

WOODS, ANNETTE B. (SITTON) INTERVIEW #9519

139

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

WOODS, ANNETTE B. (SITTON). INTERVIEW. 9519.

Field Worker's name Mrs. Nora Lorrin.

This report made on (date) December 24, 1937. 1937

1. Name Mrs. Annette B. (Sitton) Woods.

2. Post Office Address El Reno, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) 111 North Macomb Street.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month July Day 19 Year 1875.

5. Place of birth Missouri.

6. Name of Father Jarrett M. Sitton. Place of birth Missouri.

July 2, 1831.

Other information about father Died January 11, 1888.

7. Name of Mother Susanna (Mitchell) Sitton. Place of birth January 26

1844.

Other information about mother Died September 14, 1931.

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 6.

WOODS, MRS. ANNETTE B. (SITTON). INTERVIEW.

9519.

Nora Lorrin,
Investigator,
Dec. 24, 1937.

An Interview With Mrs. Annette B.
(Sitton) Woods, El Reno, Oklahoma.

Mrs. Annette B. (Sitton) Woods was born in Vernon County, Missouri, on a farm July 19, 1875. Her father, Mr. Jarrett M. Sitton, was born in Lincoln County, Missouri, July 2, 1831, and died January 11, 1888. Her mother, Susanna (Mitchell) Sitton, was born January 26, 1844, and died September 14, 1931. There were five children, three girls and two boys in the Sitton family. Annette grew up in Missouri and her mother, a brother, H. W. Sitton and she, left Missouri and came to Oklahoma in January of 1892, leaving a sister, who is now Mrs. C. R. Miller, in Missouri to finish a term of school.

Mrs. Wood's brother, W. S. Sitton, had come ahead and filed on a claim for himself and he also filed for a widow's rights on a claim and held it for his mother, who was a widow of a Civil War veteran. That was permissible, and when Mrs. Sitton came she filed on it again herself. It was located fifteen miles west and one mile north of El Reno. A Mr. Roy A. Patterson, of Okarche, moved a sawmill

WOODS, MRS. ANNETTE B. (SITTON).. INTERVIEW. 9519.

-2-

to Mrs. Sitton's claim, sawing the cottonwood timber that was plentiful on her claim into lumber on the shares and they built a small two roomed frame house of this green cottonwood lumber, battening the cracks and as the boards were inclined to warp badly, they later had to re-bat it with wider boards. The Sitton family lived in a tent for six or eight weeks while their house was under construction. Mrs. Woods' brother, W. S. Sitton, had a team and they used his team to break their sod with, later buying a young team of mules, that would run away every chance that they got. They shipped a couple of bedsteads and their Kimball organ, and a very large box of meat. Some of their furniture was home-made and boxes were made into cupboards. Their main diet was meat, flour, meal, potatoes, garden stuff, prairie chickens and once one of Mrs. Woods' brothers killed a deer and they had venison and there were also rabbits, wild turkeys and quail. They tried cooking wheat and Kaffir corn. El Reno was their trading point, and the Crow Mercantile Company and a novelty store conducted by a Mr. F. E. Rickey were their main trading places.

WOODS, MRS. ANNETTE B. (SITTON)

INTERVIEW.

9519.

-3-

The Sitton family raised wheat, oats, some corn and garden stuff and a great many sweet potatoes. The first year the crops were good but later it was hot and dry and the crops were not so good. They at first had to haul water for a mile and a quarter and their closest neighbor was a mile away and there was just one house between the Sitton's claim and El Reno. They got their mail in El Reno, until a little postoffice called "Enehoe" was started and conducted by a man of the name of Kinney. The neighbors held Sunday School in a half dugout which was the home of a Mr. Shields but it was four miles away and a lot of people who lived to the northwest of the Sitton's considered it too far to go so they changed the Sunday School to Mr. Kinney's store, Mr. Kinney giving them permission to use it and putting boards over nail kegs for seats. They had a lumber wagon for a conveyance and Mrs. Woods had a pony and side saddle and she used to ride horseback a great deal. They drilled a well in 1893, but the water was "gyppy", but not so bad, but that they could use it but they could not cook beans in it. Life on the claim was not very exciting, as people had to make

WOODS, MRS. ANNETTE B. (SITTON).

INTERVIEW.

9519.

-4-

their own good times and had to be content with heat, hot winds, bad water and all the problems of a new country, fighting prairie fires to save the little home, killing snakes and hawks, helping to make sorghum, measuring lumber from the sawmill.

As for fuel they burned wood and also sold wood for 50 cents a load. Mrs. Woods before her marriage taught school in the country for two years, getting \$25.00 and \$30.00 per month. She taught at Deep Dale, a school fifteen miles west of El Reno. She also named this school. She also taught a term at Sunny Hill, in the school district just north of Deep Dale. The building was small with no maps or helps of any kind. One of the schools had a blackboard that was made of wood, painted black and it might have been made of a cottonwood slab; it was about two feet wide and four feet long. Mrs. Woods had to exercise a good deal of ingenuity, to keep twenty-five children interested, with so little equipment. She attended the institute at the El Reno High School building located at 700 South Rock Island. There have been many changes in the rural schools since that time. Deep Dale school is

WOODS, MRS. ANNETTE B. (SITTON). INTERVIEW. 9519.

-5-

now a large frame building well equipped and up-to date. It is built on the opposite side of the road from where it used to be located. Miss Annette B. Sitton and Mr. J. M. Woods were married August 2, 1898, and came to live in El Reno. The streets were dusty in fair weather and muddy when it rained and there were no sidewalks, no trees but there was a bridge over Cooney Street just north of the Central School building. There was a draw there that has since been filled in, and the bridge was high enough so that people could walk under it. When Mr. and Mrs. Woods came to El Reno, they settled at 704, South ~~Rock~~ ^Rock Island Street and lived at that address for thirty-five years. Mr. Woods has followed farming and ranching and has been a stock and cattleman for years. He has often employed Indians to work for him. Mrs. Woods recalls that at one time an Indian came to see her husband, saw her Kimball organ and indicated by gestures that he wanted to play on it. Mrs. Woods, thinking to humor this Indian, gave him permission, never dreaming that he could really play, and she was very much surprised to find that he could play the organ beautifully. This Indian's name

WOODS, MRS. ANNETTE B. (SITTON).

INTERVIEW. 9519.

-6-

was Frank Hill. Mrs. Woods was kind to him and he told her that he wanted her to see his "papoose" and said that he would bring papoose so quite a while after that he came one day, bringing three small children with him, for Mrs. Woods to see. He was very much enthused over his "papooses"; Mrs. Woods did not see them till he came in until he was ready to leave when she went to the door as they left and there, sitting flat in the bottom of the wagon, was his squaw and he had not even mentioned her. Mrs. Woods said that they did not see much of the Indians but they would see them on the trail, and hear their tom-toms when they were dancing; Mr. and Mrs. Woods always treated the Indians right, and they in turn treated the white people all right and Mrs. Woods never was afraid of the Indians. Mr. and Mrs. Woods were living at 704, South Rock Island in 1901 when the Kiowa and Comanche drawing was held here. The people of El Reno did not know until the day before the drawing in 1901, that El Reno was chosen to be one of the places where the drawing was to be held. The place for the drawing was planned in Washington and everybody was taken unaware.

WOODS, MRS. ANNETTE B. (SITTON).

INTERVIEW.

9519.

-7-

The building where Mrs. Woods attended the County Institute was used for a ladies registration booth at the time of the drawing but the big brick building was not yet constructed and there were three small frame buildings there then. People had to stand in line in order to register and it was in front of their house that women would stand in line until they became sick and faint and then would come to Mr. Woods' house and ask to be allowed to rest; many women would get thirsty and tired and would want water to drink and would ask to rest on Mr. Woods' porch. Water was very scarce, and they did not have enough. People offered to pay them for water, and so Mr. and Mrs. Woods had a lot of sick folks and a lot of well folks in their house during the registration.

They have one child, a son, Glenn A. Woods, who is married and living in California. Mrs. Woods lived on the claim with her mother and family for five years, from 1893 until she was married and has been in El Reno practically ever since. Of early day belongings, she still has the Kimball organ, a small chest that was made in 1840, an ivory handled cap and ball (percussion) pistol that her

WOODS, MRS. ANNETTE B. (SITTON).

INTERVIEW.

9519.

-8-

father brought from California in 1856. She and her sister, Mrs. C. R. Miller, both belong to the Daughters of the American Revolution and are of English, Irish, Dutch and Welsh lineage.