

EVANS, D.

INTERVIEW #5871
EARLY DAY ROUND-UP IN INDIAN 288
TERRITORY.

Interview with D. Evans -
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EARLY DAY ROUND-UP IN THE
INDIAN TERRITORY.

My name is D. Evans, I was born and raised at Adairsville, Georgia, until I was eleven years old, when three families of us decided to go to Texas. That was in 1871. We had wagons drawn by oxen. It took eight weeks for us to make the trip from Adairsville, Georgia to a little place in Mississippi, called Chiceta, which was fifteen miles northeast of Paris.

I remember that one of the oxen was taken sick on Friday night and we worked with it all night but it died next day, so one of the men with his family had to stop there in Chiceta, Mississippi. We came very near having to stop in Arkansas when we were waterbound for twenty-four hours but when the high water went down we decided to go on to Texas.

I was about sixteen, I guess, when the railroad was put through here. I was flag bearer for the engineers when they were surveying the right-of-way for

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the railroad. Where the bushes were so high and thick that the engineers could not see very far, I had to cut these bushes out and hoist my flag. I worked with these engineers from Arthur City, Texas to Kosomo, Indian Territory and then decided that I wanted to live over in this country, so came over on horseback and located a place to live, and then went back to Texas and got my wagon and mules and "batching" outfit. I lived on the Willie Springs place, and "batched." I was not married then. I raised a little feed for my team, but mostly worked as a cow-hand for the ranchers. Each spring of the year, all of the ranchers would get together and estimate how many calves each should have on the range, by the number of cows they knew that they owned. Then they started out on the Spring round-up to try to brand as many calves as they thought they should have. Sometimes hands that belonged to three or four outfits would work together. Sometimes they went separately.

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Bill Self had a ranch about five miles northeast of what is now Hugo, on Salt Creek. This was all wild prairie, no fences, and the grass as high as a man's waist, stirrup deep. I ran cattle all over this place. I worked for Mr. Self some. In April, when the grass had grown up pretty well and the weather was still cool enough so that the danger of screw worms was not so great, all the cow ponies were properly shod, the camp bedding gathered up and loaded into the chuck wagon, the chuck box put on the back of the wagon, saddles, bridles and so forth looked over and mended if they needed it and usually a negro man was employed to drive the chuck wagon and cook for the boys. Then he was told just where to camp that night. The riders started out, usually two together, looking for young calves to mark and brand. The calf was always branded with the same brand, also marked, as was the cow that it ran closest to. If it was a young calf it was easy to tell to.

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which cow it belonged, if it was one that had come along after the round-up of the year before, it was branded with whatever brand the man who found it selected, usually according to the brand on most of the cattle with which it was found.

The boys would ride the range, roping, marking and branding all day long and when dark came they would head for camp and they would keep that up day after day for weeks, till they thought that most of the young calves on the range had been marked and branded. It was a courtesy to brand your neighbor's calf for him; if you found a calf that was not with the usual bunch and if a cowman found a cow or a calf clear off their range, he would either drive it on to its own range, if he was going that way or else he would notify the owner.

I really saw this country grow up. It was no uncommon thing for a man to ride up to another's gate, call him out and shoot him, if he had it "in" for

for him. One night as we sat in the house we heard a shot fired. Finally, when we got the courage to go out we found that some of the Everidges had killed a negro.

I was in Goodland the day that Harmon Bohannon killed his brother John but I ran out of town when I learned that trouble was brewing, I just didn't want to see a man die. I heard the shots, as I ran off.

Once at a picnic one McIntyre and "Cub" Burney had a few hard words with each other, but friends interceded and kind of patched up the trouble. They went home. They both lived in Grant. Burney lay down to sleep, and McIntyre went to his house, called him out and shot and killed him.

There was lots of game here and lots of open range for cattle. After I married and lived down on the Everidge Lake farm, in 1898, there came a big overflow. In it I lost 100 acres of corn and cotton.

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a mule, a horse, 40 head of cattle and about 400 head of hogs. Two cows floated down the river and hung up on drifts and I got them back. The farm that we lived on was the Ralston farm on Everidge Lake. We could see water everywhere and cattle floating down stream and lowing pitifully.

When we lived on the Everidge Lake Farm, Red River had filled up with snags, tree roots and rubbish that the big flood had brought down and so the Government sent barges to blow the snags out and to clear the river so that boats could traverse it again. At the Florence landing on Red River boats were tied up. They would dynamite the snags and kill the fish. Some of these fish weighed 45 pounds. No one family could eat that much fish before it spoiled.

My father was T. B. Evans and he and my mother were both raised in Spartansburg District, Georgia. Instead of counties in Georgia they had districts. My mother was Hester Jane Garrett. After I had been

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over here a few years and hadn't been scalped by the Indians my parents moved over here and settled. They moved ^{several} /different places and lived here a good many years down in the Shoals neighborhood, died there and are buried in the Shoals cemetery.

I married a young widow whose maiden name was Mattie Calder but she was a Mrs. Grubbs when I married her. We have raised her family and ours right here in this country and we are still together.

I recall the murder of Morris Fisher and wife by their son, Willie Fisher. A neighbor came to my house and asked me if I knew what was wrong over at the Fishers, I didn't. He said the dogs would not let anyone come near the house and the stock had not been attended to for a day or two. We tried to go in. The dogs would not let us. Finally cowboys roped the dogs and tied them up so we could go in. Morris Fisher, a fullblood Choctaw Indian lay in the bed with the top of his head blown off. His wife,

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also a fullblood Choctaw Indian lay on the floor at the foot of the bed, dead. They had been dead about 24 hours. Their son Willie had slain them for their money and property, as he was the only heir. Willie Fisher stated that he shot his mother as she knelt and prayed for him not to kill her, after he had shot his father. He died in the penitentiary of tuberculosis a few years later. There was a lot of litigation to determine whether Mr. Fisher or his wife died first, so as to determine heirship.

Mr. D. Evans lives at 108 West Clayton Street,
Hugo, Oklahoma.