

OVERFIELD, N. F. INTERVIEW.

5478

338

BIOGRAPHY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Leona Bryan

This report made on (date) _____ 193

1. Name Overfield, N. F.

2. Post Office Address Pawhuska, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month December Day 7 Year 1866

5. Place of birth Lawrence, Kansas.

6. Name of Father Thomas Overfield Place of birth SHROPSHIRE, ENGLAND

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Margaret Ferguson Place of birth EDINBURGH, ENGLAND.

Other information about mother _____

Notes or complete narrative by the field worker dealing with the life and story of the person interviewed. Refer to Manual for suggested subjects and questions. Continue on blank sheets if necessary and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached 5 pages.

Leone Bryan,
Field Worker.

340

I moved to Oklahoma, December, 12, 1890, when I was twenty-four years of age. I came here from Independence, Kansas, and first settled in Pawhuska, at that time it was Indian Territory. I came down here one time with two brothers on a hunting expedition. We had an aunt and uncle living here at the time. In those days we drove hacks and as I got into the hack to go home the proprietor of one of the stores here came out to the hack and told me to get out and go to work.

I lived with the aunt and uncle. There were no streets here then. We lived in a story and a half house. One family lived down-stairs and we lived upstairs. The house was what was called a log stockade. The logs were set on end and then were weather-boarded. I drove one of the wagons and it took us two and one-half days to drive here from Independence.

I worked at the Red Store for ten months and then went to work at what was known as the Green Store. Indians in those days didn't care for hotels so the back door of the store was left open for them. Around payment time, when we would go to work of a morning, we would find them lying all over the counters and the floor.

Our water supply was from dug wells and our fuel was wood. When a beef was killed, it was sold out immediately, for there was no ice and no way to keep it. One Christmas we had wild turkey, chicken and quail. All food supplies were shipped in except vegetables, nearly everyone had gardens. There was a mill here. It burned down once, was rebuilt and later burned again and has never been rebuilt. What provisions the people needed they bought from the stores. The stores bought their supplies at Kansas City and St. Joseph, Missouri. They were shipped by rail to Elgin, Kansas, and then freighted overland.

When I came here about all the white people worked in stores or were Government employees. There were a few white farmers, who either worked for the Indians or reared the land. The land was held in common by the tribe until after allotment. Fifty would be a large estimate for the white population when I first came to the Osage Reservation. The Indians were very friendly.

There was lots of game. Turkey, deer and prairie chickens. There were lots of fish but I did not do much fishing.

My parents are buried in Independence, Kansas.

The Indians used to have religious ceremonies and stamp dances.

The Osage rolls closed July, 1907.

The ranch houses were small frame houses with sometimes a bunk house. I remember when cattle were shipped in to Red Rock after swimming across the Arkansas River.

There was one church here and it was interdenominational. There was a great deal of church activity for so few people.

When I came here, this was a free country. There was nothing prohibited except liquor and gambling. All hunting and fishing were free with no closed seasons.

There was a ferry at Ralston and one at Osage but I don't know who owned them. The only way one had of crossing creeks was by fords.

There was very little trading in furs and hides.

The mixed bloods and full blood Indians had horse races. I saw one race in which there must have been thirty horses. They raced from Dial Hill almost a mile east. One boy fell off his horse and every horse that came along jumped over the boy and he was unhurt. (The Indians did not race their horses on a track but raced them straight across the prairie).

There was some cattle shipping, but most of the stuff produced here was taken care of here. Traders would buy and sell horses. Lots of the Indians had large herds of ponies.

There were four stores here at that time. All the traders were licensed Government traders and each clerk that the trader employed had to have his name on the trader's license. Government Doctor took care of the people who were ill.

Recreation.

For recreation we had church entertainments, baseball games, play parties and dances. A group of us organized a club and held dances in what is now the City Hall. There were very few picnics and barbecues.

All the roads were just trails and followed the least resistance being very crooked. The hills were too hard to get over so the roads just went around them.

The only schools we had were private schools. The school houses were built and maintained by subscription. There was a Government school for Indians and also a Catholic School.

There were stage lines from here to Elgin, Kansas, one from here to Hominy Trading post and a small line

from Arkansas City, Kansas, through Kaw City, and Pawhuska, Oklahoma. After the opening of the Strip there was a line in here from Ponca City through Gray Horse.

Remarks: Mr. Overfield is the Bailiff of the County Court and has lived in Pawhuska since 1890.