

KNEEDLER, ELLA (PERRYMAN)

INTERVIEW 7419

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Effie S. Jackson,  
Interviewer,  
Sept. 2, 1937.

An Interview with Ella Perryman Kneedler,  
( Daughter of George and Rachel Perryman )  
41st Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

My mother, Rachel Alexander Perryman, was in her nineties -so she claimed at the time of her death in 1933. She did not remember when she was born or exactly where -just some place northwest of Tulsey Town -a little community of Creek Indians who lived in the timber hereabouts and called their settlement Tulsey Town. My mother was known far and wide for her hospitality - her cooking and her nursing. Not only the Indian sofka and grape mush, but white man's dishes were cooked by her. A natural nurse and a mother to seventeen children, ten of whom were adopted.

My mother could not read and write and could only say a few words in English. The longest sentence she ever said was when she told William Lynch, a life-long friend, of the death of her little grandson- she said, "George's baby stuck nail in foot - bad sick -died."

My father, George Perryman, son of Lewis, married

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Rachel Alexander about 1868. During the Civil War my mother was sent to Fort Gibson for protection. Her father was a corporal in the Southern Army and was slain in combat. Our first house was the old ranch house - and then in 1879, the white house was built, where we live today.

My father leased a large quantity of land. A strip ten miles wide east from the Arkansas River, and south from Tulsa to Broken Arrow. In turn he sub-leased most of this land to such well known cattlemen as Shanghai Pierce, J. M. Dougherty and Jay Forsythe. He raised hogs and steers. He often drove his hogs overland to Coffeyville, Kansas. He had the only orchard in the early days in this vicinity, consisting of apples, peaches, plums and pears.

Josiah, my father's brother, was Tulsa's first postmaster in 1879. He used a northeast room in his house as the post office. In 1882 with the coming of the railroad, Josiah moved this post office to his store at the northeast corner of Main and First Streets, which

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was one of the first three stores founded in Tulsa.

"Has" Reed of Coffeyville joined him later. He pro-

pered and sold out to Bob Bynum, another pioneer.

This store passed into the hands of Haliburton-Abbott, now Sears, making it the oldest store in Tulsa.

My father built his up-town home about 1886, so we children could go to school. It was the only two-story house in town. Early day school teachers boarded with us. I remember when my mother sold this place; the south part of the block between Main and Boulder facing Sixth Street. She received \$65,000 and demanded that it be in currency, so a St. Louis bank sent her the currency. She put it in her pocket as if it were an everyday affair and walked over and put it in the bank. The house was moved to the thirteen hundred block on South Elwood where it is today. The Tulsa County Court House stands where our barn used to be. Water was used from the old Perryman well on the place until Spavinaw water came in.