

GRAYSON, CARTER

INTERVIEW

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GRAYSON, CARTER.

INTERVIEW
BIOGRAPHY FORM

Form A-(S-149)

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WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Thad Smith Jr.

This report made on (date) 6-23-1937 1937

1. Name Carter Grayson

2. Post Office Address Chickasha

3. Residence address (or location) 719 South 2nd Street.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month May Day 31 Year 1866

5. Place of birth Texas

6. Name of Father Nat Grayson Place of birth Mississippi

Other information about father Buried in Texas.

7. Name of Mother Virginia Lee Place of birth Virginia

Other information about mother Buried in Chickasha, 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 4.

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Thad Smith
Interviewer
6-23-37

An interview with Carter Grayson,
Chickasha, Oklahoma.

I came to Ardmore in 1880, when I was fourteen years old, from Texas. I forded Red River horseback at a point nearly due south of Ardmore.

Ardmore was a very small town then. There were many cattle and ranches near there. I tried to get a job from several ranchers without success because I was a negro and only fourteen years old.

I was determined to be a cowboy, so I went back to Texas and landed a job with Col. Suggs, a big Texas cattleman who summered thousands of steers in the Indian Territory.

I helped drive a large herd into the territory in 1881, and we drove them to Cobb Creek which was in the Caddo Reservation.

Most of the cowboys used big heavy square skirted saddles with a round horn shaped like an apple; they were called "apple horn saddles".

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All the cowboys used Navajo blankets, and the most of them used either a spade bit or a ring bit. The spade bit had a raised place, two and a half or three inches high on the mouth piece or cross bar. This was a very severe bit. The ring bit had a ring that fastened on the mouth piece and went around the lower jaw; this bit, when pulled on hard, would break a horse's jaw.

The cowboys all wore what were called "California pants" which were all wool and cost \$15.00 a pair. These were worn winter and summer.

We all carried six shooters on our hips and Winchesters in our saddle boots and most of us carried field glasses and when we were hunting horses or cattle the field glasses would sometimes save us lots of riding.

When we landed in the Caddo country we saw many Indians. Most of them lived in tepees in winter, and in the summer they had arbors made of native grass that they used to eat and sleep in,

These arbors were made by building frameworks of forked poles and then matting the long grass and laying it on top, and some of them had two sides covered with

grass to keep the morning and evening sun out.

Nearly every Indian family had two or three acres of bottom land where they raised corn, peas, beans and pumpkins. Their plows were made of wood with the exception of the point which was made of cast iron.

The Indians had rawhide horse hobbles made by soaking the hide and then scraping all the hair off; these hobbles were about two and a half inches wide, and the hide was doubled with the edges turned in. The hide was then put around something the size of a horse's ankle and twisted while wet and allowed to dry and the hobble was then fastened by a big rawhide button that was sewn on with a rawhide string. This button would not come unfastened unless forced, or unless it got wet and pliant.

On all big cattle drives and roundups, chuck wagons were used to carry food for the men, but sometimes on short drives we used a pack horse or mule to carry our food.

We had home made pack saddles which we made by making two crosses with sticks about eighteen inches long and fastening them together about two feet apart with other sticks, then they were covered with either

a rawhide or sheep skin. The lower part of one cross fit across the horse's back and the upper part was packed with food and cooking utensils.

Our beds were rolled in tarpaulins, packed on horses, and tied on with ropes.

I helped to drive several herds of cattle to Kansas. We always had a chuck wagon and a cook with us and when we were not close to wood and did not have anything to cook with, the cook would make a fire out of buffalo chips and cow chips which burned readily, but it took lots of them.

We traveled the Chisholm trail when we could but sometimes we would have to leave the trail for grass and water as the herds in front of us had eaten the grass down short.

I have lived in Oklahoma since coming here in 1881, but I never made any of the runs.
