

SHARP, MINNIE.

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

Field Worker's name Anna R. Barry

This report made on (date) September 17 1937

1. Name (Miss) Minnie Sharp

2. Post Office Address El Reno, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) 721 South iles St.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month April Day 19 Year 1880

5. Place of birth Chase County, Kansas

6. Name of Father Anderson Sharp Place of birth Tennessee

Other information about father \_\_\_\_\_

7. Name of Mother Eliza eth (Davis) Sharp Place of birth Grant County, Indiana

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 \_\_\_\_\_

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A biographic sketch  
Interview with Miss Minnie Sharp  
El Reno, Oklahoma

Minnie Sharp was born in Chase County, Kansas, April 19, 1880, the daughter of Anderson Sharp and Elizabeth Davis Sharp. Her father was a Civil War veteran, having served in the Ninth Kansas Cavalry; he enlisted in 1863, and served until the close of the War.

In February, 1889, her father and brother left Kansas in a covered wagon drawn by a team of good mules to seek a new home in the Indian Territory, but instead of stopping in the Territory he continued his trip on in to Texas. However on April 22, 1889, he was back in El Reno, Oklahoma.

Mr. Sharp made the run and located on a claim which was rejected because of the fact he had filed on land in Kansas. He then located on school land six miles southwest of El Reno. Minnie Sharp came to El Reno in July, 1889, along with her mother, three sisters and one brother. They came by rail on the Santa Fe to Oklahoma City, where her Father met them with a wagon, and team. When they arrived at their home they stood a nice little sod house twelve by fourteen feet, one window in the east and another window

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in the west side of the house; the only door in the house faced the south.

The Sharp home was furnished with a cook stove two beds, a walnut table (which is still in Minnie Sharp's home and she says it is no doubt over a hundred years old). Her mother also owned a good Singer sewing machine. All these things the father brought in the wagon when he came to the Territory.

Her first school to attend in Oklahoma was a rural school called South Liberty, which was located one and one half miles from the Sharp home.

Not long after the Sharp family arrived in Canadian County two small grandchildren came to make their home with the family. Minnie Sharp can tell many interesting things about the Indians. She said that one day her mother had gone to the home of an aunt, taking her children with her. As the mother and aunt were preparing dinner, the children were out in the

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yard, playing. She said, she happened to look up and see six Indian men riding horseback coming toward their house. The children all ran in the house to tell their mothers the Indians were coming. The aunt went to the bed, took out a six-shooter from between the feather beds, examined it to see if it was loaded, and laid it on a little cook table near the stove. When these Indians reached the gate they got down off their horses and looked at the wagon tracks. They came on up to the house, and asked for something to eat. The aunt told them she didn't have any food cooked and that she had ten children to feed. At this they laughed then and they told her they were trying to track wagons that had been on their allotments stealing wood and posts. They also inquired if she had noticed any wagon passing with wood. Minnie Sharp said she was hidden behind a curtain which hung in one corner of the room for clothes all during the time the Indians were there.

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Another time she told about how excited a neighbor became thinking that Indians were on the War path. Her sister had married that day and that night young folks came from every direction for a big party. They were beating tubs, cans and having a big time and when this neighbor man heard the noise he thought it was Indians. He loaded his family in the wagon and drove over to his mother's house a distance of five miles.

Minnie Sharp said in the early Fall when the Winter winds began to blow from the north her mother would tell them it was time to get up firewood and put down the carpet for winter. Although very small, she still remembers the new rag carpets her mother used to tack down in the living room each fall.

She recalls the days and evenings of endless rag cutting and tacking in preparation. She remembers the old loom where the different members of the family took turns in weaving those beautiful rag rugs. The rags were all dyed and tacked into endless strings

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and wound into good-sized balls, months ahead of time, in readiness for the loom. The children knew that long evenings of work were in store for them when the loom was hauled from aunt Sarah's house and set up in their house for the ~~siege~~ of weaving. The great frame was fitted together with mortice and tenon joints. The rollers for winding the warp and carpet were put in, and the harness and reed frame were hung from the top. Preparing the warp, unwinding the spools and threading the loom was a job that required the hands of her mother or aunt Sarah, but after that it was fun to sit on the broad bench, working the treadles, with your feet to cross the warp and shoving the shuttle through, unwinding the woof at each pass and pressing the strands back each time with the reed. It gave one a great thrill those days to take the lever and wind up a foot or so of brand new carpet, the product of your own hands and the loom even on busiest evenings.

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seldom made too much noise for father to sit by the coal oil lamp and read the home paper from Kansas or the local weekly newspaper to the family.

In the Fall of 1895 the Sharp family moved eight miles east of where they first located. Her father traded his home for eighty acres of bottom land. Here she attended Sunnyside school. This school was taught by Miss Bell McClure, for a period of five months during the Fall and Winter.

Minnie Sharp still remembers Reno City as her father did most of their trading here. She also tells about El Reno when it had plank side walks, the hitching rails, the sun bleached board houses, the signs before each store and saloon.

She remembers when eggs sold three dozen for twenty five cents and butter for ten cents per pound.

Her mother died in 1922 and her father died in 1928. They are both buried in the El Reno Cemetery.