

## [Clara Dunn]

S-241-[SAL?] DUP

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

NAME OF WORKER George Hartman ADDRESS 2438 W., Lincoln

DATE December 8, 1938 SUBJECT Folklore

1. Name and address of informant Clara Dunn, DeWitt, Nebraska.
2. Date and time of interview Dec. 8, 9 to 11:30
3. Place of interview 2438 W, St.
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant My aunt visiting here
5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you

None

6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc. C15-2/27/41-Nebraska

LM

FORM B Personal History of Informant

NAME OF WORKER George Hartman ADDRESS 2438 W., Lincoln

DATE December 8, 1938 SUBJECT Folklore

## Library of Congress

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Clara Dunn, DeWitt, Nebraska

1. Ancestry Dutch

2. Place and date of birth Pennsylvania, 1868

3. Family

4. Place and date of birth

5. Education, with dates

Early rural life

6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates

Housewife—Inn Keeper

7. Special skills and interests

Needlework

8. Community and religious activities

Episcopal

9. Description of informant

Handsome, stout.

10. Other points gained in interview

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

## Library of Congress

NAME OF WORKER George Hartman ADDRESS 2438 W., Lincoln

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NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Clara Dunn, DeWitt, Nebraska

We saw many strange sights in the early days in Nebraska. The wild game in those days was very thick especially the prairie chickens who are now practically obsolete. For some unknown reason the chickens could not see the newly put up telegraph wires and many of them would kill themselves by striking the wires going full force.

I have lived in Saline county most of my life and Saline county was named after salt. The early settlers thought there was a lot of salt springs in this region, but there never has been any salt springs found in Saline county.

The early Saline county has had quite a history. Years ago it was a wild and unsettled country. Buffaloes and Indians roamed over this country at will. Men of crime performed outlawish things without danger of getting caught.

Saline county in the early day was full of creeks that have now practically disappeared. Turkey Creek for instance used to afford water power privileges to the settlers and now it is just a tiny stream. Little creeks that were called Walnut, Spring, Dry Brush, squaw and others are just dried up.

People thought that with all of this water power in Saline county 2 that someday there would be large cities that would spring up. But time has proved that this is [?] wrong. Only a few mills now on the Big Blue river that get their power from the waters.

Timber in early Saline county was plentiful along the creeks their being plenty of walnut, cottonwood, ash, box elder, oak and others.

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The soil in Saline county has always been rich and black. From this soil there has been farmers who by hard work and thrift have made themselves very well to do.

An unusual thing happened to me one time. At a distance I was watching some Indians engage in a battle. Every once in a while I could see an Indian fall off his horse. When the battle was over I went to the scene of where they were fighting. Not an Indian body was around as they had carried off their dead and wounded.

Early settlers learned to dread the name "Sioux." The Sioux were the most hostile tribe to the whites and did the most damage. One time the alarm was spread that the Sioux were out on the war path but it proved to be false as they didn't show up. However, the whole county gathered together.

One time a lady who was riding horseback on the plains saw some Indians. She thought they were Sioux and took flight.

She rode all night and finally circled around and came back to her home. She was surprised to find that the Indians she saw were friendly and her ride all night was uncalled for.

Early settlers of Saline county went through many hardships. They had to go 75 miles to Nebraska City for their groceries and other necessities.

In 1874, Pleasant Hill used to be the county seat of Saline county. At this place four prisoners were burned to death. Three men and one woman.

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The men tried to burn off the lock on the door and set the building on fire burning to ashes all of them.

## Library of Congress

The three men in the jail were imprisoned for minor offenses but the woman was in jail for murder. The woman named Mrs. [Honschild?] had poisoned a piece of pie that her husband ate which killed him. He had gone to his farm and took along a lunch which his wife had prepared. She had put a generous portion of strychnine in it. The food was analyzed and all evidence pointed to his wife.

One time a group of men caught a man who was suspected of being a horse thief. They asked him to confess the crime but he wouldn't do it. Finally they took him out in the woods and put a rope around his neck and asked him again to confess. He again denied the crime so they pulled him up a ways hanging to a limb of a tree and then let him down again. He was still alive and they again told him to confess but he shook his head and said, "I am innocent." They pulled him up again a little longer and let him down again, but he still said he was innocent. They did this several times until he was about dead but they finally had to give it up and let him go. The matter, however, went to court and the guilty ones had to pay heavy damages for hanging this man almost to death.

A little jingle that tells about Saline county———— [Onst?] the wild injuns [tul?] their delight, Fish, fit and [?]. Now the people is mostly white, [??] a red