

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
Tape Interview Data Sheet

General Topic of Interview Life of homesteader and ranch wife

Date August 3, 1984 Place Meeker, Co.

Length (Time) 1 hr. 20 min. Speed _____ Side(s) 3

Narrator:

Name Hilda Shelton Fickle Rawlinson

Address 569 7th St. Meeker, Co.

Telephone _____

Birthplace July 24, 1905 Guthrie Center, Iowa

Occupation(s) rancher's wife

Interviewer(s)

Name(s) Julie Jones-Eddy

Subjects covered, in approximate order (please spell out names of persons and places).

Tape
Counter
No.

1. Her parents, Harley and Sophie Shelton, homesteaded in 1916 (February) in Dry Lakes, 15 mi. south of Maybell.
 - very cold winter.
 - snow was at the tops of fence posts.
 - traveled on sleds
 - emigrant car brought possessions to Craig on the train.

- 33 2. Lived in a 2 room cabin until March at Mr. Wilcox's place.

3. In March moved to homestead. Lived in a tent for the next 10 months.
 - cleared sage brush and put up fence posts.
 - father often stayed up all night to keep sage brush fire going.
 - made a dugout to live in - a "wonderful thing". Lived there 2 years.
 - built a two story adobe house.
 - father filed on 2nd homestead which they moved to and started all over again.
 - second homestead was on Wolf Mountain, 20 mi. south of Maybell on the Price Creek road.

- 67 4. School.
 - parents taught children at home until neighbors could build a schoolhouse.

- 25 students until many of the homesteaders "starved Out" and left.

- 78 5. When they moved to Wolf Mountain they had to build another school.
- 89 6. Description of the inside of the dugout.
- 113 7. Activity during the winter months when they lived in the tent.
- cut sage brush
- feed stock
- 125 8. Adjustment of her mother to the new way of life.
- 133 9. Hauled water from neighbors and from Red Rock spring, 4 to 5 mi. away (in barrels)
10. Frank Coleman family.
- had water tank.
- Shelton's hauled water from tank to new cistern.
- carried water uphill to house.
- 153 11. Chores Hilda was responsible for.
- milked cows.
- separated cream.
- did chores before going to school.
- boys and girls worked together.
- oldest girl (Hilda) did outside work, "man's chores".
- built fence.
- herded cows.
- she was the "cowboy".
- broke horses.
- plowed field with walking plow.
- mowed with horse mower.
- pitched hay onto wagon and hauled hay to stack.
- 202 12. Clothing.
- dresses.
- wore knickers when she worked outside.
- wore hats and bonnets.
- all homemade dresses.
- wore dresses to school.
- 238 13. Walk to school on Wolf Mountain was 2 mi. Went in sled.
- used hay in sled for warmth.
- 251 14. Playing and having fun.
- cards and games.
- dances in Maybell.
- 266 15. Medical attention.
- Dr. Wheeler in Maybell.
- never went to a doctor.
- 3 babies were born to her mother on homestead. 1st one in the dugout.
- neighbor lady came to deliver baby.
- mother had nine children - no doctor.
- discussions of reasons for good health.
- compares people to cattle in terms of giving birth.

- 314 16. Home remedies.
 -turpentine for everything.
 Side 2 - cuts, "wires through feet".
 32 - colds - turpentine and lard for chest, ate turpentine and sugar.
 - parasites.
- 46 17. Ideas about her future at age 18.
18. Worked as a maternity helper when baby was born. Did this from age 15 to 18.
 - stayed two weeks with new mother.
- 61 19. At age 19 worked at St. Mary's Hospital in Grand Junction.
20. Married in 1926 at age 20.
- 66 21. Moved to California to work on a fruit ranch.
 - she did fruit packing piece work for 3-4¢ a lug.
 - husband irrigated for 40¢ an hour.
 - stayed 6 years until depression hit and wages were cut to 20¢ an hour.
- 87 22. Bought old ranch on Price Creek with savings.
 - had many droughts and had a hard time.
 - weather cycle seemed to be 3 or 4 years with rain and 3 to 4 year without.
 - no irrigation, had a spring.
 - although water was piped from spring to house, had to haul it in winter because water froze.
 - wild animals ate the sheep.
 - killed animals with cyanide gun.
- 126 23. Birth of daughter in 1926 while they were in California.
 - daughter attended school at Price Creek school.
 - family boarded the teacher who made \$75.00 per mo. and paid \$15.00 for board and room. Teacher was supplied with a horse.
- 149 24. Stories mother told her about her life.
 - neighbor lady (pregnant) died in 1918 of the flu (Dry Lakes) - Mrs. Mauray (?).
 - mother was living in the tent in March.
 - mother was pregnant and was afraid of catching the flu.
 - mother prepared the boy for burial with help of Mrs. Sultz, neighbor.
 - neighbors conducted service.
 - two of deceased women's sons moved in with the Sheltons and rest of family returned to Nebraska.
 - no board and room was paid - no one charged for any kind of help - you might need it next time.
- 201 25. Women's Clubs. Home Demonstration Club.
 - 1933 Home Demonstration Clubs came to this area.
 - Club organized on Strawberry Creek. Named the Harmony Club.
 - "good lessons" on home work. "Learned a lot".
 - Clara Anderson was the Home Demonstration Agent.
 - proved higher education for women.
 - experts from Ft. Collins did the teaching to representatives from each club.
 - projects: canning, sewing, baking, fairs, textile painting.
 - set rules for booths at fair. All in competition with each other.
 - recipe for soap making.
 295 - "Hobo Party", made soap.
- 329 26. Made quilts individually.

- mostly for home use.
- used wool for batting. She cut sheep herself.
- still uses these quilts in the winter. One under sheet and one one top.

362 27. Attitude toward divorce.

- very few people divorced.
- women today are too concerned about money.
- women should stay home and help husbands.
- women who work because they like to are somewhat selfish.
- life is full of things you don't like to do.

Side
3
14 28. When husband and wife don't do things together, trouble starts.
- enjoyed fishing with husband.

26 29. Personal hobbies.

- art
- oil painting.
- favorite painting is of John Dade, mail carrier at Price Creek Post Office where Hilda was Postmistress. (slide of painting in slide/tape program)

42 30. Hilda's hopes for her daughter.

- wanted her to be a school teacher and took her to Denver for the test.
- she taught 3 years but didn't like it.
- has worked in a bank ever since.

59 31. People who most influenced her life.

- teachers.
- people she workd for.
- Home Demonstration group.

73 32. Feels most satisfied about her artwork.

80 33. Disappointments - sadness.

- losing loved ones.

88 34. Has no regrets about life.