

SHIERREY, GEORGE MILFORD

INTERVIEW

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Form 4-(S-149)

DIORNAIY BANK  
WORKS FROM 1930 TO 1940  
Indian-Pioneer history Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Elizabeth A. Duncan

Report made, on (date) August 9, 1937

Name George Milford Shierrey

Post Office Address Medford, Oklahoma

Residence address (or location) 5 miles E. 1/4 Route

DATE OF BIRTH: Month December Day 22 Year 70

Place of birth West Union "Fayette County, Iowa

Name of Father Henry Shierrey Place of birth Penn.

Other information about father Farmer & drummer boy in war

Name of Mother Wilinda Snyder Place of birth Free Port, Ill.

Other information about mother House wife

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

Elizabeth L. Duncan  
Field Worker  
August 9, 1937.

INTERVIEW WITH GEORGE MILFORD SHERRY  
Medford, Oklahoma

Mr. Sherry's father was in the Civil War.

When he was a boy, he ran away to join the army, but he was brought back home. The very night he was brought back, he slipped out of the house, swam the river and got away. He joined the Northern side. His father was very bitter against the Northern side. The only reason they let him in was because he was a drummer boy. When the battle was going on he saw a comrade fall, so he threw away his drum and picked up the gun that fell from the comrade's hands and started shooting. From then on he fought as a soldier.

In later years, Mr. Sherry's father married Malinda Snyder. Five children were born to this union, George Milford being one of the five children. At the age of five years, his father died and the mother was

2

unable to care for all five children. She put Mr. Shierrey in the Veteran's Orphanage, erected by the state of Iowa for the purpose of caring for the Civil War Veteran children. At the age of eleven he ran away from this home and went to his grandfather. He stayed with his grandfather for five years and helped him farm at Fayette, Iowa. Then, he went to Freeport, Illinois, where his mother was living. He worked on a farm in Illinois until he was twenty-eight years old; then went back to Iowa, where he bought eighty acres of land. He got started with cattle, hogs and chickens, but was not satisfied so he sold out and went to Beatrice, Nebraska. When he sold he took cattle, horses and money for pay, bought eighty acres in Nebraska, and with the cattle, horses, hogs and chickens he had, he had a pretty good start for a young fellow.

One day while Mr. Shierrey was attending church, he caught a young lady laughing and nodding her head toward him, whispering to another girl. He thought perhaps

3

that something was wrong with his clothes, so he looked himself over very carefully. The following Sunday, he decided to attend Sunday school and church, to see if he could see this young lady again. This was kept up for a month, until on the 5th Sunday one of the boys he ran around with introduced them. That was the 31st of January, 1888. They seemed to like each other very much, so he continued going to Sunday school and church. This continued until he started going steady with her. On March 9, 1890, they were married.

In 1892, they moved to Caldwell, where he moved on a farm, only one mile from Caldwell. He also established a feed store in Caldwell besides farming.

Mr. Shierrey decided to make the Run when the opening of the Cherokee Strip was announced. He made up his mind to make the run and when the time came to register, he registered at Caldwell. He stood in line one day and night. After registering, he went home and fixed a box on the hind wheels of a wagon.

When the people started coming in to register, all types of people were coming in and from all over, some were

4

tenderfeet, some rough speaking people, some God fearing people. It was a sight. On September 16, 1893, at twelve noon, the guns were fired. A mad rush it was, one trying to beat the other. It was a free for all struggle. Mr. Shierrey knew just where he wanted to locate as he had driven down in here a year before the opening and looked the country over. It was just one hour from the time he started until he reached the place he had picked out, but upon arrival he found that another man had staked the claim. Later, he learned this man had got through the lines sometime during the night and had come ahead to stake his claim. Mr. Shierrey continued southward, but was unfortunate in securing a claim. He and three cousins met at Pond Creek and started back to Caldwell, very low in spirit.

Mr. Shierrey, after returning to Caldwell, started his feed store up again, and tended to his farming in connection therewith.

About six months later, Mr. Shierrey drove down, thinking perhaps he could find someone whose rights he

5

could buy. He had been in Medford only four hours until he met the man that homesteaded the place he was aiming to homestead. He got to talking to him and the first thing this fellow said was, "Shierrey, do you want to buy a place?" Mr. Shierrey told him, "yes." This man's name was Wash Haynes. He told Mr. Shierrey that he saw him drive into town. Mr. Shierrey asked who wanted to sell, and he said, "I do, come on out and look it over." Mr. Shierrey went out to look the place over, and asked what he wanted. Mr. Haynes, said, "That span of mules and \$125.00 in cash so I can take my family and clear out." Mr. Shierrey studied about it as he had been offered \$300.00 for the team, but finally he said he would. He told Haynes that by the time he was ready to move on the place, he wanted him to move off. The following week, Mr. Shierrey and some of his neighbors came down to build a sod house. After they got down here they went ahead and used what lumber he had<sup>brought</sup> to build a shed for the horses, as an addition to the house instead. They made it part dugout

6

and house combined, up against a big bank. The house had three windows and a "boughten" door and frame. After the house was completed, Mr. Shierrey and neighbors went back to Caldwell. He then sold what he thought he would not use, including the feed store. Mr. Shierrey brought with him the household furniture, one cow, six chickens, one team of horses, one drill and one cultivator. Upon arrival at the homestead, Mr. Shierrey found Mr. Haynes and family back on the farm. Mr. Shierrey asked what he was doing back on the place, and Mr. Haynes said he was wanted the farm back. He said that he would give his mules back to him, but he had spent the money for food and clothes. Mr. Shierrey told him he was not going to give back the farm after he had sold it to him. Haynes said he would have to fight it out with him then. Mr. Shierrey just really did not know what to do, since he had sold all his things back in Kansas, so he figured perhaps he could talk to him and try to help him find another place. He started to talk to Mr.



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8367

7

Haynes, so finally Mr. Haynes said he would move out and let him have possession. Mr. Shierrey let him pitch his tent on his place and helped him all he could. The following weeks they went quite a number of places, finally they found a place for Mr. Haynes. Mr. Haynes had to sell his mules in order to buy the rights.

After this Mr. Shierrey went back to his home. He started in breaking some sod. Haynes had already broken out forty acres, so all together there was sixty acres broken out. That spring he planted corn and kaffir, but the corn burnt up and so did the kaffir.

In the year of 1896, he planted corn, wheat and milo maize, but the corn, kaffir and maize did not make. By this time feed was getting scarce and Mr. Shierrey had to haul feed from Kansas for his stock. The grass in the pasture was dried, so he ran his stock in on Mr. Anderson and Cummings, as their pasture seemed to thrive when the others were burned up.

The year of 1897 was rather wet and it brought forth an abundance of wheat that year. The people seemed

8

to have enough to buy their needs.

Mr. Shierrey had an abundance of wood and did not have to haul fuel from other places. In the year of 1897, Mr. Shierrey built another house, 29 x 18, which stands today. The lumber was bought on time and it took him quite a few years to pay the debt off.

Their trading center was Medford. Many a time they would bring a crate of eggs and some butter to town to trade for a sack of flour, when they had no money to buy with.

As the years have gone by, he has accumulated 720 acres of land. He has prospered greatly and there is no debt on any of the land. He still has the breaking plow he first broke sod with.