode on and pretty soon came back but did not stop. Found out that they supposed Pa had gone out to meet them and said if they got him, they would make him go another way. Yesterday the niggers all cut out. Report came that women and children must get out of the way, as they were expecting a battle that day. We packed all of our clothing out and hid them in the fields with other things as well as we could. Everything seems very still here this morning. Can't see or hear anything not a soul is passing. Still I know not how soon they may come and search the house, take Pa, and kill him, perhaps burn the house down. We are in a miserable condition, our lives or Pa's is not worth a straw. Oh, that help would come . . .

(Nothing else is entered in the diary until November.)

November, 1862 Arrived at the Creek Agency.

May 7, 1863 Left the Creek Agency.

May 8, 1863 Searched North Fork.

August 23, 1863 Left North Fork.

Oct. 1863 Left Tiahomingo.

Nov. 4, 1863 Searched Sulphur Springs.

Dec. 6, 1863 A beautiful day to those who can enjoy it, but I cannot. I have not the heart to enjoy anything. I am miserable, wretched, and almost tired of life. There is no enjoyment, no pleasure for me, nothing but a life of trouble and toil, before me. No bright future for me. One week after another passes away . . .

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Susan Foreman with her father and brother traveled on down into Texas where she later died among the refugees from the Cherokee Nation.