

REIMS, ANDREW

INTERVIEW

3860.

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

REIMS, ANDREW.

INTERVIEW.

8860.

Field Worker's name M. A. Nelson.

This report made on (date) September 22, 1937. 1937

1. Name Andrew Reims.

2. Post Office Address 324 E. Randolph, Enid, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) 1310 E. Main, Enid, Oklahoma.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month October Day 30 Year 1874.

5. Place of birth Albert Lea, Minnesota.

Mr. Reims is a mechanic. He stutters slightly.

6. Name of Father George Reims. Place of birth Germany.

Other information about father Blacksmith, farmer.

7. Name of Mother ? Place of birth ?

Other information about mother Children, John, George, Leonard,

Fred, Andrew, August, Charles.

Notes or reply to 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 4.

M. A. Nelson,
Interviewer.
Sept. 22, 1937.

Interview With Andrew Reims,
E. Randolph, Enid, Oklahoma.

I came to Oklahoma in 1898, locating three and one-half miles northeast of Kremlin, with my parents. My parents had a very good house with four rooms downstairs and three upstairs but this was unusual. Many of the settlers in that neighborhood were still living in sod houses, and sending their children to sod school houses. Other outbuildings, such as barns and chicken houses were also of sod.

My father, who had come from Germany, used a cradle to cut grain up in Minnesota where he lived before he moved here. Here in Oklahoma, however, they used self-binders and steam threshers.

When it came to ploughing we still used a walking plough and I ploughed a good many acres that way.

I fenced and crossfenced the place which previously had been open prairie. I farmed on this and my place for twenty-seven years.

Kremlin was started about 1894, and grew to be one of the largest towns in the county. Marked among four largest on some maps. At one time, about 1912, it had about 900

people in it, and twenty to twenty-five main buildings.

I doubt if there are more than 100 people there now.

On Saturdays they would come in their covered wagons to the stores to trade and visit. There were very few cowboys and Indians in our section, but there was a rather tough element there. Some one said they were all outlaws at Kremlin. At any rate, a man who worked on the Rock Island said it was one of the worst towns on the line. However, there were many good honest settlers, too.

I built a little shack 10 x 9 feet of 1" x 12" lumber.

There were three churches in town: Christian, Lutheran, and Baptist. The population was not of any particular nation but was just a mixture.

Hack Cross ran a livery barn, Hardings ran a clothing store and grocery, and Olaf and Will Cumerson ran another grocery store. There was no furniture store. There were three saloons in the little town. Lon, Leil had a lumber yard and there was a flour mill, also a grain elevator. The post office was in a little shack 12' x 14'. I made my furniture in my little shack out of screw lumber, myself.

In 1904, it rained on the first day of July. There was no more rain until the 12th of April, 1905. The crop of wheat in 1905 was four or five bushels to the acre.

About 1909, some one put up a garage in Kremlin.

About 1925, the first combines came. The Rock Island depot was put up by the railroad in line and not by the citizens.

The fourth of July was the big event of the year.

Shooting contests were popular and horseracing, both suited to the time. The older men would also pitch horses' oes.

The younger would walk up and down the hot, treeless streets.

When I came to my parents' place it was all grass but by exertions soon transformed it into ^a good grain farm.

To this little house I brought my wife, but I had the misfortune to lose her not long after. Discouraged, I did not like to live in the house alone, so I moved here to Aid.

The first job I got was at Frank's Machine Shop, where I worked a year and a half. From 1920-1927, I worked at the Ford agency as an auto mechanic. Then I was forty-five so they laid me off. I started a little shop at 312 S. Maine. Later I moved here.

Autos, aeroplanes, gas lines and other modern inventions came to Kremlin more slowly than in Aid. It was not till

lately that they had water and lights. They do not have gas now.

There were four large fires in Kremlin. In 1904 several business houses burned. The fight was by a bucket brigade. In 1906 the flour mill burned. All we had at the time was a cart with a reel of hose. In 1912 we had a fire in the long bell lumber yard. Now we have a hose truck. Then everybody remembers when the oil tanks got on fire.