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Field Work: Merrill A. Nelson
April 5, 1937

BIOGRAPHY OF Mr. Clarence L. Sherman
501 West Elm Street
Enid, Oklahoma

BORN Near Oskaloosa, Mahaska County, Iowa
December 22, 1865

PARENTS Father, Walter Sherman, New York State
Do not know exact birth place
Mother, Nancy Barton, Ohio. Mother
married in Ohio.
I had two brothers, Quakers
Also, two half brothers, on my father's
side who were Quakers
Father very strong.
Father was a quaker.

STORY OF CLARENCE L. SHERMAN

My people were from England. They settled first in the east, later both families came to Iowa where my father and mother were married and I was born 71 years ago. My father was very strong. He would go to the timber to get wood, with three yoke of oxen. When he could not lift the front wheel for the load, it was time to go home.

We boys in Iowa used to talk about fighting Indians, and as it turned out, in spite of my Quaker parents, I later became a Soldier. The third and twenty-third infantry had charge of registration, they divided in squads. I was in the third on the south side. One on either side of the strip. I was stationed at Orlando, 45,000 were registered by Thursday night. The run began Saturday noon September 16, but before that the crowd had gathered and some amusing incidents occurred. "Soldier," shouted some one, "there are some men going in on horseback". "A dirty

trick", said the sergeant, "go back to sleep, men". He knew it was no use for infantry to try to stop them toward night, on their horses. Water sold for a penny to a nickel a cup. But you could get it fresh in a slough.

Gambling was prevalent. They had one game they played with three English Walnuts and a pea. The game was to find the pea. Some men were fingering their guns. "What's the matter" shouted the sergeant. "This man loaned me twenty dollars and I won eighty in the shell game. Now he wants some of the winnings, I offered to pay him the twenty." "Get off the strip or I'll have you in the guardhouse." commented the officer.

Some of the officers or U. S. Marshalls I knew were Bill Tilghman, and Bud Ledbetter. Bill was killed at Cronwell., by Wiley Lynn, a U. S. Marshall. Bill was an officer in the oil field. Lynn killed Tilghman because he was jealous. He was charged with not enforcing the law. Although one of the bravest and coolest of officer, Tilghman, had been used to wide open conditions such as used to exist, and Lynn contended he did not enforce the law, as Lynn was of a stricter disposition.

A couple of men by the name of Caruthers and Ballew got in a scrape. Ballew went up the stairs of the Turner Hotel and said he would shoot the first man who came up the stairs. When Bud Ledbetter heard it, he said that he would be over. He laid his guns down and walked up the stairs, bringing back Ballew under arrest. Ballew did not mind being arrested but he did object to being mobbed by the Caruthers gang. Some called Ledbetter a coward for laying down his guns but I think he used good sense.

At another time I was with Bud who was with a posse charged with capturing a bunch of outlaws. The outlaws were located on the Illinois river. They were at a dance. I wanted to fire into the house myself, but Bill said: "There are a lot of innocent people there, you go and cut loose the outlaws horse, and club them, and bean any guard they have".

When they heard the horses stampeding the outlaws made for the door. "Drop them guns", Bud yelled, "We caught the whole nine and had them tied with tresh chains in a jiffy. (A tresh chain is one which has something which fastens to one leg and arm and a long chain on the other end which can be fastened to a wagon wheel or post.

I knew Bill Doolan and Bill Dalton. Heck Thomas shot Bill Dooland from an ambush for the reward.

One time I was staying at the home of Price Marlow with my wife. He (Marlow) had 300 acres of hay. "Some one is setting your hay on fire", I said. He had about 300 acres of it. The Dalton outlaws set about 50 stacks afire. There were about 40 in the gang it seemed. We thought they would come up to the house and if they had we would have pappered them. We had the ladies go down in the basement and were ready for them, but they stayed away.

I can remember when the post offices carried a notice of \$30,000 to \$50,000 each for reward for the arrest of Jesse James, Cole Younger, John Younger, Jim Younger and Frank James. Jesse James was killed at St. Joe, Missouri. Both Frank James and his mother told me this was true. His mother said "Jesse is dead,

would I lie about my boy?" Their mother hated a Pinkerton with a bitter hatred. The Pinkerton Detective Agency sent men in the outlaws country to secure the big rewards. They never came back. These outlaws were spectacular and did things, far braver than Kines or modern outlaws.

The Daltons were killed at Coffeyville. Spear stood at a livery stable and shot them down as they were in a street fight and such fights can not stop until they are fought out. While I am opposed to the death penalty and have often been rejected from juries on this account, I do believe in enforcing to the letter the laws, we have. There is too much leniency now.

Bill Tillman was in on the taking of two women outlaws. These were Cattle Annie and Little Breeches McDermot. Both were outlaws and cattle rustlers and had gangs. He caught Annie first. "Hold her while I get McDermot" said Bill. She started firing. Bill rode right up and ~~ank~~ put his arm around her and twisted her smoking gun right out of her hand. She still had two shells in the gun when he captured her. She fought like a wild cat. She was a fair shot. She could put a Winchester on her hip and hit the center of a target 300 yards away, nine time out of ten.

One time a negro deputy by the name of Bass Reeves had the choice of some routine work or of capturing a black man who had killed a fellow for a bale of cotton. "Let Sherman and Adams go to Muskogee and serve the papers", he said as he did not want to get mixed up with white folks. "I will go and get this man or bring his boots." When we returned he had his man in the wagon. What happened", we asked. "Well

he got in a log cabin and started firing at me, so I had to kill him, said the colored officer.

I have ridden in cavalry charges and have been in several battles. In the regular army service, I was in Mexico when Garcia was out causing trouble against Diaz, but about the worst messes I ever got into were the Apache Indian giths. They were not entirely pacified wven after Geronimo was catured. Some wanted to turn Geronimo loose but he was so war like even the Indians them selves opposed this and threatened to kill him he was so warlike. We were following a bunch of Apaches near Needles, Arizona. They were about as mean a bunch of men as I ever knew. They would kill sheep just for the fun of it. They hung a woman up on a meat hook from the back of her head. When we got there she was dead. A vanguard went ahead and stopped three time due to other dirty work. These Indians did too terrible for us to know about.

When we came up on the bunch they were camped in a bunch of willows. We begged to attack. But were ordered to wait till morning. At daylight we swooped down on them. Driving right through the camp. My horse knocked against a teepee. Two Indians came out. One of them had a long hatchet I raised up in my stirrup and came down on him. I did not wait to see whether I had wounded him or not. After the battle the report was made out. Some body said "You had better not send in that statement of dead and wounded as they will think we are too rough with them out here". "That was in the days of General Miles, and a very gentle policy toward all Indians was advocated in the east. So the official report went in with only about three Indians killed and seven Indians wounded.

Another time the medicine men had persuaded about half of the Apaches that they should not go to school. The government said they must all go. The objectors were in a body on a hill. The officer Harry Huett, in charge of the squad I was with called three men to go with him. He walked right up the hill in the presence of all those Apaches and seized the cause of the trouble, the medicine man. One show of weakness on his part and we would all have been massacred. If the officer had gone down, they would have killed all the rest of us.

There were so many men far braver than I was that I dislike telling many of my experiences. I was sergeant in the U. S. Army and held a Captain's commission in Peru, with the Peruvians. I saw fourteen months of fighting on the Tacna-Arica border a desolate country but which may ^{have} oil and gold.

I think however that we should do in this country as they do in Canada and England. There they have no pardon and parole boards but if a man is sentenced for ten years, he will have to serve ten years. The officers should be backed up and the laws on our statute books should be enforced.
