

STULL, MARY ELIZABETH

INTERVIEW.

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

Field Worker's name Elizabeth I. Dunsan
This report made on (date) June 9 1937

1. Name Mary Elizabeth Stull "Lizzie M. Stull"
2. Post Office Address Medford, Oklahoma.
3. Residence address (or location) 148 West Guthrie
4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month March Day 28 Year 1872
5. Place of birth Clyde, Kansas (Cloud County)

6. Name of Father Jacob M. Knox Place of birth Greensburg, Penn. W. Moreland Co.

Other information about father Carpenter & farmer. Homesteaded in Kansas

7. Name of Mother Lucy E. Streator Place of birth Rome, N. Y. Oneida Co.

Other information about mother Moved to Illinois when 8 years old; came to

Kansas at the age of 26, where she was married to Mr. Knox.

Note: 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: 7

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Before anything was known of the opening of the Cherokee Strip, Mr. Stull, husband of Mrs. Lizzie M. Stull, and his brother-in-law, Mr. Kirk, had come to Kansas from Nebraska to lease a farm. The owner of the farm would not lease for less than five years, so the boys leased it for that length of time. They had been on the farm two years, raising three corn crops. In the year 1896 they learned that the Cherokee Strip was to be opened, so the boys went to the owner of the farm and told him that they wanted to make the run and would like to be released from the five year contract. He said that he would release them on one condition, that they pay him cash for what he would lose on the three remaining years. The boys couldn't do it, so Mr. Stull said he would stay on the place while Mr. Kirk made the run. When the lease expired, Mr. and Mrs. Stull decided to come to Oklahoma to visit the Kirks who had taken up a homestead here. While here, Mr. Stull decided he would look around, but he could not find a place that he thought suitable to farm. Mr. Stull then returned to Kansas to lease this same farm for two more years in 1896, but before the lease expired on the place, March, 1898, he located a farm through Mr. Kirk that he could buy by

buying this man's rights. He sold what corn crop he had out to a man that wanted to run his cattle in on the corn to feed them. The amount he sold for was \$1600.00. Mr. Stull had also harvested forty acres of wheat, some of which he sold, and kept enough out for flour to run them one year. While he was improving the place, they shipped an emigrant car here. This car was made up of the five head of horses, three cows, two pigs, feed consisting of 40 bushels of oats, 25 bushels wheat, and 8 bushels of potatoes, 150 quarts of canned fruit, three barrels of apples, plow, cultivator, lister with detachable planter, harrow, wagon, two sets of harness, one set of single harness, rake, mower, and the furniture consisting of two bedsteads with springs, dining room table, six dining chairs, three kitchen chairs, one rocking chair, dresser, safe, cook stove (Rock Island No. 8), one heating stove, sewing machine, dishes, and cooking utensils. They moved in with Mr. Stull's family.

The place he was going to file on was five miles south and three west of Pond Creek. It had been filed on by an old Civil War veteran of the Union Army. On the Sunday after Mr. Stull arrived, he wanted Mrs. Stull to go

with him and Mr. Kirk to look it over. While there, they ran across a man fixing fence who told them that the cattle had broken through and he had to fix it up. Mr. Miller, the neighbor on the east of Mr. Smith's place, didn't want anyone on this place as it was a wonderful grazing farm, so upon the suspicion that they were going to buy, Mr. Miller left that night for Government Springs (Kaid), to file a protest claiming that Mr. Smith had not proved up on the place since he had filed on it. A person had five years in which to prove up on a claim, but as Mr. Smith had served in the army three years, he did not have to stay on it for the full time, also he was a Government carrier, carrying the mail on the star route from Kremlin to Ponca City.

Mr. Stull found out that Mr. Miller had filed a contest, so he began to look for another place where he could buy the rights. If Mr. Stull had waited until this contest was settled, he could have bought the place but as it was, it was three years before it was settled, Mr. Smith winning the case.

Mr. Lewis, one of the friends of Mr. Kirk, and Mr. Stull, began to help look around for a place for Mr. Stull. Mr. Brown, a neighbor to Mr. Lewis told him that a man by

the name of Frank Hudson had a place that he thought he could buy the rights upon, but in the meantime Mr. Brown had talked to Frank Hudson about locating a place for Mr. Stull. He then told Mr. Lewis to tell Mr. Stull he had a place that he would like to sell the rights to, but Mr. Brown had told Mr. Hudson that Mr. Stull wanted a place with a good well on it. Mr. Hudson went out to the place to look it over, finding the well very low, so he hauled water from one of the neighbors and filled it half way up. After this he got in touch with Mr. Brown and told him to go and look the place over. Mr. Stull went over to see the place and Mrs. Stull mentioned to Mr. Stull about the well, but Mr. Stull said he would clean that out as it had dead rabbits in it, and they decided on the site to build their house, chicken house, and barn.

Mr. Stull filed on the place November 9, 1898. They then moved a few things over in the sod house that was built by Mr. Hudson. They started to build the barn first so as to shelter the stock.

November 25 of the same year, they spent Thanksgiving at Grandpa Stull's also on January 28, they had a big surprise dinner on Grandpa Stull's birthday. On February 6, 1899, they moved into their own home. They had three

weeks of very cold weather, but the rest of the winter was mild. The first crop they planted was twenty acres of corn, and twenty acres of oats; twenty acres of wheat had already been planted when they moved on the place. They also planted five acres of cane and ten acres of kaffir corn and raised pretty fair crops. That fall they planted sixty acres of wheat, but before it could be gathered a hail storm almost ruined it, so that it yielded only nine bushels to the acre. From then on the ground was put into wheat and each year more ground was broken until 120 acres were prepared for wheat. Each year they planted fruit trees, apples, peaches, pears, apricots, plums, currants, dewberries and many other things.

The years that followed were prosperous years as well as lean. They stayed on this farm until Mr. Stull's death. Mr. Stull was township trustee in 1910, serving four years. This was the first time the law established an assessor permanently, and Mr. Delzell was appointed by the Governor of Oklahoma to that office. In 1924 he ran for county assessor and was nominated, but his death occurred September 13, 1924. The committeemen then asked

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Mrs. Stull to run, and she did, and was elected in November. She took office, January 6, 1925, serving eight years, being the first Democrat to be elected in this county. Mrs. Stull still lives in Medford and her ninety-two year old mother lives with her.