

HUGHES, PEARL

INTERVIEW

#8700

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

Field Worker's name Zaidis B. Bland

This report made on (date) September 27, 1937

1. Name Mrs. Pearl Hughes

2. Post Office Address Altus, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) 411 North Spurgeon Street

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month February Day 2 Year 1890

5. Place of birth Texas

6. Name of Father John Stewart Place of birth Alabama

Other information about father \_\_\_\_\_

7. Name of Mother Helena Malone Place of birth Alabama

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 7

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Interview with Mrs. Pearl Hughes  
411 North Spurgeon Street,  
Altus, Oklahoma.  
Interviewer -- Zaidee B. Bland  
September 27, 1937.

I was so young that I cannot remember much about our coming to Oklahoma, except that we came a long ways on a train and my sister had a bird in a cage which was a lot of trouble. We lived a long long time in a tent and my father's house was the first lumber house in Hobart, Oklahoma, and many people came to look at it. We only lived in town a little while as my father was contesting a claim. As soon as it was decided in his favor we moved five miles in the country. This was about 1900.

Our farm lay between the Elk Rivers and they often overflowed. I have seen the waters of these rivers or creeks meet often, and our alfalfa patch usually took one ducking a year, if not more,

Ours was a farm on which father tried to consume everything raised on the land by feeding it to the stock of some kind.

He always said there was more money in selling things that could be driven to market than in corn or

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cotton. We raised a lot of sweet potatoes and everything that grew, or that one could eat out of the garden. We always had a lot of turkeys, pigs and chickens to sell. That was our money crop, besides alfalfa hay and sweet potatoes.

One evening we were setting out sweet potato slips when we noticed an unusually black cloud which looked as if it were boiling or rolling toward the center. As we had put out a wash we quit work and hurried toward the house. Just as we got in the yard Father drove up in the wagon (I can't remember where Father had been). The storm struck, and we never got the door shut. Father didn't get to the house. He laid down and grabbed a post to keep from blowing away. The house was lifted off of the blocks and turned around before it was set down. All the furniture was thrown into the middle of the room and the clothes, dishes, and our books were scrambled and blown out of the doors and windows. The hail was as


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large as a turkey egg and came through the roof as if it were paper. We were so frightened that we hardly knew what we were doing, but kept trying to go to papa. We had one older brother with us in the house and as fast as we girls would get to the door to go out he would push us back. Sister had just gotten a new spring coat, and we always declared she threw it out in the rain as it was found on the outside of the house hopelessly ruined with the muddy water and beating which the hail had given by beating it into the ground.

We had a little pet colt that was the cutest thing and he ran at once for papa and lay down by papa on the ground and remained unhurt, while every other horse on the place was blown into the wire, and had the hide knocked off by the wire or was injured in some way. We had traded a sow for this colt and raised him from the time he was only a few days old, right with us. He all but stayed in the house with us.



This storm was May the tenth, but I cannot remember the year. We watched out for black clouds after that. We have had the roof blown off the house and out-buildings wrecked since by the wind and rain, but that was the worst storm we ever had. I think it must have been a real cyclone, only people were not used to naming storms in the pioneer days.

We had more fun drowning out badgers than any sport I know. They were very bad and destructive in the sandy soil and we waged continual war against them. The little badger pups were the cutest things, and we were always keeping one for a pet.

We raised one to be grown once and he became such a nuisance that one Fall when we were going to Hobart to the fair, Papa persuaded us to take him for he never could be trusted not to catch chickens. We sold the badger for \$5.00 at the fair. He was very hard to catch when he knew he had done wrong. He was chasing a chicken one day when father was digging a well.

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When the chicken got to the hole he flew over but Mask (that was the badger's name) tumbled right in, down on Papa's head. It was not very funny for Papa.

We had an old red cow that was mean and contrary. She had sharp horns and could make any of us run and seemed to enjoy doing it. One night I was milking her and my uncle was doing the feeding. He came to give Reddy some more feed, and it seemed to make her mad. She kindly reached her horns out and hooked Uncle by the seat of the breeches and raised him into the air. Uncle hollered "LORDY HELP HELP!" I jumped up and spilled the milk and began running for the fence to get to the house for help when his breeches ripped and he fell to the ground. She would not let me milk her again that night but would kick at me every time.

One year we raised so many turkeys that they roosted all over the sheds and wagon and plows. So early in

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the Fall Father began to take a load of turkeys everytime the wagon went to town. A merchant to whom he often sold, took a big old gobbler home with him about three weeks before Thanksgiving. A lot of people bought turkeys early wanting to feed them dry feed for a while before butchering them, thinking the meat better than when they were right off the range. This man lived about five blocks from an uncle of mine; a brother of Papa's.

Several weeks later Papa took a bale of cotton to town, I believe he was late in getting it ginned, so he drove up to Uncle's to spend the rest of the night. The next morning when he went out, there sat a big turkey on the wagon. On examining him for a marked toe that dad always used on his birds dad found that it was one that had been raised by us. He panned him and drove by the merchant's place and asked about his turkey and found that the turkey had gotten out and been gone several days but he knew the old wagon and went to roost on it when he found it.