

SHEPPERD, IDA

INTERVIEW

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

4981

Field Worker's name R. H. Boatman

This report made on (date) July 16 1937

1. Name Miss Ida Sheppard

2. Post Office Address Washington, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) Washington

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month June Day 14 Year 1888

5. Place of Birth Virginia City, Nevada

6. Name of Father William Sheppard Place of birth Ohio

Other information about father Supt. of Silver Mines.

7. Name of Mother Lucinda Wiggins Place of birth Ohio

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 5.

R. H. Boatman
Interviewer
July 16, 1937

Interview with
Miss Ida Shepperd
Washington, Okla.

I was born in Virginia City, Nevada, on June 14, 1882.

I started to school in Virginia City at an early age.

Virginia City is located in northeast central Nevada and is a very prosperous silver mining town. People are employed there from all parts of the world. My father was General Foreman of the mines and my grandfather was general Superintendent of the mines.

My father left Nevada and came to the Indian Territory in the early '90s and filed on a claim in eastern Oklahoma, returning to Nevada to finish another year's work. I came the next year with my parents to settle on the claim but when they arrived they found that their claim had been contested and they had lost it. I was then twelve years old; my education had been rapidly earned and soon after my arrival in the territory I saw such a great need among the children for an education that I began teaching and instructing them. After losing our claim we settled near Purcell and began share

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cropping. I attended school and taught in between terms. I began my school teaching under a shade tree with a few pupils and as my own education was being completed I taught subscription schools. Generally \$1.00 per child was paid for a term. I have taught several schools free of charge. If any of the children couldn't pay the tuition they came any way to school. I then taught two years at Iron Chapel, two years at Pleasant Valley and eight years at Byars.

There had been a school house built ten miles northwest of Purcell, where the town of Washington is now located. It was a one room frame building with one teacher. The interior was of crudely hewn logs with no paper on the walls and only oiled paper over a window to let in light. The desks were logs split in two and legs put on and the stools and benches were built on the same model. Of course there was the dunce stool and cap in the corner that was constantly occupied. There were no black boards but instead each pupil owned his own slate. There were no tablets in use and only a few of the most commonly used books; mainly books of Reading, Writing and Arithmetic.

In the next few years a lean-to shack was added to

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the frame building and in such a way the school prospered.

As the school developed the town did likewise. Our home was the second home in Washington and my father owned and established the first drug store in Washington.

It was in 1925 that a High School was secured and built for the benefit of the future scholars of the town and in 1925 a new grade school building was built. The progress of the High School is almost as distinctive as that of the grade school. The High School now has a faculty of fourteen teachers in a building which is modern inside and out, with all the modern improvements and equipment essential for large classes in Home Economics and Agriculture.

It was only last year that a new gymnasium was built and the school grounds are now being greatly improved.

I have made my life work the good of the future citizens and my work has been of great benefit to the schools, especially to the Washington school.

I plan to resign in two more years, but I expect to make my home in Washington as I own my home and as

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I am the only support of my mother, as my father died
some three years ago.