

INDEX CARD

Openings--Kiowa-Comanche

FIELD WORKER'S NAME ETHEL B. TACKITT  
Indian-Pioneer History Project S-149  
May 17, 1937

INTERVIEW WITH JOHN HERMIS,  
Lone Wolf, Oklahoma Box 53.  
Born Aug. 20, 1870, Hampton Rock Island Co.,  
Illinois.

Father's name Joseph Hermis  
Born Lorraine Germany, came from Europe when  
11 years old.

Mother's name Mary Mohr-German  
Born Hampshire, Ill.  
Father emigrated West, stopping at Chicago, Ill.  
Was offered a Two Acre Lot for every day he would  
work.

I think that every effort should be made to preserve  
records of the Early Settling of Our Country and I am glad  
to furnish such information as I may.

I was born at Hampton in Rock Island County, Illinois.  
My father, Joseph Hermis, was born in Alsace-Lorraine, but  
when he was eleven years old, his father brought the family  
to America on account of the disturbed condition of Europe.

My Grand-father died at Sandusky, Ohio, just a few  
days under the age of One-hundred-four years. My father  
served in the Union Army and was wounded three times in the  
Battle of Gettysburg. At the age of eighty-three he died  
at Hampshire, Illinois.

My Mother was Mary Mohr, also of Germany blood. Her father emigrated from New York west to Chicago in the early part of 1830. I have often listened to him tell how when he came to Chicago in that early day he was offered a town lot near the present Government Post Office Building for every day he would work. But he didnot care for lots there and went on to the Mississippi River.

In 1887, when I was seventeen years old, I went to work in the Telegraph Office of the Chicago-Milwaukee & St. Paul Rail Road, and following this held several railroad jobs and positions until in 1898 I went to work on the Rock Island as engineer between Ft. Worth, Texas and Chickasha, Oklahoma.

When the Mangum line west was built, I worked out over that line. The first train I took over the road, could go only as far as Granite, and Fort Cobb and Anadarko were the only Towns on the run. Mountain View was two miles North of the Railroad, that was before the town was moved. The cattle were so thick, we would have to stop the train and kick them off the Railroad track.

I was much impressed with Oklahoma and when the Kiowa Country was to be opened, I went to El Reno and registered. I drew number 646 but some dropped out and when my turn came

I was number 613.

On the fifth day after the opening of Kiowa County I filed on my claim which is the NW4 of S 19-TW-6-R-19 adjoining Lone Wolf Townsite on the South.

I continued to work on the Rock-Island Railroad but went back to fireman and had my headquarters at Mangum in Greer county, so I could spend my week ends and time off on my claim so I could prove up. The law required that a person should have at least five acres in cultivation.

I hired Walter Woods, who owned a team, to plow and plant five acres in feed. That was an awful dry year and the feed burned up. So, I got some of the boys to put five bushels of wheat in the Caboose for me at Chickasha and I brought it up and planted wheat. The cattle, horses and all kinds of stock were loose and they ate up my wheat but one Sunday I took a flour sack and pulled up a sack full and threshed it out by rubbing it on a wash-board and thereby saved a sample of my first wheat, grown in 1901. I will give some of this wheat to the Historical Society, if you so desire.

I have lived on my farm thirty-six years and have raised many wonderful crops of both wheat and Cotton.

Among the Pioneer Women of Oklahoma, I wish my wife to be remembered. She passed away on March 7th, 1937. She was Bertie May Hammond, born in 1876 at Green River, Wyoming. Her Father Andrew Hammond built the first Ferry Boat and operated it, to be placed upon the Green River at that point. He was operating this Ferry during the Gold Rush to California.

My wife was educated in a Catholic Convent at Salt Lake City Utah and came with her father to Ft. Worth, Texas, where we were married in 1904. I brought her to my Claim at Lone Wolf, Oklahoma, as a bride and she helped me to build our home and farm. Our first house 14ft. by 28 ft. is yet in use as part of our dwelling.

I believe that I am the only person living upon the land which they drew in Dill Township in 1901 .