

HOWELL, BERTHA M.

INTERVIEW

#4384

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

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Field Worker's name Ruby Wolfenbarger.This report made on (date) June 11, 1937. 193 1. Name Bertha M. Howell.2. Post Office Address Sentinel, Oklahoma.3. Residence address (or location) Sentinel, Oklahoma.4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month November Day 28 Year 1880.5. Place of birth Arkansas.6. Name of Father E. W. Orr. Place of birth Arkansas.Other information about father Cattlemen and farmer.7. Name of Mother Mary Hodges. Place of birth Tennessee.

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 3.

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Ruby Wolfenbarger,
Field Worker,
June 11, 1937.

An Interview with Mrs. Bertha Howell,
Address is Sentinel, Oklahoma.

My parents were E. W. and Mary Orr. We moved from Arkansas into Oakland, Indian Territory, when I was about ten years of age. We made the trip in a covered wagon; it took about thirty days of very hard driving. My father was a cattleman and horse trader. We farmed in a big way for those days. We also raised chickens and hogs. We were a large family and did most of the work ourselves.

I lived at Oakland until I was married, then with my husband, and his mother and father, we came to Putman, Dewey County, in what was then called the Cheyenne country. We came through in covered wagons, each family having its own outfit. It took some time to make the trip. We camped at what was then known as the Devil's Canyon. Here we found a deep gorge, an ideal place to camp, with plenty of good cold water. We also came over a trail which was used by all the travelers in those days. I believe it was the famous Chisholm Trail.

We filed on one hundred and sixty acres of land, built a log house out of logs that we bought from a neighbor man.

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I helped my husband build this one-room house. I also made most of my furniture which consisted of a bed, cook-stove, table, chairs, safe, and cabinet.

This Cheyenne country was very bare. There were no trees and the country was thinly settled.

The first year we carried our water from the creek. It was very bad, and you could hardly drink it. Then the next year we dug a well on our place and the well water was some better but still very hard.

For fuel we carried our wood from the canyon which was a place where almost all the settlers would come and cut their supply of wood.

We did not have much of a crop the first year. We had only one horse and wagon and had to do our work with my father-in-law's team.

We rented land out for next year and planted corn, wheat, and a little cotton. The threshing was done by horse power. We picked our own cotton. We also raised a good garden that year as there was a lot of rain.

Our closest trading places were El Reno, Weatherford, and Custer City.

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There were not any churches very near us, so we did not get to attend church as often as we would have liked to. When we did go, we went in a wagon drawn by oxen. This was very tiresome, as the oxen would sometimes get stubborn and we would have to get out and work with them for an hour at a time.

My health broke down and we had to sell our farm. The doctor wanted me to travel for my health, so we traveled for several years, then finally located in Sentinel where we have been for the past twenty-seven years.