

Kansas Folklore: The Hardships of Homesteading

Folklore is the stories, customs, and music that are passed down from one generation to the next. Folklore is a part of our community history and often tells about everyday life. It tells us how people felt about a place. The folksong *The Lane County Bachelor* uses humor to illustrate the hardships of homesteading. Lane County is in Kansas. What does this song tell us?

The Lane County Bachelor

<p><i>Frank Baker's my name and a bachelor I am, I'm keeping my 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. My house it is built of 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.</i></p>	<p>1. Define in your own words what the bold phrases mean:</p>
<p><i>Chorus: 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.</i></p>	<p>2. What hardships does Frank Baker describe?</p>
<p><i>How happy I feel when I crawl I into bed, And a rattlesnake rattles a tune in my head. And the gay little centipede, void of all fear, Crawls over my neck and down into my ear. 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.</i></p>	<p>3. How does Frank Barker feel about his experience homesteading in Kansas?</p>