

SINNARD, MARY M.

INTERVIEW

4333

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BIOGRAPHY FORM  
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION  
Indian Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma 4333

SINNARD, MARY M. INTERVIEW.

Field Worker's name Maude M. Fink

This report made on (date) June 8, 1937.

1. Name Mary M. Sinnard

2. Post Office Address Clinton, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) 700 South 10th Street.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: nth January Day 26 Year 1875

5. Place of birth Linn County, Missouri.

6. Name of Father A. L. Craple Place of birth Pennsylvania.

Other information about father Railroad Man.

7. Name of Mother Elizabeth Angle Place of birth Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Other information about mother Music Teacher.

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. Mary M. Sinnard, Clinton.

By - Maude M. Fink - Interviewer.

June 8, 1937.

Mr. and Mrs. Sinnard came from Missouri to Guthrie and in 1912 to Arapaho. They bought their lumber to build on their claim in Weatherford. Bill Blakley freighted lumber for them. They lived seven miles west and one-half mile north of Arapaho.

There was nothing at Arapaho then except board shacks. There were fourteen saloons in little shacks. You could drive for miles and never pass a house. The only way you could tell when you passed a dugout would be by the smoke coming out of the ground.

Mr. Sinnard built a one-room house 14 by 18 feet. Mrs. Sinnard would not live in the ground. She had heard about those big spiders and centipedes which crawled around in the dugouts.

They had to haul their drinking water from miles away, and in hot weather the water would get so hot that they could hardly drink it so they put it in the cellar to keep cool. Mrs. Sinnard told of a little incident when one day she went down into the cellar after some water and turned and looked back and there was a large

snake laying on the steps licking its tongue out. She called her husband and he killed it.

They lived two and one-half miles from the school house where their little six year old child had to go. The school house was a dugout with two logs on top, with a sod roof. They had home-made benches and desks, made out of rough logs which had been taken down to the saw-mill and split.

The year before, Rosie Gallian taught school under a big elm tree. School was held only in warm weather; when a cloud came up school was dismissed. The school house was between two creeks. Children had to ford the creek to get home, but parents usually went after them on horseback. The chalk that they used was just burnt gyp rock. The blackboard was just the wall painted black; sometimes it had large holes in it. Katie Fletcher was the teacher. They just studied readers. The children were not graded; they did not have reports at all. Later on, at Sunny Side School, they began to grade the pupils.

The cattlemen did not want this country to be settled up. Mr. Sinnard had running water on his place so they tried to run him off. The first fence that Mr.

Sinnard put around his place the cattlemen cut it down. If you tried to stop them they would kill you. One day a cattleman asked Mr. Sinnard what he would do if there was a sign on his door for him to leave by daylight. Mr. Sinnard answered that he would stay there. But they never did put the sign there. Mr. and Mrs. Sinnard's house was built with gables. The cattlemen would come at night and shoot through these gables. They did this in order to make them leave.

Little boys, twelve and thirteen years old, would carry a gun and a bottle of whiskey.

If a man shot another man they would fine him \$10.00 or \$15.00 and turn him loose. There was one Justice of Peace and they could buy him off.

There were no bridges, not even a board across the streams. Mrs. Sinnard has crossed Barnett Creek with the water running into the wagon bed. The Washita River was much deeper than it is now. People have plowed the land and it has washed down into the river bed filling it up.

The first sod crop was kaffir corn. They would plow and plant at the same time. They had regular sod

plows to do the work. The next year they planted cotton. When they picked it every stem was gotten out. They had good seasons. They broke the sod and planted water-melons. They raised large ones and by the car-loads. They could not give them away, all their neighbors had some so they fed them to their hogs and cattle.

They did not have church nor Sunday School. Every body was poor; they did not have money to pay the preacher.

The furniture was common. Clothes were in style all the time; they never got out of style. Everybody wore the clothes that they had.

Letters would lie in the post office for two weeks at a time before they would be delivered. The people who worked at the post office could not read the addresses.

They had a stage coach from El Reno, then after Clinton was formed they had trains; the trains were small.

Mrs. Sinnard still has her deed to the land which she and Mr. Sinnard homesteaded.