

NORTON, KITTY

INTERVIEW

#8442

374

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

Field Worker's name Thad Smith Jr.

Report made on (date) August 25 1937

Name Mrs. Kitty Norton

Post Office Address Chickasha

Residence address (or location) 502 So. 15th Street

DATE OF BIRTH: Month January Day 1 Year 1874

Place of birth Missouri

Name of Father Isaac V. Jones Place of birth _____

Other information about father Buried in Kansas

Name of Mother Margaret Humphrey Place of birth _____

Other information about mother Buried in Missouri

es or complete narrative by the field worker dealing with the life and story
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
sets attached _____.

NORTON,

KITTY

INTERVIEW

8442

Interview with Mrs. Kitty Norton
Chickasha, Oklahoma

My father, sisters, brothers and I were in Colorado, when we heard of the opening of old Oklahoma.

We loaded our belongings into a covered wagon and headed for the Indian Territory, early in the year of 1889.

When we got to the Panhandle of Oklahoma, our team gave out. They were so poor that we had to stop and feed them up a bit before moving on. My father saw that we would never be able to get there in time for the run, so we took our time, and we did not get to old Oklahoma until the fall of 1889.

My father kept looking for some one whom he could buy out cheap and he found a fraction of land of about sixty acres, located on the North Canadian River, which had not been filed on, so he filed on it and built a log house close to the river.

My father freighted our supplies from Kansas taking several days to make the trip.

He worked for the neighbors, whenever he could get work, and left my oldest brother, who was then thirteen years old, at home to break land. The land was broken with a rod, iron pulled in a hole of oxen.

After the weather got cold, and there was not any work to be had at home, my father and brother went to the Chickasa Nation, close to where Chickasha now is, and got jobs from C. L. Campbell gathering corn. They gathered corn nearly all winter and my father, finding a good piece of land that he could rent there, decided to sell his relinquishment and move near Chickasha which he did.

Bob Jewell was the man my father sub-rented the land from. Mr. Jewell had a five year lease on a lot of land and he let my father have one hundred acres.

The place was not improved, and my father made a dugout on the bank of the Washita River. He covered the

NORTON,

KITTY

INTERVIEW

8442

3

dugout with a framework of poles, and put grass on top of the framework. The grass on all bottom land then was from four to six feet tall.

My father and brother made a good crop of corn, possibly sixty bushels to the acre.

We had only two teams, a yoke of oxen and a team of horses. The oxen were used to pull the wagon in the field when the corn was gathered.

Our corn was sold to the Sweringer brothers, to feed cattle. The Sweringer brother were big cowmen and fed lots of cattle in the feed pen during the winter.

The next year which was 1891, my father rented some land from Jim Speed, an inter-married citizen and we lived in a two roomed box house that had a big hallway between the rooms. The rooms were made of one by twelve cottonwood boards and walls instead of being stripped were daubed. The floors were one by twelve cottonwood boards and the roof was covered with clapboards.

NORTON,

KITTY

INTERVIEW

8442

4

We had a little one room log house in the yard that we used to cook in. We got our water out of a shallow dug well close by.

The farm which my father rented from Jim Speed was fenced with ribbon wire.

We raised a good crop of corn that year which was sold to the Sweringer brothers. The corn was kept in a crib made of poles. The roof was made of hay.

The next year, 1892, my father planted another crop of corn on the same land and later the same year Jim Speed sold the land my father was farming, to be staked off into a townsite, and my father sold his lease for the corn which he had grown and the corn was cut down and the city of Chickasha was laid out.

I have seen a good many full blood Indians, members of different tribes who did not know each other's language could talk together by making signs with their hands.

In 1893, I married George D. Norton, and we moved onto a farm one and a half miles southeast of Minnehah.

NORON,

KITTY

INTERVIEW

8442

5

We got the lease from Bob Thompson.

In the winters whenever we killed hogs, we saved all the hog hair to mix with mud and whenever we plastered our chimney or chinked cracks in a log house, the hog hair would keep the mud from falling apart after it was dry.

This was the general custom in our neighborhood.

In 1900, my husband leased a big pasture northwest of Chickasha from Green Taylor and here we pastured lots of Texas cattle as well as our own.