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

Field Worker's name MAUD W. FINKThis report made on (date) May 14 1937Name Mr. S. H. Shroaf.Post Office Address Clinton, Oklahoma.Residence address (or location) Clinton, Okla. No. #2DATE OF BIRTH: Month February Day 16 Year 1848Place of birth Danville, Illinois.Name of Father Wilson Shroaf Place of birth Brown Co. OhioOther information about father Farmed and raise stock.Name of Mother Anna Watson Shroaf Place of birth KentuckyOther information about mother Housewife.

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 6.

An interview with
Mr S. H. Shroaf
Clinton, Oklahoma.
R. F. D. NO. 2

GRANT FOREMAN DIRECTOR
INDIAN-PIONEER HISTORY
3-149
211 FEDERAL BUILDING
MUSKOGEE, OKLAHOMA.

Maude M. Fink,
Field worker,
May 14, 1937

Mr. Shroaf left southeastern Nebraska on Missouri river, May 12, 1894. He camped on the South Canadian river and drove out to Rogers and put up camp. He filed on a claim the 15th of May. Some of the family stayed on the claim all of the time, living in a tent, later in a dug-out.

When Mr. Shroaf came here, it was mostly all Indians. The Indians went on horseback or walked. They did not know what harness or a wagon was until the white man came. These Indians knew where all of the watering holes were.

Wood was plentiful. One could get it anywhere, a tree would be cut down for use in covering the dug-out and the limbs would be used for fuel.

They lived in dug-outs, and there were no two dug-outs alike. The dug-outs just had one room,

but Mrs. Shroaf and the girls would hang up sheets when they wanted to dress or make another room. Mr. Shroaf said that when it rained, it would rain two or three days; and after it quit raining, the top would leak. The first roofs they had on the dug-outs were made out of shingles and lumber hauled from El Reno.

The first Church outside of Arapaho, was at Summit. They hauled lumber from Geary to build this Church.

All Arapaho water was hauled from Dripping Springs. This continued for a period of ten years.

There were a lot of outlaws in those times: Red Buck, Bert Casey, Hockey Miller, etc. Mr. Shroaf was acquainted with these men. He told of an incident in which they were raiding around in the county and the citizens at Oak Creek got after them. They made a raid on a store at Gyp and Arapaho. Bert Casey was bad, if cornered. He had gone to school to Mr. Shroaf's daughter, Maud Shroaf Snider, and as he was rather bad in school, his grandfather took him out

and took him to Washita to Jim and Ben Hughes, and he turned out to be an outlaw. The officers from El Reno killed the two younger uncles of Bert.

The reason they called Hookey Miller, Hookey was because he got his hand shot off and had to have a hook for a arm. His original name was George Miller.

Red Buck and Hookey Miller killed Mr. Glover. They sent Mr. Glover to Arapaho for some ammunition. While Mr. Glover was gone he made up a posse of men to get these outlaws. This posse came and hid in Mr. Glover's barn. The outlaws were on the creek, and when Mr. Glover signalled for them, they came and seeing what he had done, they killed him.

Hookey Miller was killed by an Indian named Middleton, at Sand Springs, Okla. Miller was abusing the Indian so both were killed.

Mr. Shroaf brought with him from Nebraska tools to farm with. He brought a plow, lister, cultivator and harrow. They were the only farm implements here, so all the people used them, they finally wore out. The people were friendly and sociable in those times.

Mr. Shroaf said, " the sky, earth and grass was all that was here". They could not tell where a section line was. There were people here from all countries, good, bad and indifferent.

Free grass and herd law. The east line of city of Clinton divided these two factions. The cattle were all on the west side of this line, there were hundreds of them. Free grass wanted a cattle country. Herd law wanted to have farms and homes. The Indians did not do as much damage as the cattlemen.

Kaffir corn was the first crop, kaffir corn will grow on sod. When they got the land all plowed and harrowed, they raised wheat pie melons and water melons also grew fine. They raised crops just the same as we do to-day.

The ground was full of rattlesnakes when they would be breaking the sod they would have to stop quite often and take a big rattler off their plow. When all the sod was cultivated the rattlesnakes soon left. There was a lot of wild game during the opening but people soon ran them out.

Mr. Shroaf left Nebraska the 15th of April and reached Clinton the 12th of May. He brought with him twelve head of horses and mules. He was twenty-eight days on the road. He and his wife and four children, three boys and one girl, made the trip.

Mr. Shroaf got his supplies from Chickasha. They freighted from El Reno to Chickasha.

Got mail from Arapaho, it was brought from El Reno to Arapaho by stage coach. There were no roads, only as made across prairies going around cañons and fording creeks. No schools and churches for a time, but they were soon organized. There were fifty families from Nebraska here, (Clinton) in a year's time. The first school was in a dug-out, and they had box lumber seats. The teachers wages were \$20 a month for a three months school period. They would have from two to six months school term. Mr. Shroaf's daughter, Maud Shroaf Snider, rode pony over five thousand miles teaching school.

Mr. Shroaf said their beds were from straw beds to nothing. It took six or seven years to build a home-had to wait until they got enough money.

Mr. Shroaf's dug-out was 16X 24 ft., all one room. The women folks would hang up a wagon sheet,

and make another room.

There were no gray haired men or women here- all were young. In Arapaho, the county seat, there were only five or six houses and twenty dug-outs- the first jail at Arapaho was a dug-out.

They used kerosene lamps when they could get the kerosene; when they could not get it, they used fire light. The fire was made out of wood and weeds. Mr. Shroaf hauled water for four years, a mile and half. He paid \$400 for his first well.

There were all kinds of Indians here, belonging to all kinds of tribes.

The Battle of Washita was fought above Cheyenne, north and west. Custer and Black Kettle had a fight for possessions of the country, there was no one killed. They are talking about making it a government reservation now.