

Kansas History Through Story and Song

Worksheet 2: Lane County Bachelor

Lane County Bachelor

Another early song tells the story of a single man who moved to Kansas to start a new life. The song is very descriptive. How does the author feel about living in Kansas? Draw a picture to illustrate the song. Then answer the questions below.

1.
*Frank Baker's my name and a bachelor I am,
I'm keeping **old batch** on an elegant plan.
You'll find me out west in the county of Lane,
I'm starving to death on a **government claim**.*

2.
*My house it is built of the natural soil,
The walls are erected according to **Hoyle**.
The roof has no **pitch** but is level and plain.
And I always get wet when it happens to rain.*

3.
*Hurrah for Lane County, the land of the free
The home of the grasshopper, bed bug, and flea.
I'll sing loud its praises and tell of its fame,
While starving to death on a government claim.*

4.
*How happy I feel when I crawl into bed,
And a rattlesnake rattles a tune at my head.
And the gay little centipede, void of all fear,
Crawls over my neck and down into my ear.*

5.
*And the little bed bugs so cheerful and bright,
They keep me a-laughing two-thirds of the night.
And the gay little flea with sharp tacks in his toes,
Plays "Why don't you catch me" all over my nose.*





6.

*Then come to Lane County, here is a home for you all,
Where the winds never cease and the rains never fall,
And the sun never sets but will always remain
Till it burns you all up on a government claim.
Till it burns you all up on a government claim.*

Vocabulary:

Hardtack: Hard bread

Hoyle: slang for following directions

Government claim: buying land from the government

Old Batch: slang for bachelor

Pitch: flat roof, with no slant

1. What was the bachelor's name?
2. What is his house made of?
3. According to this song, Lane County is the home of what three things?
4. In verse four, the author says he is "happy" when he hears a rattlesnake.
Do you think he was really happy?
5. What does the author say keeps him laughing in verse five?
6. Does verse six make you want to come to Lane County?

