

HURST, ALPHA PATCH.

INTERVIEW

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

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Field Worker's name Nora Lorrin.This report made on (date) January 26, 1938. 19381. Name Alpha Patch Hurst.2. Post Office Address El Reno, Oklahoma.3. Residence address (or location) 104 South Admire.4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month December Day 17 Year 1865.5. Place of birth Taylor County, Iowa.6. Name of Father William H. Patch. Place of birth Ohio, November
1, 1836.Other information about father Died latter part of 1923.7. Name of Mother Eliza Jane Kyser. Patch. Place of birth Indiana,
March 22, 1846.Other information about mother Died in May, 1924.

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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Nora Lorrin,
Investigator,
Jan. 26, 1938.

An Interview With Alpha Patch Hurst,
El Reno, Oklahoma.

I was born on a farm in Taylor County, Iowa, on December 17, 1865. My father, William H. Patch, was born in Ohio, November 1, 1836, and died in the latter part of 1923. My mother, Eliza Jane Kyser Patch, was born in Kokomo, Indiana, March 22, 1846, and died in May, 1924. My parents were married January 10, 1861, and there were ten children born to them, three boys and seven girls, seven of whom are still living.

I grew up in Taylor County, Iowa, and when I was seventeen years of age, went with my parents to Holt County, Missouri, near the county seat. Four years later, on December 19, 1886, I was married to Mr. Frank Hurst. A month after my marriage my father sold out and moved to Havensville, in Pottawatomie County, Kansas, trading some white-faced Hereford-Cattle for a farm. A year or so later, he went with a neighbor to Oklahoma, and fell in love with the country. He got a claim one and one-half miles east

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and two miles south of the present town of Banner, this land being opened in 1889. He came back to Holt County, Missouri, and persuaded my husband and me to come back to Oklahoma with him. We held a big public sale, sold the stock and things that we did not wish to bring along. My father combined his stuff with ours and sold them at the same time and place. We chartered an emigrant train (the railroads gave a reduction to people who were coming to a new country and taking their things by freight) of two or three cars, and brought a carload of cattle, horses, potatoes, apples, canned fruit, furniture and everything possible to begin work with in case we were lucky enough to get a claim. We came quite awhile before the opening of the Cheyenne and Arapaho lands. My husband, two children and I lived with my father on his farm southeast of Banner until the opening, April 19, 1892.

My husband made the run from the Rock Island School House southwest of El Reno, and luckily had only to ride a mile and a half before staking his claim. The claim is located about five miles south and a mile and half west of El Reno. It was about two weeks before we could move to the claim. My husband put up a box house about 12' x 14'.

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It was high enough that we put a floor on half of the loft, and used it as a bed-room, getting up to it by a ladder. We moved to the claim about the second of May and my second son was born August 14, 1892. My husband had to sleep in the loft when my sister came to stay with us and care for me and the baby. We had a stove, table, chairs, cupboard, and two beds in that one room. We had to haul our water from the Rock Island School House, one and one-half miles east of us. We dug a well about two months later, but it did not help much as the water was guppy and unfit for use, and we still had to haul water to drink. In the fall, we built a real house, a frame one with five rooms, and at the same time constructed a cistern and that cistern took care of the water problem.

We had three horses, three or four cows and about three dozen hens. My husband broke out a few acres and planted some squashes, pumpkins, and kaffir corn. He planted some wheat in the fall, for the next year. We had some money when we came to Oklahoma, but we had to live on it, and use it in building our house, paying the

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carpenters, etc., and it did not last long. So far as our food was concerned, we had brought a lot of fruit and potatoes with us and we raised everything in the line of vegetables, had all the buttermilk and eggs we could use, baked our own bread and cakes. The price for butter and eggs was very low, sometimes it hardly paid to take them to town. My father took a large basket of butter and eggs to town one time and rather than sell it for the price he could get, he brought it home again.

My husband was a great hand to hunt and he killed lots of prairie chickens and quail. He went into the Caddo country sometimes after wood and on one of these trips he killed a deer. He also killed wild turkeys, wild geese and wild ducks and we have had as many as twelve and fifteen of them on hand at one time.

We did our trading in El Reno, mostly at the Dixon Dry Goods and Grocery Store. We also traded with an Irishman by the name of Barrett, who ran The Barrett's Grocery Store, sometimes we patronized Cooks and Schrovers.

I thought this country was the funniest place when we came here. There was timber where I came from and it

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was cold. This country was prairie, covered with grass and stacks of wild hay were dotted here and there on most every claim. People were going barefoot and many of them plowing with oxen, and I had never seen anything like it before. There were no roads by section, the roads merely went cross country, just any way. The Rock Island School House was blown away by a cyclone the first summer we were on our claim. This cyclone also blew my aunt's (Mrs. Bradbury's home) away and my aunt lived with us until a dugout was built on her claim.

We had seven children, two girls and five boys. Our oldest children went to the Rock Island School House the first year, then the school located and called Pleasant Hill, that was located a mile and a half west of us, was built by subscription. Our first teacher was Addie Wheeler.

There was a diphtheria epidemic in our community at one time and we lost one of our boys by that disease, and all the family had it except Edwin, the baby.

Our first pleasure conveyance was a cart that we bought from a neighbor in Missouri and brought with us to Oklahoma. Later, we had a buggy and a carriage. We were

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very thrilled with our cart. On several occasions I was frightened by Indians, would go across the road to be with an aunt when they passed by, but I soon got used to them. A few years after we took our claim we purchased the farm just east of our quarter section, and this farm had a new two-room house on it. We moved this house and added it to our first one, making our home into a seven room dwelling. I still own this property and rent it. We lived on our claim for about thirty years then moved to El Reno and have made our home here since leaving the farm.

Our oldest son, Frank L. Hurst, is traveling freight and passenger agent for the Southern Pacific Railroad, and is residing in Oklahoma City. Our next son, Edwin D. Hurst, is a farmer near Banner, Oklahoma. Another son, Paul Hurst, is a farmer in Oregon. Our daughters, Mrs. H. P. Ricketts and Mrs. Esther Erbar, both live in El Reno. The other two children are dead.

Of relics of the early days I have a Bible published by the New York Bible Society in 1865. It has been in the possession of my family since about that time. I also

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have a pair of black leather baby shoes that are sixty-five or six years old. These little baby shoes were bought for a cousin of my husband. They were given to me and all of my children have worn them. The soles are very stiff, there is almost no pliability in them; the tops are scalloped. These shoes took first prize in one of our Pioneer exhibits here in El Reno.