

HUSEMEYER, ELLEN HELBERG. * INTERVIEW

10095

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

HUSEMEYER, ELLEN HELBERG. INTERVIEW. 10095.

Field Worker's name Louise S. Barnes.

This report made on (date) February 11, 1938. 1938

1. Name Ellen Helberg Husemeyer.

2. Post Office Address Watonga, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) 1/2 mile east of Watonga.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month January Day 1 Year 1878.

5. Place of birth Bergen near Celle, Provinz Hanover, Germany.

6. Name of Father Charles Helberg. Place of birth Hanover, Germany.

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Augusta Helberg. Place of birth Hanover, Germany.

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 _____.

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Louise S. Barnes,
February 11, 1938.
Investigator.

Interview With Ellen Husemeyer,
Watonga, Oklahoma.

I was born on January 1, 1878, and came with my parents at the age of fifteen from Germany March 23, 1893. My father, Mr. Helberg, had come from Germany in 1892 and homesteaded a claim in the Cheyenne and Arapaho opening located two and one-half miles north of Watonga. He then returned to Germany and brought his family back with him to America; he was an American and a scout with Buffalo Bill; also helped to survey Nebraska, Wyoming and last but not least Oklahoma.

There were seven children with Father and Mother to make this trip from Germany; we came from near Provinz Hanover, Germany. We left March 6, 1893, and embarked at Brenner Haun on the ship Lohn; we arrived at New York in five days and nineteen hours from the time we left. We stayed there one day and from there went to Washington, D. C., and stayed four days at the Hotel Statler while Father had his pension adjusted; from there we started to

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Wichita, Kansas, and visited several days there with relatives; then went to Kingfisher on the train and stayed there a few days and bought the furniture for the homestead where Father had built a small home before he returned ^{to Germany for} his family. On the second day, early in the morning, we loaded up the furniture and our other provisions we had bought in Kingfisher and started for our new home. When we arrived on the homestead at six o'clock we were very hot and tired, because we were not used to the weather. We upset our wagon while crossing one of the creeks and spilled everything in the wagon, and it was so hot we walked up the way while the men were trying to get things loaded so we could continue to our home. There were no roads and the prairie was not any too good on our old German shoes. The prairie had been burned and it looked terrible to us, who knew nothing of these things. We had just gotten home when a storm came up; it was a regular downpour, and Father had to find milk for my baby brother and had started to the closest neighbor to see if he could get some, and had gotten lost. Mother knew he had gotten lost because he was gone so long and placed a light in a window, so he could find his way back.

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As soon as we had settled we bought posts and wire and hired men to put the fence up; we also had a well drilled for water. The neighbors were glad to work, they put the fence up for three cents a post and the posts were bought for five cents each and were cedar. We had twenty-five acres of sod broke, paying \$1.25 an acre for this work; then we planted it to corn, beans, and watermelons, but we did not know how to use the watermelons, for we had never seen any before. We bought twelve head of cattle, five of which were milk cows, so had plenty of milk and butter.. We bought several head of horses to do the farming with; then hired a man to help and hauled lumber from Kingfisher to build a barn, which still stands. We built a cow and hog shed and fenced ten acres hog-tight and got some hogs and started farming.

Father's health failed him and he died in 1894, because he was not used to the climate; Mother died ten months afterwards, 1895, and this left me at the head of the family, as I was the oldest. I continued with the farming and rearing the smaller children; then was married in 1900 to Henry Husemeyer. I still own the home and also

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a part of my husband's homestead, it was Indian land. We were married May 2, 1900, and moved on the homestead in Lincoln Township, Blaine County, and at that time it was like going to a new country. We built our home and fences and drilled our wells. We had twenty head of cattle and we began to farm on a large scale; we farmed lots of Indian land and had it all in fence. Corn, cotton, feed, oats and all kinds of grain sorghum were raised. When the first Indian land was sold we bought a half-section and farmed there until 1914; then we bought a farm close to Watonga and I live there now, since the death of my husband in 1930.