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BOLTON, S.A. (MRS) INTERVIEW

4594

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

Field Worker's name Jessie M. Thompson

This report made on (date) June 21, 1937

1. Name Mrs. S. A. Bolton

2. Post Office Address Hollis

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

5. Place of birth _____

Mrs. Bolton is eighty-one years old.

6. Name of Father _____ Place of birth _____

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother _____ Place of birth _____

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 suggestions on subjects and questions. Continue on blank sheets if necessary and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached _____

Josie M. Thompson,
Interviewer
June, 21, 1937.

A PIONEER WOMAN
Mrs. S. A. Bolton of
Hollis, Oklahoma.

My father lived in Whitney County, Kentucky. We moved from there to Franklin County, Arkansas, then to Montague County Texas and to Hollis in 1895. We are still living in Hollis.

We left Montagus County in wagons: we had six children, two wagons and two pair of good mules, five cows and some loose stock, we also brought some chickens, and our furniture but it wasn't much. We came to Quanah Texas and forded Red River there for there were no bridges, and then we traveled on and on down the trail for that was all the road we had. When meal time came we would stop and cook our victuals over the camp fire in iron pots and skillets. We would probably have a leg of an antelope or some wild turkey or quail, which was very good. While we were cooking our meal we would let the stock graze around for the grass was good.

After an all day's drive we arrived at the place that was to be our home, which is two miles north of what is the town of Hollis now. We did not file, for a man by the name

of A. Y. Williams had filed and we got the place from him.

The camp was soon started and all were busy getting our half dugout started. We built two dugouts, one for the kitchen and one for a place to sleep. These just had covers; they had no wood floors.

The next thing was to get water of some kind and in some way, so the men dug a well by hand. And the water they got was pure gyp which was not good in any sense of the word. The water had to be drawn up in buckets for the stock as well as for household purposes and later we got a crank and rope and we could wind the crank and draw water that way, which was a great help.

In 1897 we raised eight bales of cotton and hauled it to Quanah which was our trading post and we received four cents per pound for it. We also raised millet and sorghum.

For food we had our chickens and cows so you see we had eggs and milk and butter. We made hominy, using wood ashes for the lye. Then we could go out and kill quail, wild turkey, antelope and deer. And we also raised sweet potatoes. To cook the potatoes we would bury them in hot ashes at night to bake and the next morning they were fine.

The cooking vessels we used were not like those of today. We had everything iron.



As to the wild things we had plenty, of wild antelope, wolves and deer. We could stand in our yard and see as many as eight or nine antelope in a bunch.

The rattlesnakes were to be dreaded for they were very poisonous and there were a great many of them. One time a child was sent out to get the turkeys in, and a rattlesnake bit him and he died right soon. There were no doctors closer than Quanah or Mangum. Mangum was forty miles away and Quanah was farther.

Quanah, Texas was the place where we got our supplies. We would gather up a load of buffalo bones and take it with us to trade for supplies such as flour bought by the barrel, sugar, coffee, and clothing. I would go once a year to get clothing and I well remember getting at one time, one whole bolt of brown domestic which cost three cents a yard and calico at two and one-half cents and I got some real nice calico for five cents to be used for our best dresses. Now those bones which we took brought eight dollars a ton. It took us three days to make the trip.

I remember that the people on the homesteads up north of us across the river would make the journey to our house and camp the first night so they could get water there as water was a problem. One time a crowd camped there in our yard

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and I gave them a big bucket full of clabbered milk to make bread, and I remember how glad they were to get it.

We got our mail from Mangum and when one person went he took a list of all the folks around and got their mail. Then probably next time some one else would go and do the same thing. Our first post office was called the Witt post office and stood about two miles southeast of where Hollis is now. In about 1892 a man by the name of Hollis came and put in a little store where Hollis now stands and that is how this place got its name. Sometime after that the post office was moved here.

This was then Greer County, Texas, and until Oklahoma gained it in 1896. Greer County consisted of what is now Greer County Oklahoma, part of Jackson County and all of Harmon County.

There were not many amusements, only hay riding, singing and Sunday School in the homes. There were no churches. The Baptist Church at Bearden, ten or twelve miles south of us, was the first church here. Then later one was organized at Sandy, seven or eight miles west of us.

Of course there were no schools at this time. The first school that was here was organized by C. D. Edwards.

To get enough children to start a school, it was necessary to have a piece of land, eight miles square. The school was later moved to Hollis.

Many people came, few stayed, others went back to where they came from and later came back to Oklahoma. This land where we settled was in what was called the old Teacross Ranch.*

A boy by the name of Combs was riding the pastures when the horse fell and broke the boy's neck. This started the first cemetery.

*Doubtless this was the T-Cross Ranch - Ed.