

SANDERS, B. UL-H

INTERVIEW

"8586

97

NATIONAL FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Film r Film Project for Oklahoma

98

FILE NO. INDEXED #2586

John E. Dougherty,

September 22, 1937

Mr. Quinn Jones,

Billings, Montana.

(Mr. Jones)

August Day 2 Year 1865

Billings.

Place of Birth. South Carolina.

Parmer, Wisconsin.

Mrs. Anne Cooper Place of Birth Georgia.

Billings, Montana

Note: This information is to be used only for the purpose of identifying subjects in the work and along with the life and work of the subject. It is to be used for identification purposes only and should not be used for any other purpose. It is to be used for identification purposes only and should not be used for any other purpose. It is to be used for identification purposes only and should not be used for any other purpose.

John F. Dougherty
Interviewe
September 22, 1937

Interview with
Mrs. Beulah Sanders
Mill Creek, Oklahoma.

I came to the Indian Territory in 1896 in a covered wagon from Texas. Several other families in wagons came when we did.

We forded Red River five miles below Denison and camped the first night in the Territory at Robbers Roost. We followed an old cow boy's trail and camped on Pennington Creek, near Tishomingo, for about a week or until we could find a place to live.

We located on a place belonging to Frank Kemp, north of Mill Creek.

Our house was a log shack with two rooms. One room had a floor, which was made of native lumber, and there were large cracks between the boards. We nearly froze to death in the winter. We had a fireplace, the lower part being made of rock, and the upper part of sticks and dirt. The other room had a dirt floor.

- 2 -

When we first came here I was very afraid of Indians. My husband took our cotton to Davis the first fall we were here, and he had to spend the night there. I would sit and cry with fright nearly all night when he was away.

One day when he was in Mill Creek having his cotton ginned, a white man came rushing in and said, "Please hide me, the Indians are after me, and will kill me if they catch me." The gin man hid him behind some cotton. When the Indians came riding up in search of him, they were told that he had gone in another direction and they rode off looking for him. I didn't know why the Indians were trying to kill him, very likely because he had stolen something or harmed them, but I got the idea that they chased white people for the fun of it, which I found out later was not true at all. I found them to be fine, loyal neighbors.

About the worst scare I had regarding Indians was one day while my husband was in the woods doing some clearing. An Indian and a white man came to the door and asked for

- 3 -

Mr. Sanders. I told them where he was. They talked in Indian and made many signs which I couldn't understand. After they were gone I told the children to stay in the house, keep the door shut and not open it for anybody. Then I ran as fast as I could to where he was and told him he had better hide, I just knew that Indian was going to kill him. He laughed at me, but I wouldn't go back to the house without him. The Indian didn't come to the field. I later told a neighbor of my fright and he laughed and said, "Why that was the permit collector and he decided he wouldn't go to the field after Mr. Sander's permit."

Another frightful night for us was when Mr. Sanders went to gin at Mill Creek and didn't get back. He was gone two and a half days. The children and I cried most of the time. I was sure the Indians had gotten him. One day after he was gone two nights, I started to a neighbors to tell them of my plight, and I saw him coming in the distance. I hastened to meet him and he told me that the gin broke down while they were ginning his cotton. Some of it was in the press, some in the stand and some

- 4 -

in the wagon and he couldn't ^{get} away. So he had to stay two days until it was repaired.

I finally got brave enough to go to a big camp meeting near Connerville with Mrs. Kemp. They had a white preacher and an Indian preacher. One interpreted while the other preached. They took turns. There were many white people there. They had Indian Police on the ground to keep order. I never saw a better behaved crowd of people than they were. They had two large stoves and Indian women did the cooking, such a large amount of food as they cooked. There were about two thousand people there, and they served "Pa-shofah." It was there that I found the Indians to be as civilized as we, and I was never afraid of them again.

We had our milling done at Blue. The neighbors took turns. Each Saturday was milling day, and one man would go and take up the neighbors sacks of corn or wheat. The next Saturday another neighbor would go.

The country was all open and covered with cattle. I've seen as many as five hundred following the wagon, as my husband returned from the mill. They could smell the

- 5 -

meal and salt and were trying to get it.

I cooked on the fireplace in the winter but it was too warm in the summer, so I built a stove outside in the shade. I got four forks of trees about two feet high and put them in the ground for the four corners. I floored it with very thick boards and nailed thick boards around it at the top. I filled this box with dirt and made my fire on top. I was proud of this outdoor stove, and used it for two years after moving here, then purchased a small wood stove at Davis.

I married William Sanders in 1886 in Mississippi.