

ROBRECHT, EMMA.

INTERVIEW

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

ROBRECHT, EMMA

INTERVIEW

9832

Field Worker's name Lillian Gassaway.

This report made on (date) January 31, 1938

1. Name Emma Robrecht,

2. Post Office Address 110 West Washington,

3. Residence address (or location) Anadarko, Oklahoma.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month January Day 3 Year 1870

5. Place of birth St. Clairsville, Ohio.

6. Name of Father F. W. Robrecht, Place of birth Germany.

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Christina Weekon Robrecht, Place of birth Germany.

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 4

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Lillian Cassaway,
Investigator,
January 31, 1938.

Interview with Emma Robrecht,
110 West Washington,
Anadarko, Oklahoma.

I came to El Reno from Kansas City with my father, F. W. Robrecht, about a week before the Opening of the country; we camped for a few days just across from the depot. One day, as I was standing in the door of my tent, a train pulled up to the station and the people all looked hungry so I thought I would fix them some sandwiches; I had brought some meat from home and I had bread. I told my father that I believed those people were hungry and I was going to fix some coffee and sandwiches for them, which I did, and asked my brother to take them to the people. He was young and timid and didn't want to but there was a young Jew with us and he said that he would. He picked up the coffee and told my brother to bring the sandwiches and it was no time till the basket was empty. The passengers were hungry and were glad to get the sandwiches and coffee.

We came to Anadarko the night before the sale of lots

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and camped in Rag Town. The next day I bought Lot 6, Block 14, and built a small lunch room, 8 X 16 ft. For several years my father met all the trains with baskets of hamburgers and coffee. One day he was selling them on the train and it pulled out of the station before he could get off, but he got off at the next stop and walked home. He started to throw what coffee he had left away but decided as he had to walk he might want it. He was pretty tired so he thought he would rest awhile before starting home so sat down beside the cars to rest. He soon fell asleep and while he was sleeping the engine started to switch the cars about and a man who had seen my father under the cars called to him and asked him what he was doing there. Father told him that he just sat down to rest; the man told him that the cars were being switched and he had better get up. It was very late when he got home and he was almost worn out, for he was an old man then. We tried to get him not to meet the next train but to rest, but he met the train anyway with the basket of hamburgers and coffee.

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I remember on the twenty-sixth of August a storm came up that was almost a cyclone. It blew down most of the little shacks that people had built for temporary use and two men were killed in this storm. The water stood waist-deep in the streets; I waded in water to my waist helping to take care of women and children who were living close by. One woman was sick so I brought her to my tent with her eight children and cared for them until the storm was over and they could go back to their tent.

When we first came here the post office was in Old Town (the Agency), in one of the trader's stores but it was not long till it was moved to the new town and was located in the Miller Building on Main Street.

We fed a great many Indians in our little 8 X 16 ft. lunch room, especially when they got their payments. One time I had a man helping me; he could wait on them until it came to taking the money, then they would say, "No, pay boss", and they wouldn't let him have the money, either.

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The sand was so deep in front of the stores and shops that the merchants soon began to make sidewalks; some of the merchants had brought twelve-foot boards with them to make sidewalks but when they got here they had to get more lumber for the sidewalks were being made much wider.

I have run a little restaurant ever since I sold those sandwiches to the people on the train at El Reno. Everyone knew my father and our little restaurant was for many years called "Dad's Place".