

THORNTON, MARY ELLEN COX.⁸³

INTERVIEW

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Carl R. Sherwood
Investigator
October 1, 1937.

Interview with Mary Ellen Cox Thornton
Vian, Oklahoma.

I was born near Joplin, Missouri, in 1859, and came to the Indian Territory with my parents in 1878 and located at Muldrow where we farmed.

My father, Clisby Cox, entered the Civil War in 1860 when there was great excitement among the Cherokees, for the bitterness between the North and South extended throughout the nation. Many of the Indians were wealthy slave owners, and were opposed to any change from their traditional customs.

My father was under General Albert Pike and fought in the Confederacy. At a meeting held in Tahlequah in 1861 a large number of Cherokees were present and wanted alliance with the South. My father had his horse shot out from under him in a battle at Webber Falls and died a few years after the war ended.

My mother, brother and sisters and I moved to where Vian is now and we cleared the timber off a

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small tract of land in the Creek bottom, and built a log house and farmed and raised stock on the open range.

There were many wild cows, hogs and horses and when people wanted a wild horse they would round up a wild herd and get it headed for a timbered ravine where they had built a high brush fence with a narrow entrance. The men would enter this brush corral on horses and rope the one they wanted and let the rest go back on the range. The ones they caught were taken home and branded, worked and ridden until they became gentle and would range with the tame horses.

In 1877, I was married to Smith Thornton and we are the parents of two children, Thomas and William.