

PEERY, THOMAS.

INTERVIEW

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BIOGRAPHY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History

PEERY, THOMAS.

INTERVIEW.

8173.

Field Worker's name Thad Smith, Jr.This report made on (date) August 11, 19371. Name Thomas Peery.2. Post Office Address Chickasha, Oklahoma.3. Residence address (or location) 1428 Oregon.4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month September Day 5 Year 18675. Place of birth Texas.6. Name of Father Elijah C. Peery Place of birth Missouri.7. Name of Mother Sally Bonner. Place of birth Texas.Other information about mother Buried in Oklahoma.

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 3.

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Theo Smith, Jr.
Interviewer,
August 11, 1937.

An Interview with Thomas Peery.
1428 Oregon, Chickasha, Oklahoma.

In the year 1896 I forded Red River at the old Spanish Fort with three hundred head of cattle. The cattle were mine; all steers. I had only three men helping me, including my cook, who drove our chuck wagon.

I bought a wagon load of supplies before leaving Texas, and we killed several wild turkeys and deer, after we crossed into the Indian Territory.

We drove our cattle through Bill Washington's pasture, on Mud Creek; Mr. Washington had a big ranch, stocked with lots of cattle. One of his cowboys helped us all the way through the pasture, to keep Mr. Washington's cattle out of our herd.

We also drove our herd through Bill Stone's ranch pasture, which was located on Bear Creek, and we were accompanied across his pasture by one of his men, to keep the cattle from mixing, or to keep the trail drivers from picking up some cattle intentionally. That is an old custom, and no one was excused.

I was heading for the old long O ranch (O) on the Cana-

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dian River, close to Norman, where I had three hundred other steers on pasture that I had shipped there.

The long brand belonged to Meek Smith, but at that time another man was on the ranch. I got to the ranch without losing any cattle, or having any trouble with the exception of having trouble finding water for stock in a few places.

I made two corn crops on the Canadian River, which made forty bushels to the acre. I fed all of the corn I raised to my cattle in the feed pen.

In 1898 I went into the commission business, lending money, to cattlemen, for the commission firm of Strayhorn, Hutton and Evans. They did livestock commission business at Kansas City, Missouri, Chicago, Illinois, and St. Louis, Missouri. I, as their agent, loaned the money to stockmen at the rate of seven per cent, and, of course, when the cattle were sold on the market, Strayhorn, Hutton and Evans got to do the selling and got a commission for that.

I was located in Chickasha and there was lots of good grass, and good cattlemen there. If a man was the right kind of a man, had grass and water, and saddle horses, and ability

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to take care of cattle, I would buy him all the cattle his grass would carry. I have had loaned out several hundred thousand dollars at one time and I very seldom made a loss, and only then on account of a hard winter, when some of the cattle would freeze to death. In such cases I would buy them more cattle and let them try it again, if they showed the right spirit, which they usually did.

I worked for the same firm for fifteen years, or until 1913, when most of the grass land had been broke.