

PEARCE, T. D.

INTERVIEW

#12187

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PEARCE, T. D.

INTERVIEW
BIOGRAPHY FORM

Form A-(S-149)

#12187

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WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Lula Austin

This report made on (date) November 16 1937

1. Name T. D. Pearce (Intermarried)

2. Post Office Address Caddo, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) 8 miles East Caddo

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month November Day 20 Year 1855

5. Place of birth Middle Tennessee

6. Name of Father _____ Place of birth _____

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother _____ Place of birth _____

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 4.

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Lula Austin,
Investigator,
November 20, 1937.

An Interview with Mr. T. D. Pearce,
Eight miles East of Caddo, Okla.

T. D. Pearce, better known as Uncle Dave, was born November 20, 1855, in Middle Tennessee. His father was in good shape financially- before the Civil War broke out- for as a farmer he had plenty of cattle, hogs and stock, but the Confederates came and shot his stock and took everything away except a yoke of steers. From Tennessee the Pearce family moved to Sebastian County, Arkansas, when Dave was quite young and then to Fort Smith where they got government work. At the close of the Civil War they went back to their farm from which they had been driven, and here their family experienced some hard times. Finally the father of Mr. T. D. Pearce got hold of a yoke of white steers and one cow. The family had to eat bread and water for quite a long time.

T. D. Pearce moved to Caddo November 1, 1878, at the age of twenty-three. He managed to get some work at different times in Denison and around there, but Caddo was

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his home.

There were not many farms in cultivation at this time and all around Caddo was just a range of prairies, not settled. There were no roads; you just started out in most any direction and found a trail to travel. Caddo was very small, only four little stores and a few smaller buildings such as a meat market and a blacksmith shop owned by Pete Homer and J. N. Alexander. These men furnished Mr. Pearce with work and he followed blacksmithing as his occupation for several years.

At this time the government furnished the Comanche Indians of the Comanche Reservation, wagons and little ponies to do their freighting with and they had to come to Caddo after freight as this was the market place nearest to the Comanche Reservation. There was also a stage coach in Caddo which took the mail about once every two weeks to Fort Sill.

In 1873, the first railroad through Caddo was built and in 1874 it went over Red River to Denison, as this was the first bridge across the Red River to be completed.

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Up to this time the only way of crossing the river was by ferry.

T. D. Pearce is a member of the Masonic Lodge at Caddo and has been for over forty years. On January 14, 1883, he was married to Fernelia A. Corney Folsom, widow of David Folsom. She was a half breed Choctaw Indian and was educated in the Indian schools of that time. While they lived in Caddo, three children were born.

When T. D. Pearce moved out east of Caddo about eight miles when he bought a place.

After coming to the country Mr. Pearce raised and cattle, hogs, and farmed.

About two miles and a half south of his farm was a place of interest known as Double Springs. These springs furnished water to people for miles around and the people who lived near the springs were negroes who were freed of slavery- some of whom are still living there.

Another place of interest near his home was the old court ground, where court was held at the Forks of

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Boggy. Here they had what is known as the whipping post and when they found a prisoner had stolen horses or cattle he was shot for his crime. When prisoners were whipped they had to pull off their shirts and were given ten licks apiece.

On March 18, 1895, Mr. Pearce's first wife died and in later years he married Chestenia Timberlake. Six children were born to this union all of whom are living except one.

Mr. Pearce, is now eighty-two years old and owns a little store out at Pritchard, five miles north of Bokchito and eight miles east of Caddo, where he has lived for many years. He is still active about his store and does most all of his work. He still owns some cattle and hogs. He has made his home in Bryan County since coming to this country.