

EGELSTON, HENRY C.

INTERVIEW

10074

272

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

EGELSTON, HENRY C.

INTERVIEW

10074

Field Worker's name Mildred B. McFarland,

This report made on (date) February 23, 1938

1. Name Henry C. Egelston,

2. Post Office Address Guthrie, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) Rural Route, # 6,

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month December Day 1 Year 1864

5. Place of birth Iowa Point, Kansas.

6. Name of Father Wm. R. Egelston Place of birth Kentucky

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Jane (Finley) Egelston Place of birth Kentucky

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 4

EGELSTON, HENRY C.

INTERVIEW

10074

Mildred B. McFarland,
Investigator,
February 23, 1938.

An Interview with Henry C. Egelston,
Rural Route # 8,
Guthrie, Oklahoma.

I lived on a farm in Kansas prior to coming to Oklahoma in 1892. I bought a relinquishment from Thomas Gordon, nine miles southeast of Guthrie. There was just a small shack on the place and about five acres of land had been cleared.

There was no well and I had to haul water in barrels from a creek a mile and a half from my place. We moved here in November and it was a year before we had enough money to have a well drilled. The water I hauled would get so hot in the Summer time that we could hardly drink it. We would fill stone jars with water, wrap wet cloths around the jars and set them where the wind could strike them to keep the water cool.

We came in two covered wagons, bringing just the necessary household furniture. We drove eleven head of cattle through but lost all but two of them with "Texas fever." I cut and hauled logs about nine miles from home

EGELSTON, HENRY C.

INTERVIEW

10074

-2-

to build a barn. We also brought a few chickens and ducks with us and we kept in flour and meal. The first crop I put in was kaffir corn and cotton. The first bale of cotton brought me \$11.00. There were quite a few old buffalo wallows on the place.

We got pretty low on money and food so I cut and hauled firewood, taking it to Guthrie to sell. Many times I brought the wood back, not having any luck, but when I did sell it I received 75 cents a load for it.

One day we were without any food except a small amount of flour and salt. I took a load of wood to town but could not sell it. When I arrived home the house was full of company. I took my gun and went out and shot three rabbits. My wife, in the meantime, boiled some kaffir corn and made some bread and that bread and the rabbits were what we fed our company. We went to quite a few neighborhood parties, literaries and spelling bees.

I used oxen to break the ground for there were many roots underground.

Our first well was a failure. The walls crumbled

EGELSTON, HENRY C.

INTERVIEW

10074

-3-

and caved in so we had to have another one drilled. We built our new house about two years after coming here. It was built of native lumber and we were the first family in the neighborhood to have a glass door. When it was completed we gave a party to celebrate our new home, so folks could see our door.

After the first year things began to brighten up and times were much better for us. Eggs were 6 cents a dozen but we traded them for flour. Along as we could we set out fruit trees and it wasn't long before we had a fine orchard. We had a two wheeled cart and mule we used for transportation. One day my wife and two babies started to Guthrie in it. About five miles from home the cart hit a large rock and turned over, tumbling them all on the ground. The old mule became frightened and ran home, leaving the three of them stranded but when I found them they were walking back home unhurt.

Today, February 23rd, 1938, my wife and I are celebrating our fiftieth wedding anniversary with "open house" to our friends and neighbors. Many of them are the old timers who started out with us to make homes in the new country.

EGELSTON, HENRY C.

INTERVIEW

10074

-4-

We still own our original homestead. We are happy and content, knowing that we have worked hard and struggled long for what we have gained. We both feel we have spent our lives usefully and have no regrets for the hardships endured.