

SPEAR, ROSE KELLY THOMPSON . INTERVIEW

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

Field Worker's name Mrs. Nora Lorrin, Reno, Oklahoma.

This report made on (date) August 25, 1937

1. Name Mrs. Rose (Kelly) (Thompson) Spear.

2. Post Office Address 1000, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) 520 South Williams Street

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month January Day 10 Year 1882

5. Place of birth Rocklin, Missouri

6. Name of Father Patrick Kelly Place of birth Ireland, August 3, 1840

Other information about father Died in Missouri, in 1880

7. Name of Mother Rose (Barrett) Kelly Place of birth Ireland.

Other information about mother Died in 1916.

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

Interview with Mrs. Rose Kelly Thompson
El Reno, Oklahoma.

Mrs. Spear lived in Missouri until she was fifteen years of age, then she and her folks moved to Iowa. There were seven children. She taught school in Iowa for seven or eight years. Her father died before they left Iowa. Her mother, a brother and sister, came to Oklahoma in 1894.

The brother bought a claim four miles west of Calumet and a half mile south. She came after they did, coming on the train to Oklahoma City. There was nothing in Oklahoma City but shacks when she arrived. She came first on a visit and then to stay.

She married Mr. Frank Thompson in 1895. He was a Kentuckian. He made the run from Reno City when the Cheyenne and Arapaho country was opened in 1892. He farmed and he was also a trader making a business of buying and selling horses and mules; he made lots of money at that business. They started life on their claim with a small two room house, a monkey stove to cook on

and an old fashioned iron pot to cook in.

Mrs. Spear still has the iron pot and her old fashioned coffee mill and she still owns the claim. She is keeping it for her son, Judge Emmett Thompson, who was thirty one years old last February and was torn out on that claim. She has only the one child. They lived about two and one half miles from "Little Chief's" Indian camp. They went to bed many times to the music of the Tom Toms. Sometimes there would be as many as two thousand Indians in that camp at one time. It was located on the North Canadian River. The Indians frightened her at first but she soon became accustomed to them and finally got so she did not mind, though she never made any personal friends among them.

Their home was so situated that they could see for miles up and down the North Canadian River Valley.

One time she was at home alone and she looked up the valley and saw a line of covered wagons, all Indians, as far as she could see. It frightened her because she did not know what was up. She thought maybe the Indians were on the war path and feared she might lose her scalp. She

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ran across the road to her folks. She still does not know why there were so many wagons unless they were going to Fort Reno after their pay or for the issues; there were dogs trailing the wagons and some of the Indians were on horseback. These Indians would pick up any dead animal and use it for food. If you wanted to get rid of a dead animal all you needed to do was to tell "Little Chief" and he would send about a dozen dogs and a half dozen squaws to take it away. Mrs. Spear got so she could understand the Indian sign language pretty well. She says that the Indians were honest. They would not steal and they harmed nobody. A neighbor used to kill and sell pork. An Indian came one day to buy pork and the meat was gone. The Indian took the amount of meat he wanted and carefully piled the right amount of money to pay for it and left it in the place from which he had taken the meat.

Mr. and Mrs. Spear lived on this claim for eleven years and before they left it to move to El Reno, they had a nice little five room cottage, a nice large hay

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barn, a cistern and an orchard which contained peaches, black berries, grapes, cherries and pears.

When they came to El Reno they built the home in which they now live and have been living there ever since.

Mrs. Spear's first husband died when her son Emmett was sixteen years old. Emmett went to college at Norman and Mrs. Spear was house mother for the Delta- i fraternity all the time until her son finished college; there were thirty boys at the fraternity house, she enjoyed it very much.

She then married R. L. Spear a real estate man in El Reno. He died about two years and a half ago.