

SHARP, CLEM

INTERVIEW

#1379

117

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

SHARP, CLEM.

INTERVIEW.

1379

Field Worker's name Ida B. LankfordThis report made on (date) November 24, 1937 19371. Name Clem Sharp2. Post Office Address Cordell, Oklahoma3. Residence address (or location) South College Street4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month January Day 3 Year 18605. Place of birth Lewisburg, Tennessee6. Name of Father Fealing Sharp Place of birth TennesseeOther information about father Farmer7. Name of Mother Mary Young Place of birth TennesseeOther information about mother Housekeeper

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

SHARP, CLEM.

INTERVIEW.

1379

Ida B. Lankford
Investigator

November 24, 1937

Interview with Clem Sharp
Cordell, Oklahoma

I came to Cordell, Washita County, in January, 1892. I came from Texas. I filed on land south of Cordell near Rocky in the Rainy Mountain neighborhood.

We had eight children and lived in the dugout of a Full Blood.

I raised cotton and corn and hauled it to El Reno and Mountain View to have the cotton ginned and to sell the corn. Sometimes I would be gone three or four nights to Mountain View with one bale of cotton. I would sell the cotton for 5 cents a pound after it was ginned.

I hauled wood from Red River and would be gone for weeks at a time. I just had one team of mules and I have sat up all night many times watching them for there were lots of horse-thieves and I didn't have the money to buy any more mules. Later we organized an Anti-Horse Thief Club and we broke up the horse stealing.

S. ARP, CLEM.

INTERVIEW.

1379

2

One night my wife got sick and was to be confined and I rode eight miles on an old mule bareback to get a doctor and the smallpox was so bad that he couldn't come so I had to get a neighbor woman to help me.

When we first came here the wells were about one hundred feet deep and the women drew all the water and when one would get the water drawn it would be so muddy and guppy that you could hardly use it. The women drew the water for the stock while the men would freight our provisions of fuel, food and our clothes.

We went to church in a dugout and it didn't make any difference what denomination the preacher was, when one came through the country, everyone came to hear him.

Polecats would get under our beds at night and eat our eggs which we kept under our beds.

One day I took a load of corn to market with the shuck on it and the northern Dutchmen came up to my wagon and said to me, "Why did you bring your corn

SHARP, CLEM.

INTERVIEW.

1379

3

to market with the leaves on it?" They always shucked their corn and I had always sold my corn with the shuck on it.

The prairie fires would break out and burn into dugouts, burn barns and hen houses; the people would have to leave their homes on horseback and when the fires were over they would go back to their homes and not have anything. The barns, dugouts and hen houses were covered with hay, so it didn't take long for them to burn down. There would be fifty to one hundred chickens lying in piles, burned to death and cows, horses, hogs and sheep would be lying around dead.

We raised ten children, fed them on corn bread, sorghum molasses, milk and butter. We made their winter shirts out of old cotton sacks and they got only one pair of shoes a year and sometimes they did not get any.

In our dugout on our home made bedsteads, lots of times there would be a rattlesnake coiled up sleeping and we had so many children we would make their

SHARP, CLEM.

INTERVIEW.

1379

4

beds on the floor and next morning we would shake a rattlesnake out of a quilt.

I have worked many days for 50 cents a day and taken home a piece of bacon and when it was frying it smelt good.

We sent our children to school in a dugout; they sat on benches made out of poles and held their slate and pencil in their hands. Some of the teachers had an eighth grade education and some not that much. We had a three months' term of school.