

PERRY, HENRY BELTON. INTERVIEW #4702

59

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

PERRY, HENRY BELTON

INTERVIEW

4702

Field Worker's name Robert H. Boatman,This report made on (date) June 29, 19371. Name Henry Belton Perry,2. Post Office Address Blanchard, Oklahoma Route No. 23. Residence address (or location) 4 miles S. E. Blanchard4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month March Day 15 Year 18555. Place of birth Doaksville, Indian Territory6. Name of Father Calvin Perry Place of birth Territory

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Cressie Carter Place of birth Territory

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 6.

PERRY, HENRY BELTON

INTERVIEW

4702

Robert H. Boatman,
Field Worker,
June 29, 1937.

An Interview with
Henry Belton Perry, Negro,
Route No. 2, 4 Miles S. E. Blanchard,
Blanchard, Oklahoma.

I was born in the Choctaw Nation near old Doaksville,
March 15, 1855. Doaksville was an old Indian trading post
of the Choctaws and Chickasaws.

Mr. Perry's mother was one-half Choctaw.

As a boy I led a life of leisure as the people then
in that country were mostly Indians and did very little
work.

The people lived in little log huts about ten feet
square and generally the cabins were built in sight of
each other. All the farming that was done was small In-
dian corn patches used to make Tom Fuller. The squaws al-
ways tended these corn patches. It was the duty of the
buck to keep the meat and generally he kept up a good
supply of venison. The Indians are very fond of deer meat.
If an Indian found a deer feeding and his head was down, he
would walk right along, but when the deer switched his tail

PERRY, HENRY BELTON

INTERVIEW

4702

-2-

the Indian stopped still; for that meant the deer was going to raise his head. When the deer started feeding again he continued his approach. The men seldom brought in their kill. They usually just came home and the women would go bring in whatever they had killed. They did most of their hunting with bows and arrows. The bows were from four to six feet long, with a big rawhide string. The arrows were painted. The longer bows were for long range shooting.

I never went to school very much. What schooling I did get was at old Fort Arbuckle. That was a Government school. There was one store, a schoolhouse, and the old Fort where the soldiers stayed. A Mr. Grant kept the store. Some of the old buildings of the Fort are still there, but in a very dilapidated condition.

What few supplies we bought we got at Atoka. There were one or two stores there. Fort Arbuckle is located on the Washita River near the Arbuckle Mountains.

When I was about sixteen years old I began riding range and running cattle for Nate Burnett, Jack Brown, and Ike Jones. They had all the range near Rosedale and

PERRY, HENRY BELTON

INTERVIEW

4702

-3-

Byars. There was a store at Rosedale that furnished supplies for their outfit. Byars was not known. Johnsonville was two miles north of where Byars is now. The town took its name from a big rancher, Mr. Johnson. Byars took its name from Nath Byars.

I worked for Burnett, Jones, and Brown for eighteen years.

The first doctor that came to that country was Dr. O. T. White.

My father had a big herd of ponies on the range and if he wanted to trade off some of them, he would go see the Indian Agent at Anadarko. There were three agencies in the Territory then, one at Anadarko, one at Fort Sill, and one at Fort Reno.

One time a bunch of Comanche Indians stole some of our ponies and started toward Fort Sill with them. We got on their trail and kept following them. After three or four days we came upon them on Big Beaver Creek, near where Lawton is now. They had the ponies staked along the bank of the creek and were swimming in the creek.

PERRY, HENRY BELTON - INTERVIEW 4702

-4-

When they saw us they began to scam and opened fire. We returned the fire. We killed four of them and the rest of them got away. None of our men were hurt. We got our ponies and returned home.

All the Indians were pretty friendly except the Comanches and Kiowas. We had to watch them pretty closely.

Payne was a whiskey peddler who was in this part of the country. The Indians knew about what time he would be coming and also knew about when the United States Marshal would come. When Payne would be in the country we would have out two or three spies to watch for the marshals. They always came through in a covered wagon. The spies were always Indians, as they had an eye for the business and they would be stationed at different points, in the top of a tree on some hill and could see the wagon two or three miles away. When they saw them coming they would send a runner and by the time the laws got there everything would be just fine and the peddler would be two miles gone. However, the marshals caught

PERRY, HENRY BELTON

INTERVIEW

4702

-5-

up with Payne north of where Blanchard is and killed him on a creek where three streams come together. That place took the name of Triple Hell and is still known by the same name.

About this time I left the Territory and went to Mississippi and stayed a year. At that time the Government began allotment of land and I started back to the Territory to get my allotment. I came up the Arkansas River on a small steamboat, the Rosalee. There was a bunch of people on it coming here and they sang and danced all the way. They called the Rosalee the molasses boat and said this country would be as easy to get as a barrel of molasses would be in Mississippi.

When I returned quite a few settlers had already come in and had begun to settle on the best land. I was enrolled as one-quarter Choctaw and finally got forty acres of land near Blanchard. I built a log house and it /^{And} cleared most all of it out. I remained here and farmed and raised my family.

Our clothing we made ourselves. We would pick the seed from the cotton by hand. Then the cotton would be

PERRY, HENRY BELTON

INTERVIEW

4702

-6-

carded by hand and made into rolls. A spinning wheel was used to spin it into thread, and a loom then wove the thread into cloth. Wool cloth was made in the same way. The wool cloth was called linsey and the cotton cloth was jeans, and you just couldn't wear them out. Of course, all the sewing or at least most of it, was done by hand.

As years passed, more and more people came and the country was settled so fast and everything along with it that we hardly knew how it all happened.

INDEX CASES.

Fisher's Station
Kiefer