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Interview with Stella Hill Ryan of Lacrosse, Kansas

Mary P. Schmidt

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RT
398
F666m
1958
no. 8

STELLA HILL RYAN (Interviewed by Mary P. Schmidt)

- 1- 13 Introduction
- 14-681 Reminiscences of her life in Kansas (Mostly school-teaching experiences)

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Transcription Date: 2009-28-June

Interviewee: Ryan, Stella Hill

Interviewer: Schmidt, Mary

Interviewer:

The following is a tape recorded interview with Stella Hill Ryan of La Crosse, Kansas. This interview is being taped at three and three fourth's inches per second on dual track by Mary [unable to hear] Schmidt on July 1, 1958 at La Crosse, Kansas.

Mrs. Ryan, first I want to tell you how very much I appreciate being permitted to come into your home for this interview, and knowing what a remarkable woman you are, I know we are going to have fun doing this together and I will learn many things about you and your background.

Interviewee:

Well, thank you Mary for your very kind [unable to hear] and your very kind thoughts [unable to hear].

Interviewer:

Mrs. Ryan, would you tell me when you family came from... where your family came from and where did they located in Kansas?

Interviewee:

Well, my mother came from Sundburg [?]Valley, Virginia, and my father came from Allegany, Pennsylvania, and they met in Kansas during the territorial days at Leavenworth and finally homesteaded in what is now Abilene.

Interviewer:

We would like to know something about your family, how many there were in your family and what you did.

Interviewee:

Well, my father was run one of those commissary wagons I think in those days, see, it was before the Civil War that my father and mother came here. They came here before '61. I mean they came before, now see... I repeat...that doesn't sound...

Well, they, at one time my uncle Charlie Thompson owned the site of Abilene but my mother and father homesteaded it homesteaded that track of land they had and today the Bonn [?] Memorial is on my father's and mother's homestead in the early day and it was given to a man by the name of Wright for grist mill only but of course that was long, long, time ago and the records were burned in the in the courthouse so we never could get the record of that otherwise we could have come into for inheritance on that Bonn Memorial land there because it was part of my father's homestead and my mother's homestead.

Interviewer:

Did you family experience any hardship?

Interviewee:

Oh my child yes. Do I have to answer that question? They lived in a log cabin just about a mile from Abilene and the log cabin on the bank of the Smoky Hill River. And they lived in a log house and they only had a buffalo robe for a closing the door for a door closing a buffalo robe. But they did have three dogs, two large dogs that my mother kept chained inside the house and the little dog was kept outside

and whenever anything would disturbed outside at night and my mother was alone she would turn the big dogs loose and she had her protection by those three dogs.

Interview with Stella Hill Ryan of LaCrosse. My mother came from Virginia and mu father came from Pennsylvania. They later moved to Leavenworth and Homesteaded which is now Abilene. Folks lived in log cabin outside of Abilene. Parents had 9 children many hardships. Mrs. Ryan went through high school was and was married at Manhattan. Stated teaching high school at age 15. taught different schools in Kansas. disciplined hard at times. Tells about hard candy at county school.

She had a confrontation with student who was a trouble maker and referred him to several other teachers and then back to her and then had no more trouble with him. Sat on the election board and her husband also. She was a Democrat, but said she voted for the best man and not just the Democrat. Talked about the earlier days when she taught at school and experiences with the children. Enjoyed her teaching experiences.

Tells of man giving treats at Christmas time. Has one brother left and had six children.

Tells where parents were born. Homesteaded in Abilene and lived in a log cabin. Parents had family of 9 children. Tells if how they struggled when family was growing up. They later moved to McCracken. She went to school there and then on to Manhattan. Started teaching when 16 years old. Taught number of years in Rush Center and LaCrosse at first received 25 dollars per month. At Rush Center taught in a sod house. Tells of games played like the watermelon game the children played. Tells about one boy who that rebuked her discipline with rawhide. He was sent to another school. They couldn't manage him so they sent him back.

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Interview with Stella Hill Ryan of LaCrosse,
Ks. July 1962. My mother came from
Virginia and my father from Pennsylvania
later moved to Leavenworth - homesteaded
which is now Abilene - (very muffled) -
Folks lived in log cabin outside of Abilene -
Parents had 9 children - many hardships -
Mrs Ryan went through high school - was
married at Manhattan - started teaching at
age 15 - taught different schools in Kansas
(very muffled) - discipline hard at times - tells
about hard candy at country school -

Tape #	Time	Break between sides A and B.
F666m 1958 no. 8. (Continued)	30 min	<p>continued interview with <u>Stella Hill Ryan</u> she had confrontation with student, Jim - trouble- maker + referred to several other teachers + then back to her + had no more trouble with him - Sat on election board + her husband also - She was a Democrat, but said she voted for best man + not just the party. Reminiscence about earlier days she taught at school + very homesick - tells of experience with lice children had - Enjoyed her teaching experiences. (Hard to understand at times)</p>
(Continued on Side B)	4 min.	<p>Tells of man giving treats at X-mas time - Has one brother left now - I had six children + made my life very pleasant and happy.</p>

Tape

Time

Break between Side A and B

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32 min

Interview with Stella Hill Ryan of La Crosse, Ks - Tells where parents were born - parents homesteaded in Abilene - lived in log cabin - Parents had family of 9 children - Tells of how they struggled when family growing up - They later moved to McCracken - she went to school there - grade + high school - then on to Manhattan, Ks - started teaching when 16 years old - Taught number of years in Rush Center + La Crosse, Ks - at first received \$25 per month at Rush Center - taught school in Sod house - also taught school in McCracken - Sometimes her voice not too clear - Tells of games played - talks about watermelon game children played - Tells about one boy that rebuked her discipline with rawhide - he was sent to another country school, couldn't manage him + sent him back to her to teach. - Tells about being a Democrat at election time - Served on election board for years + years - Her husband also served on it - talks about more election times + politics - Talks about her school adventures with children - Taught school for 50 years

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INFORMANT BIOGRAPHY FORM

1. Name: Stella Hill Ryan		2. Date: July 2, 1958	
3. Address: LaCrosse, Kansas		4. County: Rush	
5. Age: 83			
6. Place of Birth: Abilene, Kansas			
7. Ancestry: English---Scotch-Irish		9. Education (Circle highest) Grade school 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 High School 1 2 3 4 College 1 2 3 4	
8. Languages spoken: English			
10. Places of residence:		Dates:	
Abilene, Kans.		1875---1887	
LaCrosse, Kans. (1 year) McCracken, Kans. (34 years)		1887---1917	
Alexander, Kans.		1917---1921	
Rush Center, Kans.		1921--1934	
LaCrosse, Kans.		1934---1958	
11. Present occupation: Retired Teacher		12. Former occupations: Teacher	
13. Father's name: William A. Hill		17. Mother's name: Margaret Elizabeth Thompson (Hill)	
14. Father's place of birth: Monongahela, Pa.		18. Mother's place of birth: Front Royal, Va.	
15. Grandfather's place of birth: Monongahela, Pa.		19. Grandfather's place of birth: Front Royal, Va.	
16. Grandmother's place of birth: Monongahela, Pa.		20. Grandmother's place of birth: Wales, British Isles (Great Britain)	
21. Place and condition of interview: In the home of Mrs. Stella Hill Ryan			
22. Remarks:			
<div>Collector's name: <i>Mrs. D. L. Hill</i> Address: <i>LaCrosse, Kansas</i></div>			