

[Elmer Dellett]

[?] II [Dup?]

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

NAME OF WORKER Harold J. Moss ADDRESS 6934 Francis St. Lincoln, Nebr.

DATE Sept. 21, 1938 SUBJECT Folklore

1. Name and address of informant. Elmer Dellett, 3266 Dudley St.
2. Date and time of interview. Sept. 21, —1 p.m.—3:30
3. Place of interview. Home of informant. 3265 Dudley.
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant.
5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you.
6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc. Lives with daughter, large 2 story house, well furnished, just an average American type home, surroundings good about like any residential section of medium class. There are several old pieces of furniture, semi-antique including three or four “what nots” in sight. [????]

FORM B Personal History of Informant

NAME OF WORKER Harold J. Moss ADDRESS 6934 Francis St.

DATE Sept. 21, 1938 SUBJECT Folklore

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Elmer Dellett, 3256 Dudley St. Lincoln, Nebr.

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1. Ancestry. French-German
2. Place and date of birth. Nodaway Co. Missouri, March 16, 1855.
3. Family. 3 children
4. Place lived in, with dates. Hopkins, Mo. 1855 to 1875 — Lincoln 1875-1876, Plum Creek (Lexington) Nebr. 1876 to 1883, Buffalo Co. 1883-1884- George Town (Custer Co) Nebr. 1884 to 1887 — Ulyses, Butler Co. 1887 to 1890 — Bee (Seward Co) 1890-[1915?] — Seward 1915 to 1935 — Lincoln 1935 to date.
6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates. Missouri county school 1862 to 1870, Nebr. 1876-77.
7. Special skills and interests. Cabinet maker parttime. Farming, Painter, Paper to 1884 1880- to hanging, playing violin 1930 1876 to date. Cabinet making, violin playing-musical instruments, [reading?].
8. Community and religious activities. Musical entertainment, church, which ever available.
9. Description of informant. Typical Old timer, whiskers, medium height, and build, used cane, bright mentally, slightly hard of hearing, health well preserved. Suggests the hardy pioneer life of earlier days.
10. Other points gained in interview. Likes dances and social gatherings and is alert to changing conditions about. Is or was highly adaptable to new environment and is inclined to think that the past is well worth preserving. Believes the life of modern children a bit narrow and that it would be possible to enlarge their view point and broaden their perspective considerable.

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FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

NAME OF WORKER Harold J. Moss ADDRESS 6934 Francis St.

DATE Sept. 21, 1938. SUBJECT Folklore

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Elmer Dellett, 3256 Dudley St. Lincoln.

"We came to Nebraska from Nodaway Co. Missouri in 1875 to Lincoln. There wasn't much here then. The streets were paved with wooden planks and the mule cars ran along those streets.

Out on the flats, one could see the piles of salt scraped together, and whenever it rained these would be washed down.

We moved out to Dawson county near [Cozad?] in 1876. That year I saw our nearest neighbor, his wife and three children killed and scalped by a band of 120 Rosebud Indians. Hawke was his name. I watched through field glasses. Their place was 3 miles away. The Indians just before leaving, set fire to the barn, which had a thatched roof, and the house too. If you never saw a thatch roof, it was one put on by twisting hay or grass around slats on the rafters.

While the Indians were there, Major North and a troop of soldiers appeared and I could see the smoke from their 'carbines' off in the distance.

The buildings blazed up and the Indians rode off through Gallagher canyon and on to Muddy Creek. [Major?] North caught up with them and when he came back, he only had 16 live Indians. I asked him where the rest were and he said, "Theyre all good Indians now." 'A dead Indian in the only good Indian.'

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I went to Hawkes place right after the massacre with a man named Miller and we found them all dead, five of them. They had all been shot and scalped tho we thought maybe none of them were dead when they were scalped.

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They only cut off a small part of the scalp about as big as a silver dollar from the top of their heads. There were three dead Indians there too, Hawke had shot these or his wife had before they died. [??]

We lived in Buffalo county a year. I helped tear down Old Fort Kearney'. The commissary where they kept their food was soaked with bacon grease. It made fine firewood.

We lived at the 'French Dirty Woman Ranch.' The woman who run this ranch was French and filthy dirty.

In Custer county, we lived near 'Georgetown' Olive Bros. had a big ranch there. Two 'Nesters' by the names of [Ketchum?] and [Mitchel?] came and squatted on Olives ranch which was partly open to homestead.

I.P. Olive took some of his cowboys and dressed them up as Indians. They raided Ketchum and Mitchels dugouts and killed and scalped them. They did not bother the women and they got away. Olive was arrested for this when some one told on him.

We moved later to Butler county and I did lots of painting from then on. My first job was painting the blinds on the windows of a house, I used green paint.

There and in Seward county I played for lots of dances, but had played many a dance before in sod houses, sometimes in school houses. I played the fiddle and called. They danced waltzes, [shothsches?], polkas and square dances. My partner was Jim Moore. Such pieces as.

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'missouri Mush Ice'

'Fisher's Horn Pipe'

'miss McCloed's Reel'

'Irish Wash Woman'

'Old Zip Coon'

'Pop Goes the Weasel'

'turkey in the straw'

'Grandfathers Days'

'Old Dan Tucker'

'the Girl I left Behind Me'

'Haste with the wedding'

'Rye Waltz'

'Leather breeches'

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I could play all night and never play the same tune twice. 'the girl I left Behind Me' First [!?] couples lead up to the right Pass right through Balance two And swing with the girl behind you'

(Four times around.) And promenade eight.

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This was repeated four times [once?] for each two couples. 'Pop goes the Weasel!. First gent lead up to the right, [I?] hands around and pass right thru' Pop goes the weasel. Repeat Ladies Do Si Do [Balliente?] First [?] lead tot he couple on the right, Halfway around Do Si Do [Balliente?], Break and Swing, Half right and pass right thru Do Si Do [Balliente?]. (Four times around.) The calls were tuned to the music. They were many other calls. We used to play with a '[Melodian?]' which was a small organ. I went to many a '[Busin Bee?]' play parties and games. [One tune, we used to play wa 'Oh where oh where has my little dog gone. Oh where, oh where can he be, with his tail cut short and his ears cut long. Oh where, oh where can he be. [A German Wedding?]

I played for a German Wedding dances. They started celebrating in the afternoon, and drank Beer, wine and whiskey. Nobody got drunk tho. The wedding was at six oclock and they eat until 9 or 10 oclock, then started to dance. They did not give 6 the bride any money at this wedding. At one wedding I went to in Seward County the bride had \$600 pinned on her dress.

They did not dance at this wedding. I have the oldest fiddle in [own now?]. It weighs a little over 7 [ocs.?] and came from Germany. Pioneer Medicine & Funerals

I never had the doctor but once for myself or the three children. People were healthier then and didnt run for a doctor everytime they felt a little sick. They didnt eat so much stuff like pies and sweet things. They used their own medicine sometimes.

Black cherry Bark and honey for coughs, for [croup?] and some call it [shakecherry?]. Bread and milk poultice. Coal oil baths for colds and aches. Skunk oil for lung colds. We just caught skunks and got the oil. I guess the country was cleaner and not so much disease then. Everybody exercised more and did not live so soft and they didnt think much about getting sick either. We had lots of fun and lots of hard work. I have seen a good many funerals when they did not have coffins and have seen them take the lines off a team to lower a box or coffin into the grave.?)

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Supplementary.

Mr. Dellett has apparently lived a full life in his time and seen much of the earlier days in Nebraska. It is probable that in time he can recall some interesting stories and data of earlier groups and local customs. He plays well now and much of his interest was centered in social life and community gathering. At a latter date will visit with him again since he gives one the impression of having much more to add to what is begun in this interview. His violin is stamped [Ammo 17-Bersendi?] [??] [?]

Has no picture available but does not object to having one taken.