

[Philip H. Smith]

[?]

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

NAME OF WORKER George Hartman ADDRESS 2438 W. Lincoln, Nebr.

DATE Nov. 7, 1938 SUBJECT Folklore

1. Name and address of informant. Philip H. Smith, 1130 J St.

2. Date and time of interview. Saturday

3. Place of Interview. 1130 H. St.

4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant.

None

5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you. None.

6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc. Lives in basement at large house which he owns and runs several apartments. [??]

FORM B Personal History of Informant

NAME OF WORKER George Hartman ADDRESS 2438 W Lincoln Nebr.

DATE Nov. 7, 1938 SUBJECT Folklore

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Philip H. Smith, 1130 J St.

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1. Ancestry. Irish-Dutch. Irish
2. Place and date of birth. Scot township, Pennsylvania 1874.
3. Family.
4. Place lived in, with dates. Penns. Table-Rock—Elk Creek 1879-81 1881-95
University Place, Lincoln.
5. Education with dates. Grade, High School, College Theological.
6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates. Minister
7. Special skills and interests. Is retired minister but works now at odd jobs.
8. Community and religious activities. Methodist
9. Description of informant. Kindly looking, 155 pounds.
10. Other points gained in interview. Life of a minister in Nebraska.

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

NAME OF WORKER George Hartman ADDRESS 2438 W. Lincoln, Nebr.

DATE Nov. 6, 1938 SUBJECT Folklore

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Philip H. Smith, 1130 J. St.

We came to Nebraska in southwest Pawnee county in 1879 and settled on a farm. We then moved to Table Rock to live.

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Our first house was a log house fourteen by sixteen feet and only one room with father and mother and four children.

We had to eat lots of game, prairie chicken, rabbits and quail as other food was scarce.

Any uncle and his children and wife would come and visit and we had to all bunk in the same house. When it came time to eat the children would go out and the older people would eat and then the children take their turn.

We had only wood and cobs to burn for fuel for years. It was several years before we could get coal about the year 1886. The only thing we had for heat was the cook-stove.

We moved to a farm where we had no variety in food. Finally a cow was purchased and gradually we annexed more and more livestock. In the years of 1885 to 1892 we made good money for a while. We all worked hard and the boys in the family helping father we got along and prospered.

All of the early settlers settled on the bottoms because wood was plentiful; water was near and the ground was fertile. Later on settlers had to take the uplands and bottom settlers thought they wouldn't make a go of it. But the settlers of the uplands could dig wells to get water, consequently they got along all right.

The floods that came along, later on flooded the people out of the bottom lands and then the upland people had the whip hard.

The Nemaha river was straightened out due to a law passed by the legislature which helped the people living in the bottoms, from losing their crops from the floods.

I went to York College to school in the year of 1887. This college was bought by the Catholics who made it into a nun's home. In the fall of 1888 I came to Lincoln to school and the following year I taught school in Johnson county.

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The school in Johnson county was a district school. We didn't have grades but went by readers. I had forty pupils ranging from youngsters of 5 years to boys and girls of eighteen years of age. I had forty pupils of all grades of advancement and it was quite a job to teach them. I received 35 dollars which was good money in those days because of the purchasing power of a dollar was far greater than of today.

In the winter of 1919, I went in the fall to Lewellen Nebraska as pastor of a church and the parsonage which was so small we had difficulty getting our furniture in so we had to put up a tent for room to sleep in. That winter we were rationed for fuel. We could only have one fire and that had to go out at night. The war was just over and fuel was very scarce in that part of the country. We had a little baby born the fifth of August and we were about to run out of fuel. The U. P. railroad that ran up that way had a bin for engine fuel. I could buy no coal in town so I went to the agent to get some coal. The agent said I couldn't buy any coal but he insinuated that I take some anyway and he wouldn't know anything about it.

I lived in Crawford, Nebraska in 1898. The Indians that bred in the Pine Ridge agency used to come down and visit an Indian scout named "Littlebat." These Indians had a big roundup of all of the town dogs that they could get their hands on and had a real feast. I had a camera and went to take some pictures of Indians. I came to a teepee and looked in, seeing two squaws sitting on the ground and an old buck who was smoking a long pipe. One squaw was rocking on her knees with a papoose in her arms. The Indian pipe went out and he passed it to one of the squaws. The squaw took the pipe filled it with tobacco she found somewhere in the teepee. She then got a stick, and pulled a coal out of the center of a small fire in the middle of the teepee, put it in on the bowl of the pipe, puffed it a time or two to see if it was lit and then she reached it to the man who took it without looking.

I asked some of the Indian children if I could take their picture and they asked me if I had any money I said "no." They asked me if I had a dog and I said "no" again. The children

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said, "no pictures." When I got back to town I asked some townfolks what they wanted of a dog and was told they wanted something to eat and that one of their chief delights was soup made from dogs. I have lived an average minister's life with not very many unusual things happening. the ones I gave you are about the most unusual I can think of.