

PEMBERTON, ZEL:

INTERVIEW

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Form A-(S-149)

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BIOGRAPHY FOR

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Louise S. Barnes

This report made on (date) October 27, 1937

1. Name Mrs. Zeda Pemberton
2. Post Office Address Kingfisher, Oklahoma
3. Residence address (or location) \_\_\_\_\_
4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year 1874
5. Place of birth Brown County, Kansas

Early day school teacher.

6. Name of Father \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_  
Other information about father \_\_\_\_\_
7. Name of Mother Margaret Lilly 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 suggested subjects and questions. Continue on blank sheets if necessary and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached \_\_\_\_\_

Louise S. Barnes,

Investigator,

October 27, 1937.

Interview with Mrs. Zeda Pemberton  
Kingfisher, Oklahoma

Zeda Pemberton was born in Brown County, Kansas,  
in 1874.

She moved to Oklahoma with her mother, Margaret  
Lilly, October 1, 1890.

There were seven in the family. They came on  
the train bringing their furniture with them in the  
car. When they first arrived on the train they made  
their homes in the hotel in Kingfisher, which was  
usual for most of the early settlers to do when they  
arrived.

They tried to rent a house. There were plenty  
of houses to be rented but they were only of one room  
and were very roughly built. They had to rent three  
of these small houses in order to have room for their  
beds and furniture they had brought from Kansas.

When it rained the furniture had to be moved  
around to the places where the roof would not leak.

Mrs. Pemberton's sister and brother built homes  
on farms and her mother built a three room home in

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Kingfisher. This house looked like a mansion at that time.

The first schools were held in private homes, basements of churches, or anywhere they could find room. It was on February 2, 1891, that they started their first school, which lasted three and one-half months. There were seven teachers, five in South Kingfisher and two in North Kingfisher. They used wooden benches and any kind of paper, books and supplies.

The first school Mrs. Pemberton taught was in an old store building in North Kingfisher. There were sixty-six pupils, all races and all subjects.

The teachers were all examined before they could teach. These examinations were held in the old court house, the Central Hotel now, by the County Superintendent, J. H. Parker.

The first school house built in North Kingfisher was a two room building, boxed up. South Kingfisher held school in the basement of the churches for some time.

The school boards were appointed by the County Superintendent. The County Normal teachers, as they were called, attended a two to six weeks training school after each term of teaching, this continued for several years. Mrs. Pemberton has the picture of the first school house built in North Kingfisher.

The social life of all the communities was centered around the church and school life. Mrs. Pemberton says they had wonderful "Literaries" and some real entertainments. She taught school eight years, four in the country school. She says she has seen so many people at these "Literaries" on Literary night that she thought the walls of the building would be pushed out.