

## **THE SILVER FOX FARM**

Garden City, Finney County, Kansas

Written by Bernice Crooms

*Consultants: Edward and Juanita (Berry) Clifton*

*\* Additional information added about Edward and Juanita Clifton*

The silver fox is termed “a brunette, born into the red-furred fox family.” It came from parents with peculiar intensifying vigor, which resulted in a strange coloring, transmitting red to black. The pigment is the softest, thickest, warmest, and most lustrous of furs. The fur is worth its weight in gold.

The hair of the silver fox is three colors, a slate blue, capped by a portion of black, surmounted with a black and white tipped tail.



Finney County of western Kansas has two industries, of which very few counties in the state can boast. One is the silver fox industry, and the other is the growing of celery. The following information was given by Mr. and Mrs. Edward Clifton\*, who own and operate the Arkansas Valley Silver Black Fox Ranch in the northern part of Garden City.

The Cliftons have been raising the silver fox in Finney County since the fall of 1930, and they have found that beautiful furs can be produced in this locality, the same as in the northwestern localities. They explained that the first investment should be of profitable stock. The next should be excellent food and sanitation, for when the fox is

in pens, it is at your mercy for food and protection. At the time of this writing, their yard had forty pups from eight litters, and more are to be born soon.

The fur industry is still in its infancy, as wild fur is becoming extinct each year. Imitations of the fox fur are close to impossible, so there is always a ready market for fox pelts, and they demand a reasonable price.

The silver fox industry stands on its own feet through the country's hard times, and the Pruiva Feed Company made the statement last year that they have never lost a dollar on a fox feed contract.

The years of drought and dust storms have not affected the animals. The Cliftons had fox puppies born during the worst dust storm in Southwestern Kansas with no ill effects. They have underground kennels, which are warm for the puppies and cool during the summer. They also provide artificial shade.

People became more interested each year in the business. At the time of this writing, there were about 175 foxes, including the puppies. Several people were interested in a Fox Ranch business, one living in Wichita, one in Hutchinson, and the other being a Garden City resident.

Mr. and Mrs. Clifton stated that the Silver Fox Farm in Garden City always welcomes visitors.

*\* See the story about Mr. and Mrs. Edward Clifton, titled CELERY, Garden City, Finney County, Kansas.*

### Additional Information

#### MRS. AND MRS. EDWARD CLIFTON

EDWARD CLIFTON, son of Charles Clifton and Mary Fawcett, was born on 7 Oct 1876 in Ellsworth County, Kansas. He married JUANITA BERRY on 28 Feb 1928 in Umatilla County, Oregon. Juanita, daughter of Benjamin Berry and Lucy Craig, was born on 6 Apr 1887 in Missouri. After spending time on a fox farm in Oregon, Edward and Juanita became interested in starting their own in Garden City, Kansas. In 1930, they became owners of the Silver Fox Farm.

Edward and Juanita did not have any children. After they were married, they moved to Garden City, Finney County, Kansas, living there until 1943, moving to Green Mountain Falls, El Paso County, Colorado.

Edward and Juanita's death happened on the same day and the same month, two years apart.

Juanita died on 13 Mar 1948 in Denver, Colorado, with burial on 18 Mar 1948. Edward passed away on 13 Mar 1950 in Colorado Springs, and his burial was on 16 Mar 1950. The Valley View Cemetery in Garden City, Kansas was the burial place for both, Edward and Juanita.

## Newspaper Obituaries

*Newspaper obituaries provided by Laurie Oshel, Assistant Director at the Finney County Historical Society Library in Garden City, Kansas*

### JUANITA (BERRY) CLIFTON

*Garden City (Kansas) Telegram – March 1948*

#### DEATH TAKES MRS. CLIFTON

According to word received here today, Mrs. Waneta (Juanita) Clifton, Edward Clifton's wife and a former Garden City resident, died Sunday in Denver.

Mr. and Mrs. Clifton resided here for approximately 20 years before moving to Denver about five years ago. She was a member of the Rebekah-Lodge of Garden City. Harry Clifton of this city is the brother of Edward Clifton. Mrs. Clifton had no local relatives. Her body will arrive here Tuesday night for funeral services held in the Phillips Chapel at 3 p.m. on Wednesday.

### EDWARD CLIFTON

*Garden City (Kansas) Telegram - Tues, 14 Mar 1950*

#### DEATH TAKES EDWARD CLIFTON

Edward Clifton, 74, a former resident of Garden City, died in a Colorado Springs Hospital Monday night due to a heart attack. He had been in the hospital for about a week.

Mr. Clifton came to Garden City from Pendleton, Oregon, in 1927 and raised foxes here. He and his wife moved from here to Green Mountain Falls, Colorado, about nine years ago, where he had a ranch. He had been a member of the Community Church here in Garden City, plus the Odd Fellow and Rebekah Lodges. Surviving are Mr. Clifton's brother, Harry W. Clifton, Garden City, and a sister, Mrs. Jennie Palmateer, living in Oregon.

Funeral services will be in Colorado, but burial will be here in Garden City, at the Valley View Cemetery. Graveside services will begin with the funeral procession at the Garnand Chapel at 2 p.m. on Thursday. The Rev. Marvin Brown will officiate at the services. The Odd Fellow Lodge will furnish pallbearers.