

MANLEY, EDWIN

INTERVIEW

#4834

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

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**MARLEY, EDWIN**

**INTERVIEW**

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Field Worker's name Robert W. Small,

This report made on (date) July 15th, 1937

1. Name Edwin Manley

2. Post Office Address 304 West Grand Ave. Tonkawa, Okla.

3. Residence address (or location) \_\_\_\_\_

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month July 10 Day 10 Year 1862

5. Place of birth Lewis, Cass County, Iowa

6. Name of Father Edmund Manley Place of birth Indiana

Other information about father \_\_\_\_\_

7. Name of Mother Susanna Everly Manley, Place of birth Ohio

Other information about mother \_\_\_\_\_

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 13.

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Robert W. Small,  
Interviewer,  
July 15, 1937.

An Interview with Mr. Edwin Manley,  
304 West Grand Ave., Tonkawa, Okla.

Edwin Manley was born July 10, 1862, in Lewis, Cass County, Iowa. His father, Edmund Manley, was born in 1818 at Newport, Vermillion County, Indiana, and his mother, Susanna Everly Manley, was born in Ohio, in 1827.

The elder Manleys were married in 1853 and the following year, 1854, moved to Iowa and in 1871, to Kansas, settling on a homestead in Coffey County, seven miles southwest of Eaverly, where they resided until 1896 when they came to Oklahoma, and passed the remainder of their lives at the home of their son, Edwin.

In the year 1881, Edwin left his father's homestead and went to Cheyenne, Wyoming, where he was employed by the United States Government as a teamster to haul ammunition and provisions for the soldiers.

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During the year 1881, he went from Cheyenne to Fort

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Thomas, Arizona, near the San Carlos Indian Agency, hauling ammunition for the Third Cavalry which had been dispatched from Cheyenne to quell the Indians in the southwest country; Geronimo, Chief of the Apaches was on the warpath. The soldiers chased Geronimo here and there over the country until finally in 1882 he was captured.

In 1882, Mr. Manley was engaged in helping to remove a remnant of the Cheyenne tribe of Indians from the Pine Ridge Indian Agency in South Dakota, to Fort Reno, Oklahoma Territory, where they remained until 1883, when they were taken back to South Dakota.

In 1883, Mr. Manley went to the Ute Indian country of Utah and stayed there until 1884 when he went to Colorado where he remained about one year, after which he returned to his father's homestead in Coffey County, Kansas, where he engaged in farming.

On May 12, 1887, he was united in marriage to Miss Charlotte Dudley, of Ohio, to which union were born five

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children .

In July, 1893, anticipating that the Cherokee Outlet would be opened to settlement that fall, Mr. Manley and his family, consisting of Mrs. Manley and their two little children, left Coffey County, Kansas, bringing a wagon and team which Mrs. Manley drove through herself and two extra head of horses and eight head of cattle which Mr. Manley drove; settled six miles west of Arkansas City, Kansas, within two miles of the Kansas-Oklahoma Territory line, where they lived in a tent until the opening of the new territory to settlement. The distance traveled in making this move was about one hundred and fifty miles and the journey required ten days, making an average distance of fifteen miles per day.

In a short time after their arrival near the border line, the President, Grover Cleveland, issued his proclamation opening the Cherokee Outlet to settlement and designating the day and hour of September 17, 1893, at

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high noon, as the time for the opening.

The last Monday preceding the opening was set as the first day for the registration of entrants in the race and in order to be on time, Mr. Manley left his home on Sunday night, arriving at the registration booths at two A. M. Monday morning, where he found a multitude of men waiting for the booths to be opened. The crowd in waiting were formed in lines around the several registration booths and such a mass of humanity was there waiting that it took several days to register them all.

Mr. Manley was in line from early Monday morning until Tuesday evening before he could get registered. When night came, the men in the lines would lie down upon the ground or on blankets, if they had any, and when they left their places in the line the men next to them would guard these places until they returned.

A strip of land about a hundred feet in width along ~~the border line in Oklahoma Territory was set apart for the use of people coming to take part in the race and this~~

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strip of land was completely filled with men, horses, wagons, buggies, carts and every known means of conveyance.

A few minutes before twelve some shots were fired out in the new territory and one man started to run on a fiery horse but before getting far the soldiers shot and killed him; the man fell from his horse which proceeded on his way with the empty saddle on his back and ran for miles before being caught.

When the final hour for firing the signal gun had arrived at high noon on September 17, 1893, Mr. Manley started in that memorable race from a point one half mile west of the Chilocco Indian Reservation and riding a trained cow pony, noted for speed and endurance proceeded over the bare, burned black prairies to the valley land on the Chikaskia River where he drove his claim stake on the Northeast Quarter of Section 9, Township 28, North, Range 1 East, a distance of seventeen and a half miles

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south and two and a half miles west of the starting point. He covered this two and a half miles in one hour and five minutes.

On Tuesday after the "race" Mr. Manley and some of his neighbor claimants went to the land office at Perry to file on their claims; so many people were there to file that the authorities adopted a plan for the multitude to organize into companies of a hundred each and each company was designated by a certain letter and or number the members of that company filed in that order.

Most of the claimants, including Mr. Manley, returned to their homes and waited until their number was about to be reached at the filing office before they returned again to file. The number filed each day was printed in the newspaper published in Perry, which furnished claimants throughout the country with information that enabled each claimant to arrive at about the exact day on which he could return to Perry and file his

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claim. On the opening day, September 17, Mrs. Manley and her two children, John and Mabel, were stationed near the line where they could witness the "run".

The first work done by Mr. Manley on his claim was to build a pen for his calves, in order to keep them separated from the cows; this pen was built of poles cut from timber on a nearby creek. He next dug a well fourteen feet deep striking sheet water which he later learned was fourteen feet deep which furnished water in abundance at all times.

After a rain had fallen and moistened the dry, parched earth, Mr. Manley broke sod for a house which he built 14'x18' in floor space with eight foot walls which he covered with shingles and floored with lumber; two full sized windows and a door were placed in the building and the walls inside were plastered and white washed and the house was a real mansion for those days.

The next thing to be built was a sod chicken house covered with hay; then sheds for stock were built

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with sod walls and straw roofs; since so many buildings had been constructed of sod, Mr. Manley called his place "Sodom".

Mrs. Manley brought eight hens and a rooster to the new claim and the following spring, which was the year 1894, she raised a hundred chickens. She carefully used the milk from their cows to make butter for family use and had some to spare for market which with the surplus eggs from her flock of chickens, and cheese made from milk was almost all traded for groceries at their trading point, which was Cross, which is now a part of Ponca City.

Occasionally, after getting what supplies the family needed if a few cents were still due her on her produce she would be paid the balance in money which was usually spent for postage stamps. The Manleys had looked forward to just such times as they were experiencing on this new claim and had laid away wearing apparel and various articles for use when they should be moulding this quarter

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section of raw, barren prairie land into a farm home; thus, their wise provision necessitated a minimum of expense in wearing apparel for the first year or two.

In the spring of 1894, Mr. Manley planted some few acres of land in corn, a few acres in kaffir and some in sorghum cane.

The late spring and early part of the summer of 1894 was hot and dry and crops were looking "sickly" by July 1st.

On July the 4th, the Manleys went to Blackwell to attend a celebration and on their return home in the afternoon the corn was almost all lying flat on the ground because of the heat and lack of moisture. No corn was raised that year, but a few heads of kaffir had matured some grain and they made five gallons of sorghum from the cane; potatoes had been planted but made no yield. In July, Mr. Manley sowed some turnip seed which came up but the grasshoppers ate every plant that peeped through the soil. Mr. Manley had lost one horse by sickness the

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first year but he still had enough horses to work.

In the fall of 1894, Mr. Manley sowed about twenty-five or thirty acres to wheat, on sod land which came up and made good pasture for cattle for some time but the dry and cold weather completely killed the wheat out that winter. This wheat land was planted to broom corn the following spring which made a good yield but the price of broom corn was so low after it was harvested that he lost \$5.00 per ton. He had paid \$5.00 per ton to have it harvested. Some vegetables were raised that season and considerable kaffir corn was made.

Mr. Manley went to Elk County, Kansas, to husk corn during the husking season of that year, 1895, and was gone for twenty-five days during which time he made eighteen dollars husking corn at two cents per bushel; however, seven days were spent in coming and going and in looking for work. He worked long hours- from daylight until dark, husking this corn.

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During these early years, food, clothing and all the necessities of life were cheap; rice was sold at four and one-fourth cents per pound. Mrs. Manley received from twenty to twenty-one cents per pound for the butter that she marketed and a fair price for the cheese she sold.

In 1895, the people of Mr. Manley's neighborhood voted bonds in the amount of \$300.00 to buy material to construct a school building. Several men in the community were good mechanics and carpenters and everyone agreed to donate their services in helping construct the building.

Lumber at that time was selling at \$10.00 to \$12.00 per thousand feet. The schoolhouse was soon built in a substantial way; so much so, that it is being used for school purposes to this day and may last for years to come. The first school in the community was taught by Mrs. Tom Constant in her house; she was paid \$25.00 per month, for a three months term. R. H. Heagy was the first teacher to

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teach in the new school building; Mrs. Constant was the teacher for the second year and for some years following.

Sunday Schools were taught in brush <sup>arbor</sup>/tabernacles and private homes through the country; occasionally a preacher would hold services at some brush arbor or other convenient place.

After the new school building was built a revival meeting was held in it and afterward, Mr. Manley, Ed Mavity and E. G. Draper gave about six months of their time in soliciting donations to build a church. Mr. Manley was the secretary of the organization and still has in his possession the old book containing all the minutes of their various meetings. The church was built in 1900 and dedicated in the spring of 1901, free of all debt, and was named the Excelsior M.E. Church. Mr. Manley was elected Sunday School Superintendent in 1901 and served continuously for fourteen years. A regular pastor was procured for work in the community in 1896.

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In the fall of 1895, Mr. Manley planted twenty-five acres to wheat and harvested fourteen bushels per acre; wheat was worth forty cents; wheat for previous crops had been borrowed which he repaid from this crop and then he sowed another crop from the remainder on hand; the following year a bumper crop was harvested and the prices were good, ranging from fifty-five cents per bushel to over \$1.00 per bushel. When Mr. Manley began to sell this big crop of wheat at good prices he began the construction of new barns and additions to his dwelling house and he has today good buildings of various kinds on his old homestead; however, after living on it for twenty-eight years, he moved to Tonkawa, in 1921, where he has lived since with the exception of four years in Texas. Mr. Manley's present home at 304 West Grand Avenue is a seven room house with every modern convenience. On May 16th, last, Mr. and Mrs. Manley celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary; on which occasion a hundred and fifty guests were present, most of whom were old pioneer neighbors and early day settlers.