

## [Thomas J. Hartnett]

[?]

### FORM A Circumstances of Interview

NAMES OF WORKER Edna B Pearson ADDRESS 108 E. 18 South Sioux

DATE October 24, 1938 SUBJECT Interview No. 12

1. Name and address of informant Thomas J. Hartnett, Jackson
2. Date and time of interview October 24, 1938, 11 A. M.
3. Place of interview Mr. Kennelly's oil station
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant no one
5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you no one
6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc.

Mr. Kennelly's filling station is just an ordinary filling station in a small town.

### FORM B. Personal History of Informant

NAME OF WORKER Edna B Pearson ADDRESS 108 E. 18 South Sioux

DATE October 24, 1938 SUBJECT Interview No. 12

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Thomas J. Hartnett, Jackson, Neb.

1. Ancestry Didn't procure names of father and mother

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2. Place and date of birth Hubbard, 1861
3. Family four boys and five girls
4. Place lived in, with dates Lived in Dakota County whole life
5. Education, with dates Quit school in about seventh grade
6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates farmed all his life
7. Special skills and interests none
8. Community and religious activities Member Catholic church
9. Description of informant Mr. Hartnett is rather a large man; rather ruddy complexioned; jolly and full of jokes
10. Other points gained in interview ——

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

NAME OF WORKER Edna B Pearson ADDRESS 108 E. 18 South Sioux

DATE October 24, 1938 SUBJECT Interview No. 12

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Thomas J. Harnett, Jackson

I was born in Hubbard in 1861. My folks came here in 1856; they lived at old St. Johns for a while; got burned out with prairie fire; burned horses and house and everything; moved, to St. Johns for seven years; started to school in St. Johns. St. Johns was bigger then that Jackson is now. Once I got caught in a rat trap while I was monkeying around a moonshine still.

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The Northwestern was the first railroad through here. I remember they had a barrel of whiskey and tin cups hanging all around the barrel on the day the train first went through. The Northwestern track was taken out over five years ago. The Burlington passes through Jackson, across the ditch, almost out of town.

The Indians used to work on the railroad and some of them got fired and were made mad about it and were going to clean everything. The white men all gathered at Beacom's and sat up all night watching but nothing happened. They would bind grain and chop wood just like the white men and used to catch fish and trap muskrats at Jackson Lake, and gather berries on the side hills.

Those were better times then than now, and people were happier; they were more sociable and helped each other more. If a farmer lost a cow the whole community would be sorry.

In 1880-81 was the biggest snow we ever had; came on the 14th of October and was on the ground the next May; eight feet of snow on the level in the timber.

The big blizzard of 1888, January 12th I think it was. I shoveled snow for ninety days between Hubbard and Omaha on the railroad track. We would shovel in the day time and that night it would drift in again. It would take five "pitches" to get the snow out; some of the drifts were fifty feet deep. Below Randolph the road curves in an S-curve and in the cuts the snow would drift terribly. The snow and sand would drift together, and they didn't have rotary plows like they do now, but had to put the snow on [?] flat cars and take it to the cuts and dump the snow down there.

In 1873 the grasshoppers came in such droves as to shade the sun. They came in here and in two hours would strip a corn field. They tell a story about a man who was plowing in a field; he took off his vest, with his watch in the pocket and hung it in a post. When he had plowed around the field once and got back to where he had left his vest, all that was there

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was his watch. The grass hoppers had eaten the vest. They tell, too, about a man who left his team in the field while he went to the house. When he came back the team and wagon had been eaten up by the grass hoppers and they were playing horseshoe with the shoes the horses had worn. The people would make trenches and drag the grass hoppers in the trenches and burn them.

They had two race tracks at Jackson; I lived in Hubbard and used to come over with the Red Shirt Canadians. Pat Ferrel, Dave Waters, o'Neill, local people had horses. That was before the Burlington railroad was gut in, about forty-six or forty-seven years ago, about in 1891. The indians used to bring their ponies up and camp on the hill, and race their ponies to get the pale faces' money. Jim Flynn, Dave Waters, Flannery, John Ryan, had sorrel horses with white faces; there were no strange horses brought in. The Red Shirt Canadians and raced on Sunday, used to go to church and then get up a horse race and get John Barleycorn mixed up and have a battle before they went home.

Jackson had a good ball team; Johnny Heenan, John Lillie, Charley end Tom Moran, Joe Twohig and John Ryan were all good ball players.

The women were great for riding horses, no buggies. They had no saddles but would ride bareback. Mrs. Pat Gill was a good horseback rider; Mrs. Bob McCormick was one of the best riders, and Mrs. Sarah Erlach used to catch a horse and ride it around for half an hour before her husband would ride him.