

HARLAN, HARRIET

INTERVIEW

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Field Worker Hattie Lee Burns,
August 2, 1937.

Interview with: Mrs. Harriet Harlan,
Fairland, Okla.

THE LITTLE SOLDIER.

I was born twelve miles north of Muscatine, Iowa, June 13, 1850. My father, David Shoe, was born in Pennsylvania of Dutch parents. My mother, Hannah Evans, was also born in Pennsylvania but she and father were married in Ohio near Cleveland, later coming to Iowa.

We left Iowa the fall I was seven years old. Father sold all of his stock before leaving and we traveled by boat down the Mississippi to Saint Louis and then up the Missouri to what is now Kansas City. We would tie up and camp along the way. One night, my sister, brother and I were gathering wood for a fire when we found a man's hat; soon we came upon the coat and then found his body lying under a tree with the flesh gone- just the bones there.

Life in Kansas.

My father stopped in what is now Kansas City and father, who was a blacksmith, had a shop there for a short time at the time that the Shawnees and Wyandottes were living nearby. We stayed there one winter and till May

of the next year, when father moved to near Florence where he began to farm. Mother's youngest brother, Andy, was with us and helped father in the shop in Kansas City and came on to Florence with us.

Civil War Days.

Father was not a strong man and so was not able to join the army. My oldest brother joined Company C. 11th Kansas Infantry. My youngest brother, really too young to join, enlisted in the Militia.

We had frequent visits from both sides and when the Gray Coats asked father anything, he would tell them he was a Democrat. However to join them you had to pass a physical examination which father could not. The other side took anything, even boys and old men and when approached by them father would say, "I'm just an old man, not able to do anything." The first time the Blue Coats stopped at our house they killed all mother's chickens and then forced her to lend them a kettle in which to cook the chickens.

Quantrill.

My mother's father was Elijah Evans and mother had an elder sister named Emily Rhoda. My mother went with her and Quantrill's father to near Cleveland, Ohio, on a trip, where

they were married. Our mothers being sisters: ~~with~~ Robert Evans Quantrell and myself own cousins. They lived in Jackson County, Missouri, and his father died when quite young, leaving him to care for a widowed mother.

At the beginning of the war, the Blue Coats came to their home. They threw my aunt, who was sick, together with her bed out into the sleet and snow. She died from the exposure, leaving a young son who was very bitter and who decided that he would do everything possible to get even with them. Quantrell joined the army at Olathe, Kansas. Cousin Bob, of course, was at our house often. Sometimes he would spend the night with us, and sometimes stop for a meal. Again, perhaps would slip in and be there a very short while.

A widow named Edwards lived near Florence, and a Baptist preacher had a mortgage on her home for five hundred dollars. He (the preacher) came to her home one day in February and demanded the money and she told him that she could not pay him and asked him to give her time as she had small children. He refused and told her that he would be there the next morning at nine o'clock and if she did not have the money, he would put her out. That night Cousin Bob came to our house to see us as he was passing through and Mother asked him to stay all night but he said

that he could not. Later she told him what this preacher had done and asked him if he could help the widow. He studied a while and then smiled and said "If you will take care of Ribbon and me, I'll see." I was only a small child then and he called me Wasp. I spoke up and said, "Cousin Bob, if you will stay, I take care of Ribbon." That night while he slept I sat in the door all night and held the reins of the horse. This horse was trained until she could scent danger and you could tell from her actions when there was danger. Later she was shot from under him and he never ceased grieving for her. Later he rode a Claybank named Bess but he never cared for her as he did for Ribbon. He gave another five hundred dollars and told her to take it and give it to the widow and tell her to pay the man when he came the next morning, and to demand the return of her mortgage, which she did. Knowing the time that the man was supposed to call on the lady, he left our house and waited for him. As the preacher left her home he took the money that the lady had just paid from him. A week later, he was at the house again and his pocket was so full of something that it was bulging and I asked him what he had in his pocket, he replied, "We dived into a store the other

night and here are some ribbons for your dolls, Wasp."

There were ribbons of many sizes and all colors. "That's for holding Ribbon the other night," he said.

The Burning of Lawrence.

The women folks of the James, the Youngers and the Quantrell kinfolks had been placed for safety in a brick house in Lawrence and they had stationed pickets around the house. In some way, the other side had found a way to undermine the house with powder, and when it exploded some of them were killed and others wounded. The burning of Lawrence was in retaliation for this.

Cousin Bob, with eighty men, was camped near our house when the other side with a large force came up and camped for supper near the house. Father managed to get word to Cousin Bob and he and his men slipped away without being discovered and went ahead to Lawrence, gathering more men as they went.

There was a regiment, or eleven hundred men there, and Pa had thirty acres of corn cut and shocked. They fed all of it to their horses that night. Later that night, they forced Pa to go with them and show them the road to Lawrence.

Not very far from our house the road forked in three directions and not knowing what the soldiers intended to do with Pa, and being afraid that they would kill him, I went along in my gown and barefooted. It was a clear frosty night, and they tried to get me to go back but I wouldn't. After they reached the three forks and Pa told them the way they told him that he could go back home.

I was called the "Little Soldier" and no matter where Pa went, I went along. I do not know what I could have done, but I thought I could help him.

It was but a few hours till we heard the sound of guns and saw the smoke of burning buildings in Lawrence. Cousin Bob did not lose a man but many were killed on the other side. In history this is called, "The Lawrence Raid."

My brother, who joined the army, had first tried to join the Confederates but to join them you had to pass a physical examination and be twenty-one years of age. He was minus a kneecap so they would not take him, then he angrily told them that he would join the Blue Coats and help them whip the Confederates. This was John Shoe who in later years was the first man to strike lead at Galena, Kansas.

None of our family were killed in the War and we did not have much stock to lose as father had sold it when we left Iowa and had never bought much.

The War was not so bad as pictured by some as they never killed a man unless they were ordered to do so. Even the pickets of the two armies were friends and I have known them to exchange chews of tobacco. The bush-whackers had no principles, for they used the War as an excuse to take anything that they wanted. Captain Jim Lane was called, "Feather-bed Thief Lane." I have seen him with several feather beds strapped on to his saddle at one time.

The Northern soldiers were called "Federals," "Blue-coats," and sometimes the "Union Men." We were called "Rebels," "Graycoats" or Confederates."

Later Years.

We moved from Florence to Columbus, Kansas, April 1, 1865. I had gone to school at Florence and started to school at Emporia when the folks moved and mother wanted me to come along. As I was home from Emporia I did, and after they got down here mother wanted me to stay. I did and though my clothes and trunk were at Emporia I never even went back for them.

Father rented a place on Shoal Creek near where Galena is now and here I met the man I married, David L.

Harlan, a Cherokee Indian, whose father, David Harlan, Sr., had been Chief when he brought the Immigrants and Old Settlers here. They had settled on Spring River at the mouth of Shoal Creek. We were married at Enterprise, now Joplin, Missouri, June 16, 1866.

Harvest was on and my father-in-law wanting my help to cook did not want us to leave so we remained there some weeks. I was anxious to have a home of my own and insisted on it, so my father-in-law said one day, "All the horses are busy and if you move you will have to take Paddy and Buck, the two oxen. We loaded in my clothes and trunk; mother gave me a dozen hens and a rooster and I got my bedding, among which was a blue and white wool cover that I had woven when I was fourteen. Here she added, "when I was weaving that I was so proud that I could do it myself that I told them that some day that would be written in history.")

Our house was of hewed logs and very nice. One room, 16' x 18', and a shed kitchen. Here our first three children, Della, Willie and Laura, were born. After we moved to ourselves father gave me a mare and a cow, and my husband had a mare. I liked my home but as my husband

was away so much I was lonesome and the wolves would howl around so that the first time I went home I told my sister, younger that she had to come and stay with me, and she did.

An Eventful Ride.

In February after we were married, my husband wanted some iron wedges sharpened to split timber and I offered to take them to the blacksmith's shop in Baxter Springs. Frank Barnett, who was the husband of Samantha Hillen, now lives here in Fairland, and he owned the first blacksmith shop in Baxter Springs.

I took the short cut by the old Baxter Springs and as I rode up the hill my mare began to snort. When I reached the top of the hill, there hanging to a limb on a big cottonwood at the spring, were three bodies. I got off my horse and led her up to the tree, and there I saw the bodies of Jim, George, and Joe Mercer; their coats, hats, shoes, or rather boots were gone, and lying on the ground was the body of Nick Gillett, their cousin. They had been shot. I went on to Baxter and told Frank Barnett and he gathered some men together and they went and got the

bodies. I learned afterwards they were shot by a supposed Vigilante Committee who claimed that they were gathering up and branding too many cattle. Afterwards at a dance I saw a man wearing the boots of Jim. I knew them as they were stitched in an unusual way.

We remained at our first home five years, then we bought out Harlan Hears and moved on the old place. When it was found that the Cherokees could not hold the land in what is now southern Kansas we sold our place and located south of here towards Hickory Grove. We took our land south of Chetopa and here I lived after my husband left, and till my youngest son James Rondal Harlan (called Cude) began to play professional ball and could not be at home.

Sometime before this I had gotten a divorce and later married Pierce McClain. This was forty-eight years ago. He only lived a year ^{and} eight months, so I went to work six miles south of Chetopa and worked for many years.

I have owned three restaurants and worked in them at Galena, Picher, Bluejacket, Vinita, Adair and Big Cabin.

I clerked for five years in a store at Pensacola, and worked in the Osage country five years. I came here

thirteen years ago to be with my daughter, Della, who was in poor health.

Eleven years ago, my former husband, David Harlan, broken in health came here to my daughter's and I took care of him the last four years of his life. He died here seven years ago last February, 15.th.