

FOWLER, E.

INTERVIEW

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Investigator, Lillian Gassaway
November 26, 1937.

Interview with E. Fowler,
201 West Oklahoma Avenue,
Anadarko, Oklahoma.

Born December 25, 1866,
Buffalo, New York.

Parents Thomas Fowler, Ireland,
Margaret O'Conner, Ireland.

My father was Thomas Fowler, born in Ireland, and my mother was Margaret O'Conner Fowler, born in Ireland.

I came to Oklahoma the first time at the opening of the Cherokee Strip in 1889. I was in the race and ran from Hunnewell, Kansas, and settled on what is now known as the Carmichel place, one mile north of Blackwell. I only stayed a short time and sold to Carmichel and went back to Kansas.

The race couldn't start until twelve o'clock, and the people were there in all kinds of conveyances, wagons, buggies, buckboards as well as horseback. Some of the men were on such spirited horses that they would break over the line. There were four men shot by the guards for this offense and two were killed. It was a sight that can't be described, that run. People were killed, wagons broke down and every one went wild.

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Ben Walters had a herd of cattle over the country and I got a few cattle from him and became associated with him in business. We never had very much trouble with the Indians except once when we had been letting our cattle range over their country, which was a common thing in those days. These Indians demanded four steers for the use of the land and refused to let us round up our cattle until we paid off. We at last got our cattle at the price of only two steers.

Later we took our cattle to the W. G. Williams place down by Verdén to be taken care of. We then sold our cattle and bought all of W. G. Williams' horses.

In July, 1901 I came back to the opening of the Kiowa country. I helped to survey the townsite and lay off the blocks and lots. I carried the chain and cut down cornstalks and cockleburrs.

I opened a little grocery and feed store. I also had a livery barn in partnership with Mr. Brisco. We had horses and buggies to let to any one looking over the country hunting for locations and I often acted as driver.

In 1902 there was a flood and I worked all night filling sandbags to sand-bag the waters that were about to get into the town of Anadarko. It was the worst flood that ever has been in

this part of the country. The railroad had just a small bridge crossing the Washita River northeast of the town and it held the water back.

Mr. Charlie Callahan, Bill Starkweather and I got some dynamite and went to the tracks near the bridge and blew up the track. This released the waters and soon the flood began to recede. We had worked all night under the direction of John Blackmore, who I believe was a United States Marshal at that time. There were many head of stock lost and much damage was done.

On the first train that went out after the flood I shipped two cars of hay. The Oklahoma City ice plant wanted hay and couldn't get any so when my cars got there they took the hay at my own price. I considered myself very fortunate.