

COLEMAN, GEORGE M.

INTERVIEW

10449

269

LEGEND & STORY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

-270

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW.

10449

Field worker's name Louise S. Barnes

This report made on (date) April 13, 1938

1. This legend was secured from (name) George M. Coleman

Address Dover, Oklahoma.

This person is (male or female) White, Negro, Indian,

If Indian, give tribe _____

2. Origin and history of legend or story Some experiences of a Pennsylvania Dutchman and Oklahoma Pioneer.

3. Write out the legend or story as completely as possible. Use blank sheets and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached 22

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW

10449

Louise S. Barnes, Investigator.
Indian Pioneer History, S.-149.
April 13, 1938.

Interview with George M. Coleman
Dover, Oklahoma.

I was born on December 27, 1862, in Milton, near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and am almost as native as an Indian. I heard my father, in 1876, say he knew that his folks had been in America for two-hundred years, but that he did not know how much longer. His people were spoken of as the Dam Dutch (Amsterdam).

In 1865 my folks moved to Illinois, and of course took me along. I grew to manhood in Mt. Carroll, Carroll County, and was given a high school education. In 1884 I cast my first vote for Blaine and Logan. Then in the spring of 1885, a neighbor and I decided to take Greeley's advice to go west and grow up with the country. We decided to go to Wellington, Kansas, as a place near the border of civilization. We first put up at the Barnard Hotel, where David Payne had died the year before. In a short time we learned that two young men from our home town lived at Milan, sixteen miles west of Wellington, and we went out to see them. They persuaded us to

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW

10449

-2-

start a restaurant and confectionery there. Well we had a good time while it lasted. The next year my partner and I separated; he went out to Cow Land (now Ravana) and I took a pre-emption claim. I got a job clerking in a store joining our restaurant. This store belonged to a Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Johnston, formerly from Paisley, Scotland. He had been a schoolmate of James and Peter Coats, the thread men. I worked for him until the spring of 1887; when I joined a cowboy with a bunch of wild bronchos to sell through the country. We closed out at Kingman, Kansas. My partner came back to Sumner County, where he had a farm. I still had two ponies and decided to go out to Ravana; went west through Pratt, Cullison, Greensburg, Ft. Dodge, Dodge City, Cimarron, on to Ravana. My bed at night was my saddle blankets on the prairie with my saddle for a pillow. I arrived at Ravana the night of July 3rd, slept in the haymow at the livery stable, and was in the fantastic parade of the celebration the next day.

I got a job for the first month I was there as a roustabout at a hotel. The next month a druggist I

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW

10449

-3-

was acquainted with from Sumner County, got me to work for him in a drugstore. There was a lot of sickness with what they called Mountain Fever, and they even had me to fill prescriptions. It was harmless stuff- the doctors admitted they did not know what to do for it. They gave all the patients the same thing, a mixture of cinchonada and ingluvion. Some got well in spite of them, and some did not. By fall people were leaving that country faster than they came. I got a letter in September from Mr. Johnston, the man at Milan, I had clerked for, offering me much better wages to come back and work for him; in spite of the protest of the man I was working for I lost no time in getting back.

While I was out in Garfield County, a county seat fight was on between Eminence and Ravana.

There, where many girls and old maids took claims and were anxious to catch a partner, one was bragging to me about the amount of fuel she had gathered up, consisting of cow and sheep chips, commonly called buffalo chips. One evening another young man and I went to a dance; he had a rig while I was horse back; at the

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW

10449

-4-

close of the dance he asked the young lady that he was dancing with if he might see her home. She said that she would have to see if her brother would take her baby home; he did.

In 1888 while clerking for Mr. Johnston, my a sweetheart, Clara E. Day, and I became engaged to be married, but we decided to put it off until I got a home, so I went to Oklahoma when it opened for settlement.

On April 16, 1889, our bunch went to Caldwell, Kansas, to get ready for the opening. On Thursday the 18th, the soldiers led us for the first day's march, and halted us at Pond Creek, north of Salt Fork River. On the first day some seemed more excited than any other time, and seemed to want to be the first in line. I remember one man in particular was driving what is called a spike team, a yoke of oxen hitched to a wagon, and a horse to the end of the wagon tongue. He shouted, yelled and whipped the team but he had a heavily loaded wagon, and oxen are slow, so he did not get first place. On the morning of the 19th we were led by the soldiers for the second day's march. Salt Fork was high and the

COLEMAN, GEORGE M.- INTERVIEW

10449

-5-

quicksand bad. A freighter known as Dutch Joe took the lead across the river, and that night we were halted at Skeleton Ranch east of what is now North Enid; that was on Friday. Then Saturday, the 20th, we were taken on down to Buffalo Springs, just north of Bison. There we were held over the next day, Sunday. Major Lillie, Pawnee Bill, branched off and went east. There was an estimate of ten thousand in the crowd. The soldiers were on guard along the line to the south all day and night; occasionally some one who could, or would not restrain himself from making a try would make a break, and several of the soldiers would try to capture him. If they caught him they would keep him under guard until the legal time. Monday morning, April 22nd, at ten o'clock, we were taken several miles south to the Oklahoma line. Our crowd from Milan, Kansas, twenty-one in all, left our wagons in camp under guard of one who did not want a claim, and went horse back to the line. We had come down the old Chisholm Trail from Caldwell; at Buffalo Springs I saw the graves of two men who had been killed by the Indians at the same time Pat Hennessey was killed. The soldiers were lined up along the line on

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. INTERVIEW

10449

-5-

the Oklahoma side. The crowd were in all kinds of conveyances of that time, and some a foot. At twelve o'clock the soldiers fired the guns as a signal for the start, and the race was on.

I rode along beside an old soldier, and he said it beat any charge he ever saw during the War. It was said that many an accident happened at the start but as we were in the lead we did not witness many. We could see timber to the southeast, and I headed for that; most of our outfit stopped in the north side of the timber; one other and I decided to go through the timber, to see what it was like on the south. We scared up many deer, some prairie chickens and turkeys; the timber was about six miles through.

The first water we came to was the Cimarron River, and we thought we would get a drink, but a drop was enough as we found it to be brine. We then turned back and came to a camp of some Sooners, and from appearance they had been there at least a week. They showed us a spring, also a corner tree, and claimed the four claims around it. I stopped west one mile and got the claim I still

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. INTERVIEW

10449

-7-

have. The other man went back to the north side of the timber and took a claim joining his brothers. Two days afterwards he brought my wagon to me. In the meantime I rustled my chuck from among the new settlers who had gotten in. The next morning after the opening an old Cowboy came by where I had my pony staked out, and wanted to know what I was doing there; I told him I was holding down a claim. Well, he said, I was on his claim and it would not do me any good. I told him I did not know where the lines ran, but I claimed the spot that I was sitting on. He wanted to know when I got in, and I put it about the time it would have taken me to ride direct to the claim, about three o'clock. He said that he got in about the same time. Well, we both lied - it was nearly sundown when I got on the claim, and he came in a wagon with his family and was not there when I got there. He did not try to bluff me as I had a gun, and looked as tough as he did. We did not have any trouble, for when we had the line run it ran between us, and he and his partner who came in with him, were both on the same claim, and one of them had to move back on

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW

10449

-8-

the next claim.

All of our crowd could have gotten claims, but not half filed. It was said the others were looking for claims with a pansake tree on it; they could not see how they could make a living and went back to rent homes already established, while I decided to take a chance; we had six months to get on our claim. I went back to Kansas for the summer, bought and gathered up poultry for a poulterer in Argonia, Kansas. When it was time to go to my claim a younger brother came out from Illinois to go with me. When we got down to Polecat Creek in the Strip, there we found camped on the bank of the creek Fil Patterson, a man from Milan; he had a heavily loaded wagon and part of his family, a mule and an old horse that was worn-out, and was waiting for the old horse to gain strength to go on; his time to get on his claim would be up in a few days. I had an extra pony following loose so I caught it up and let him put in one of my heavy horses, and by doubling up in the bad places we got through all right. My brother and I took the wagon bed off the wagon when we got

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. IN T E R V I E W

10449

-9-

to my claim, and slept in that. Game was plentiful, and my brother hunted most of the time, and I hauled stove wood to Kingfisher. We made a living and got our cabin up, a log hut 12 x 14, chinked and daubed with mortar and covered with shakes (oak shingles). Our principal food was corn pone, sour dough biscuits, game, sorghum, sow belly, and turnips. Everyone had turnips grown that fall on sod; we had no milk that first winter. The next spring I broke out twenty acres of ground with a sod plow, and turned up many a rattlesnake.

The Rock Island built through here the summer of '89 and the townsite first established was called Red Rock. The first store was owned by Tom Carter; it was what they called a stockade and covered with a dirt roof; it was a general store with a post office in the front part. That fall, 1890, he learned that I had been a clerk, so he wrote to Mr. Johnston for whom I had worked, and came out to my claim and hired me to come and work for him. The first wages, thirty dollars per month, would not sound very good now, but it seemed like good money

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. INTERVIEW

10449

-10-

to me then, along with my claim. He later told me I could not have gotten a better recommendation than Mr. Johnston gave me.

In April, 1889, after learning the numbers of my claim, I went to Kingfisher to file; there was a long line at the land office so that one could not get to file for days; they gave us numbers and told us what day we could file; some men who had influence were accused of getting a fellow in ahead of his time for a price. I was told I could file the thirteenth of May, in about two weeks, so we took a trip down to Fort Reno, and over to Oklahoma City. We were well acquainted with John Miller, and family, the section foreman of the Santa Fe Railroad, who had moved there the year before.

While camped at Council Grove, I met a fellow with a .38 Marlin Rifle that he wanted to trade for my shotgun. I looked around for something to try it out on. There were some very tall trees, and I saw a small squirrel, as I thought, in the top of one; I fired at it and down it came, and it proved to be a very large

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW

10449

-11-

squirrel so I traded. We got back to Kingfisher by the thirteenth and I filed. We then went to my claim and put up the logs for a cabin, but when I got back in the fall they had been stolen and moved off.

We then started back to Kansas for six months, and on the prairie north of the timber we saw a prairie chicken about 300 feet distant. There were three wagons in our outfit. A fellow got off of one of the other wagons with a shot gun, and was walking out toward the chicken to get in range; he had got about halfway out when I picked up my rifle without the intention of firing it, I took aim at the chicken, I got such a good bead on it, I felt so sure of getting it, I thought, too, if I flushed it he would get it with the shot gun, that I pulled the trigger, and at the crack of the gun the chicken fell over. The other fellow stopped and looked at the chicken for a second or two, turned around and went back to his wagon. I told him to get it, that it was his chicken, but I had to go after it myself. We had it for dinner. There was no way to cross the Cimarron River, but to ford it, in hauling wood to Kingfisher. The quick-

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW

10449

-12-

sand was bad and to get across, you had to keep moving; if you stopped you were stuck. On one occasion I drove a young horse, and when I got out into the river he threw up his head and stopped. The sand was well settled, so I unhitched and thought I would come down the next day with the old team and go on to town, but next day when I got down to the river I could just see two wheels of my wagon sticking up out of the water. The river had come up during the night, upset my wagon, took the bed and wood down stream. To get the wagon out I had to take it out a piece at a time. I found the bed two miles down stream lodged on my side of the river. The spring seat is still in the river or someone else has found it.

In 1891 Mr. Johnston moved his store to Pauls Valley, Chickasaw Nation. They had my girl to go with them to live, and Mr. Johnston wrote to me that fall to come down and work for him, and as there was plenty of inducement, I jumped at the chance.

Amos Waite, a brother of Fred Waite, who had been with Billy, the Kid, in the Lincoln County War in New

COLEMAN GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW

10449

-13-

Mexico, and a nephew of Sam Paul, also a grandson of Smith Paul, for whom Pauls Valley was named, was also a clerk in the Johnston store. I became acquainted with his grandfather, Smith Paul, who was eighty-two years of age at that time. I was visiting my girl at the Johnston home one evening when we heard two gun shots, and a short time afterwards some horses ran past the house. I went over, less than a block away and saw them carrying Sam Paul out of the restaurant. He had been boarding at the Hotel where I too lived and had been out lecturing for the opening of that country to settlement and gotten in too late for supper, so he had gone to the restaurant and was eating supper a short distance from the door. His son Joe had been carrying guns; Joe and his brother Billy came down by the restaurant and Joe shot his father in the head with the first load, and gave him the other when he fell under the table. Marshal law was all they had at that time and there were a half dozen murders during the winter while I was there. They took Joe to Paris, Texas, and turned him loose, and I learned that his cousin killed

COLEMAN GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW

10449

-14-

him in about a year. I was told that Sam Paul had killed seven different men himself, and I saw in the paper a year or two ago, that Billy Paul had killed his own son over a dog.

Just after the holidays in 1892 Cora and I were married and in March I came back to my claim; my wife stayed with Johnston until later. I brought with me a span of mules and one horse of Mr. Johnston's to pasture. When I got up to the Cimarron River, it was very high, and two men with their teams were waiting for the river to go down so that they could cross. The railroad bridge was the only thing that spanned the river. It was seldom that a train ran at night, so we decided that we would risk taking our wagons across on it, and if a train should come we would dump them into the river. The wagons just fit between the rails, and the ties were so close together that it was almost as smooth as a floor, so it was not much of a trick to run them across by hand, then in the morning we swam our horses across.

On the 19th of April, 1892, the Cheyenne and Arapaho

COLEMAN GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW

10449

-15-

country opened. My brother made a run for a claim. I thought he would get back to Kingfisher that evening so I got in line at the Land Office to hold him a place, but he failed to get in so I had to give it up. He later got a claim down by Fort Reno. In September, 1892, my mother made me a visit from Illinois; I can still see her coming in from the field with a watermelon that was all that she could carry. I was clerking for Mr. Carter and driving back and forth to the claim. My mother was well pleased with my wife and my prospects.

On Thanksgiving day we had something to be thankful for that year, 1892; for our first child, a girl, was born the day before, November 26th. We gave her the name of Mary Laura in honor of my mother and my wife's sister. I think it was while my mother was with us that the Dalton Gang met their Waterloo in Coffeyville, Kansas. The father and brother of Dick Brodwell (Texas Jack), one of the gang that was killed, lived here at Dover at the time and were engaged in buying and shipping walnut logs. Maybe Dick financed him. They disappeared just after that.

COLEMAN GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW.

10449

-16-

My daughter is now Mrs. Frank Hartson of Lone Wolf, Oklahoma, a druggist, she has three children, the oldest 22 years of age, the age I was at the time I left home, and is now teaching in Kingfisher, after graduating from Phillips University at Enid.

In 1893 I made my first trip back to my old hometown in Illinois, eight years after leaving, (I had never been away from home before), with my wife and daughter nine months old. We went back to see the folks and the World's Fair at Chicago. I came back in time to make the run into Enid for a lot September 16, 1893. I rode in on the cattle train from the south. The train crew tried to take everyone to North Enid where they had a depot. They wanted to make the town there so they went faster through South Enid than any other place. I was on the top of a car; I got down on the side and jumped off, a couple of bounces is all I got, but a woman, who said she was pushed off, and Joe Miberger, who also jumped, got a broken leg. I saw one fellow take a somersault, his pocket book flew out of his hip pocket, another grabbed it and ran on.

COLEMAN GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW.

10449

-17-

I got three lots in Jonesville, north of Enid proper, that were under contest several years, but finally won by the Townsite Company; a Mr. Clampit was the main contestant. A young man known as Sut with no education, said that he knew if he paid a dollar for a thing and sold it for two that he did not lose anything, so he started a store here. He did business for a while in Dover and got all he could on credit, sold regardless of what he had paid and was closed up by his creditors and lost his name. He wanted me to go in business with him in Enid in my name and his wife to be the company and we would go half and half on the profits. He took me to his dugout and showed me about \$3000 in tin cans. I decided to try it and I went on to Wichita and bought the first bill of goods to start the store. I paid cash using his money, he was to furnish the cash, I my name and service. He had got a lot on the east side of the square and started a frame building; when I got back I found that he had got the lot in his wife's name and backed out on my coming in for half the lot.

COLEMAN GEORGE M.- INTERVIEW

10449

-18-

Well, the first day at the close of business he put the money in his pocket, and we kept no record of receipts so I saw that the jig was up. I saw that all the bills were paid for protection, and drew out what I considered fair wages, and charged myself for all that I drew. We were in business about six months. We could have gotten plenty of credit in my name but I would not allow that; he saw there was no chance to go broke in my name so he decided to rent the building to Myberger and Goldchank and started up in Waukomis in his wife's name, so we took an invoice, and I received about five hundred dollars for the time I put in. He had his store several years in Waukomis and then quit. He told me that a sight draft came with every bill of goods he got and that he could not do business that way. He had about 200 head of cattle that he had gathered up, so he went out to Woodward County and fenced in a large pasture and got a thousand head of cattle from another man to pasture the first year at \$1.00 per head. The settlers kept coming in and taking his pasture, so he mortgaged the cattle, all of them, and then sold them, and that was the last I ever

-19-

heard of him. They found his pony and hat on the prairie, put there to make it appear that he had been gotten away with.

In the spring of 1894 I moved up on my farm, and moved my family to Enid. I had a two room house on three lots, where the Alton Wholesale House now stands; it was then Jonesville. I had a son born on those lots on February 10, 1895, and we gave him the name of his two grandfathers, John Nathan. When Sut moved to Waukomis I clerked for a while for Fred Buttry in his grocery store.

There was nothing grown in the Strip in 1894 and '95, so business got dull, and Buttry wanted me to solicit and work on commission but I did not like that kind of a job so I quit. People were leaving Enid by the score so I decided to go back to the farm. The train would not stop at South Enid and all kinds of tricks were tried to stop them. They stuffed some clothing to look like a man, and put it on the track, but the engineer would not stop for anything, not even if the bell rang, as it was tried, but they did stop a freight south of town, by sawing the trestle under the bridge.

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. INTERVIEW

10449

-20-

There were two men in a car loaded with lumber and it was a miracle that they were not killed.

While I was at Enid there was a train held up at Dover, and it was supposed to be the work of men living on Turkey Creek. I was told the names of those in the job by a man who thought he knew. One of them was tried but they could not prove anything on him. My wife now owns the farm, one-fourth mile west of the depot, where it is claimed their horses were tied.

In 1895 I was down at my farm, when we got word that the Kickapoo country would be opened in a few days. An old soldier and his family were living on my place, and he begged me to go with him and help him get a place, saying that he could not get one by himself. He offered to pay me but I knew that he did not have any money, only a small pension. I told him that if he and his wife would let me have that cow, standing there, that I would go; so we went down, and anyone not wanting a claim was allowed to go in, so I went in, hunted up a corner stone, got the numbers, and when the time came for the opening I met him and took him to it. It was

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW

10449

-21-

about four miles from McCloud, near an old Mission. His name was Thomas Tomay, and he got a pension under the name of Theodore Redout, so he must have been a substitute in the War. I learned that after they had moved there one of their daughters married a Cowboy and that later he had trouble with his mother-in-law and shot her. I went with Tomay to Oklahoma City, and he filed on his place and when we came back to the farm I got my cow.

On December 16, 1899, our third child was born, whom we named Dorothy Day. She is now Mrs. L. P. Smith of Enid and has a boy named Coleman aged 12, and a daughter Betty Joe aged 5.

In 1901 my sister and I went to El Reno to the drawing of claims. Sister got nothing so we went to Anadarko to the Government lot sale, and we bought two lots each. Then in 1904 I went with her to Beaver county, stayed six months and paid out ^{a claim} at \$1.25 per acre.

On the way out with my family in March we took refuge in a dugout from a storm, and found the family down with the measles. We were forty miles from Lib-

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. INTERVIEW

10449

-22-

eral, Kansas, where the nearest doctor was. We got along fine without one. We came back to Dover, and I got a job clerking again, but as I preferred an outdoor job, I made a bargain with a Rural Mail Carrier to buy his outfit if he would resign. I took the Civil Service examination and was given a grade of 97 $\frac{1}{4}$. However, the carrier was influenced not to resign and the examination was only good for one year. On May 20, 1906, we had another daughter born, to whom we gave the name of Vena Hurley in honor of my old painting teacher. She is now Mrs. Neal Evans of Superior, Nebraska, and has one child, seven years old named Norma Jean.

I decided after the carrier refused to resign, to build a house on my Anadarko lot and move there. On the evening of August 6th, as we went down on the passenger train, there was a high water came down the Cimarron River and damaged the pile bridge so badly that the next passenger train going north the next morning went into the river. The engine and express safe are still in there. The mail clerk, Claud Needham, and the porter were drowned and the passenger coach drifted to

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW

10449

-23-

the south bank of the river where all the passengers got out. Claud Mank of Dover took care of the mail clerk's body, and Mr. Bracken of Kingfisher, the porter.

I was only in Anadarko a short time and was not well known when I received a telegram from Illinois telling me that my mother had died. It was several days after it had been sent that they found out where I lived and too late to get there before the funeral.

In a short time I got a job clerking in a store for a man by the name of Dave Foley, and not long after I got a letter from the Post Master at Dover telling me that the carrier had resigned and urging me to come back and take the examination again. The carrier had sold out to a friend of the one that had influenced him not to sell to me. I suppose they thought that, as I had moved away, I would not come back. I told the Post Master that I had no political pull and he said that was not necessary now; so I returned to Kingfisher for the examination and received exactly the same grade $97\frac{1}{4}$ that I did the first time, by a different board, and I got the job. I gave the other party what

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. INTERVIEW

10449

-24-

he gave for the outfit.

The party I was clerking for in Anadarko tried to get me to stay on, but I had got what I had always wanted. I carried the mail from 1906 to 1919, and when my son became eighteen years of age I made him my substitute. He was drafted into the army in 1918 and sent to France, and when he came home he took the Civil Service examination and passed. As an ex-service man he would be given the preference and I felt sure that he would get the job so I resigned, as my health had failed and I was getting deaf. He has carried the mail nineteen years and is now the age I was when I first got the job.

The Dalton family lived for a number of years on my route and on occasion Mrs. Dalton or her daughter rode out to their home with me. In the early days I have been to dances that Bill Dalton attended and he acted a perfect gentleman. At a Fourth of July Celebration, after he had been acquitted of train robbery in California, he was called on to speak and as he climbed on the stage he said that it reminded him of climbing onto the tender to a locomotive.

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW

10449

-25-

On April 22, 1889, when that Sooner showed my companion and me the corner tree, we learned it was at the northeast corner of Section 15 and the southeast of Section 10. The sun was a little north of west and we stepped off 1600 steps directly toward the sun and I knew that would keep off of Section 16, a school section. At three feet to the step we knew that we should be near the line between Sections 10 and 9. There was a point of timber extending down on the prairie to the west of us; my companion asked me which claim I wanted and I told him I would take that point of timber. At that time and until the country was fenced, two trails crossed my claim; one was an Indian Trail, that the Cheyenne, Shawnee, Ponca, and Osage Indians used to travel on their visits to one another; the other was from Red Fork to Guthrie and it ran across my place from the northwest to the southeast to Walnut Grove and there crossed the Cimarron River. There was a spring about a half mile west of my place not far from the trail; a box had been put in this spring and it was known as Box Spring, and the neighborhood was

-26-

known as such. The Indian trail went northeast from Kingfisher down Kingfisher Creek, and crossed the Cimarron River at the mouth of the creek on the west side; it then went across the bottoms to the northeast up over my claim and through the timber that was about eight miles through at that time.

In the year of 1890 while I was staying at Red Fork, they had quite an Indian scare out in my neighborhood one night. A bunch of Indians were camped in the bottoms near Box Spring and they must have had some fire water, and were celebrating and making considerable noise. The folks in the neighborhood became scared and all gathered at the house of Finn Warnberg to wait for developments.

My wife, Cora E. Day, was born in Ohio July 26, 1868. Her folks moved to Sumner County, Kansas, when she was about four years of age, and that is where I met her. Some time after we were married I learned that her folks once lived in the same little town in Pennsylvania where I was born, and that one of her sisters was born there, so this is a small world after all.

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW

10449

-27-

She now owns a farm west of Dover on Turkey Creek, that has a high hill upon it. There was a trail from Red Fork Ranch that went south of the farm to the river, and west of the hill or row of hills, and one east of the hills.

Hamp Merideth, the first man that carried the mail from Caldwell, Kansas, to Fort Reno, told me at the time Pat Hennessey was killed, those hills saved his life; that he came up the west trail as the Indians went down on the east side on the trail.

Dover was first called Red Fork, then Red Wing as there was another Red Fork in Oklahoma, and finally changed to Dover, I think on account of so many Englishmen settling in this neighborhood.

When the Rock Island Railroad built through here, they thought of making this the end of a division, but as they could not get the necessary land, they made it at El Reno. Dover was kept under contest by Kingfisher people as long as possible for the interest of Kingfisher.

I am giving the names of most of the first people who lived in the immediate neighborhood, though I will

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW

10449

-28-

undoubtedly miss some. Those I remember are as follows:

- (A) Abbott, Mr. and family. Adams, Mr.
Adkins, Tom. Applegate, George and Bruce.
Armstrong, Mr. and family.
- (B) Baily, Dr. Carson, from Kentucky, with a
colored wife and baby, a good doctor
who officiated at the birth of my
three girl children.
Bakehouse, John. Barr, Link. Beckman, Will-
iam. Bilderback, John and Charlie. Blair,
Milton, and family. Bledsoe, William.
Bond, Mr. and wife. Botten, Bob and family.
Bradberg, Bill and Sam. Bradshaw, Joe and
George. Buler, George and family. Burns,
Ned, and family. Buzzard, Jack. Buzzard,
Jim and family.
- (C) Calico, Jack. Carden, Dan. Carratt, Mr.
Carter, Tom and family. Chapin, John G.
Clark, Dave, and family. Clark, John.(col.)
Coffman, Jess, and family. Coffman, Lou.
Cole, Eric. Craigbottom, Mr. and family.
Crawford, Mr. and family. Crayto, Fred.
Currin, G. J.(col.) State Legislator.

LEMAN, GEORGE M. INTERVIEW

10449

-29-

- (D) Dean, Frank. Dean, Will and sister, Mrs. Anstine. Difenbaugh, Mr. Draw, Tom. Dry, Jake. Duffy, John, and family.
- (E) Eisenbise.
- (F) Fancler, Bob, and family. (Cherokee Bob) Fletcher, George. Foster, Mr. Fouts, Mr. and family. Frater, Mr. (col.)
- (G) Garrett (col.) Gilbert, H. B. Goins, Levi, and brother, with families. Grees, Sam and Dick, and families. Griffith, Jake. (colored)
- (H) Hadley, Tom. (col.) Hess, Pete and family. Holmes, Jim and Frank, and wives. Homas, Tom and family. Hubbard, Mr. and family. Hughes, Ben. Hunter, John, (col.)
- (J) Jackson, A. J. Jaleneck, Mr. Johnson, Dick. (col.) Johnson, Jerry and Spencer, and family. Jones, Dan. Jones, Jimie, and family. Jones, J. N. Julian, Ben.

-30-

- (K) Kaltmit, Mr. Kennedy, Sam. Kimerer, Jack.
Kuder, Mr. and wife.
- (L) Layton, Dave. Layton, Sam, and family.
Lewis, John, an early day school teacher.
Liggeth, Pike. Lillibridge, Mr. and family.
Long, F. M. and family. Long, John and family.
ily. Lonis, Mr. and family. Lyons, Mr.
- (Mc.) McClure, Jimmie. McCoy, Joe. McDaniels,
Charlie. McDaniels, William and family.
- (M) Maclin, Finnie. (col.) Markell, Jerry and
family. Martin, Henry and family.
Mauk, Ben and family. Mead, Mr. (barber).
Medow, M. and family. Melca, Jim. (Bohemian.)
Merideth, Hamp. Mertz, Jess and
family. Miller, Mr. (col.) Minor, Jake.
Mitchell, Mr. and family. Moore, W. L. -
(known as Sut.) Murphy, and old soldier.
Myers, Frank and family. Myers, George,
known as Arkansas Joe, who carried the mail

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW

10449

-31-

on a buckboard in the early eighties to Fort Reno; and said sometimes he would swallow tobacco to keep him awake.

- (N) Nay, John and family. Neff, Ben and wife.
Newcomb, Mr. and family. Newkirk, Sam and family. Night, M. Northup, Doc. and fam.
- (P) Page, Wes. (col.) Passenger, Mr. and fam.
Payne, Jim. Pfeiffer, Fred. Phillips, Mr. and family. Porter, John and family.
Porter, Louis. (col.) Prinin, Granville and family.
- (R) Ranacky, Frank. (Bohemian). Raniky, Bill.
Ray, Ben. Ray, Bill and wife. Ray, Boss and wife. Ream, George and family.
Redington, George, John and Francis, and family. Redman, George and Joe. Reeves, Bill. Richardson, Bill and family.
Ridgley, Conrad and family. Roberts, Jim and family. Robinson, Mr. and family.
Rough, John and fam. Rumsey, Do. Runnels, Mr. and Family.

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW

10449

-32-

- (S) Sansburg, Fred and folks. Schilde, Fred.
Sims, W. Sherman, William and family.
Short, Aaron. Slief, A. J. and family.
Spiker, Doug and Grant. Steel, Mery and
family. (col.) Stitt, William and wife.
- (T) Taylor, Mary. Taylor, W. L. and Robert
with families. Tucker, Mandy (colored).
- (V) Vangun, Sam and wife.
- (W) Wakefield, William and family. Walker,
Bill and family. Walker, Mr. and family.
Wall, George. Warnberg, Finn and family.
Washington, George and Martha. Watson,
Ben and family. Wells, O. G. and family.
Wendall, Billie. Whitacer, Mr. (moved
his cottongin here from Minco.)
Whitehead, W. and family. Wilderman, Ed
and family. Wilks, Iza. Wilks, Old Man.
Williams, D. K. and family. Williams, W.
H. (col.) Wilson, Elias and family.
Wilson, R. T. and family. (colored.)

COLEMAN, GEORGE M. - INTERVIEW

10449

-33-

-(W) Continued:

Wilson, Simon and family. Windall, Jake
and family. Woods, Mr. Wright, John
and family. Wyatt, John and wife. (col.)

Note:

Mr. George M. Coleman and his wife still remain in Dover, Oklahoma, and their house is built out of lumber that was brought here at the opening in 1889.

Mr. Coleman has illustrated, with some of his drawings, his memories of his pioneer days. He has a picture of the Old Ranch House at Red Fork, of his first home on his homestead. He would be very glad to let the State have a copy of these masterpieces that he has painted.

He remembers well all the Pioneers' location in the Community around Dover and would be very pleased to give any information that we might wish to have. He has written some of his experiences but knows that he did not remember everything and would be glad to answer any other questions.

FIELD WORKER.