



ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
INTERVIEW ABSTRACT

CONSULTANT: George "Lad" Pendleton

DATE OF BIRTH: August 13, 1917 SEX: Male

DATE(S) OF INTERVIEW: June 25, 1996

LOCATION OF INTERVIEW: Pendleton ranch headquarters, rural Reserve, New Mexico

INTERVIEWER: Jane O'Cain

SOURCE OF INTERVIEW: NMF&RHM x OTHER _____

TRANSCRIBED: Yes: January 12, 1998

NUMBER OF TAPES: Two

ABSTRACTOR: Jane O'Cain

DATE ABSTRACTED: November 14, 2000

QUALITY OF RECORDING (SPECIFY): Poor. There are times when the tape skips. The electrical power is not steady and at one point during the interview it seemed to go off, some material repeated during the interview.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE: Family history of the "Boothill" area of New Mexico. The interview touches briefly on the consultant's role as a board member of the Heritage Institute.

DATE RANGE: 1917 – 1996

ABSTRACT (IMPORTANT TOPICS IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE):

TAPE ONE, SIDE A:

Pendleton was born in Douglas Arizona, and came with his parents to Cloverdale, New Mexico, in a covered wagon when he was three weeks old. His parents took a homestead east of Cloverdale. His mother taught school at Walnut Weels (southwest of Hachita), it was an area settled by members of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints when they were driven out of Mexico by Poncho Villa.

At the homestead near Cloverdale mail was delivered once a week on horseback. It was delivered to within about a mile of their place.

In 1924. a band of Apaches came into the Animas Mountains from their home in the Sierra Madre Mountains in Mexico. A half-butchered beef was found, and a horse with a kyack and a rawhide rope around its neck. After a period of time the Apaches left the Animas Mountains and went over to the Chiricahua Mountains. Then they returned to the Animas Mountain area and two horses and some mules were believed to have been stolen by them. Some men from a local ranch and the sheriff of Hidalgo County surrounded a group of these Indians, but they slipped away during the night. This band of Apaches lived in the mountains in Mexico until 1937. The last group of ten or eleven were ambushed and killed at a spring near Cumpas, Mexico, by Mexican soldiers. He describes an incident when a pre-teenage Apache girl was captured by some trappers and taken to live with a Mexican family. Although she had a difficult adjustment, she eventually married a man from Mexico.

The Pendletons would go into Hachita from their homestead at Cloverdale in a wagon about twice a year to get supplies. The Hachita mercantile extended them credit on a "year-long" basis and they were also able to write a check on the store. Brown was the owner of the store. Pendleton states that when Brown sold the store, he financed Robert O. Anderson's first oil-drilling venture.

For a period of time the people from the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints, who were fleeing from Poncho Villa, lived in deserted army barracks in Hachita. Hachita was a "fly camp" of Camp Cody in Deming.

Pendleton's parents married in 1912 in Carlsbad and moved to Douglas, Arizona, in 1914. They arrived at their homestead near Cloverdale with 150 stock mares. Raising mares in the southwest corner of the state was not as profitable as it had been in the Carlsbad area owing to the large bands of wild mares that were available in the southwest corner of the state. Some of their mares sold for as little as three to five dollars a head.

In 1882, his grandfather went with (Buffalo) Bill Cody to purchase bucking stock for Cody's Wild West show. Cody gave his grandfather a .45 pistol to protect himself from hostile Indians. This weapon is still owned by the Pendleton family. Cody offered Pendleton's grandfather the opportunity to travel with his Wild West show for \$75 per month, but he declined the offer. Documents show that Carl Pendleton, the consultant's grandfather, was logging with a team of oxen in the Guadalupe Mountains in the 1870s. Pendleton Canyon north of Weed, New Mexico, is named for Carl Pendleton.

Eventually, Pendleton's parents sold the homestead at Cloverdale because there wasn't a school available (They then purchase another ranch near Cloverdale and some additional properties.) He discusses his mother's teaching as being a necessity to "buy groceries and to support the ranch." She taught until Pendleton was in the fifth or sixth grade when she started having more responsibilities running the ranch due to her husband's failing health. Pendleton attended high school in Lordsburg. The first year his

mother moved to Lordsburg to be with Pendleton and his sister but thereafter they boarded with some families there.

Pendleton's father died in 1937 when Lad was nineteen. He purchased the family ranch from his mother, and she remarried in 1943 or 1944. Pendleton graduated from high school in 1936; he was offered a football scholarship but could not accept it because of his father's illness. While he attended high school in Lordsburg in the 1930s there was a student body of approximately two hundred. Pendleton relates an incident that occurred between his father and the family's banker. Pendleton's father told the banker it would cost \$30 a month for room and board to keep Lad in high school. The banker thought he should take Lad out of school to help on the ranch. His father said to the banker, "You tend to your bankin' business and I'll tend to my business."

While the Pendleton children boarded in Lordsburg they returned home only at Thanksgiving and Christmas. The ranch was eighty miles from Lordsburg.

After high school Pendleton owned a Caterpillar (tractor) and worked as a contractor. He did not serve in World War II as he had a family, and ranching was considered essential to the war effort. He married the first time in 1938 or 1939 and had two children. Later he divorced; and he remarried and had two more children.

Briefly discusses the difficulty in getting ranch children education. Pendleton remarked that there are still some ranchers who do not know how to read or write.

TAPE ONE, SIDE B:

Pendleton states that he took some training to become a real estate broker, but regrets that he did not attend college.

He bought the ranch at Reserve after he sold his ranch at Cloverdale. He states that at the time he purchased it the ranch was in bankruptcy. "And this ranch's broke the last seven people that are on it (chuckles)." The ranch is composed of 111 acres of deeded land and a seventy-section forest permit. They are allowed to run 330 head of cattle on the permit; . . . "it is the roughest land in Catron County."

Pendleton was a real estate broker from 1975 to 1995. At one point his brokerage in Silver City employed ten to twelve salespeople. However, with the decline of copper prices his salespeople were unable to make a living, and he closed the office. Thereafter he worked independently selling ranch real estate, and handled some ranches in Mexico.

He became interested in prospecting, and related an incident that occurred with a prospector who was working in New Mexico. He is now interested in "map dowsing" topographic maps to locate precious minerals. He will make a formal agreement with a rancher in Mexico in order to prospect there.

Pendleton serves on the Elk Depredation Committee. As the drought has worsened, water has become scarce in the high country for the elk and they have moved down into the lower elevations normally reserved for cattle graze. The elk numbers are increasing and they are competing with the cattle for forage. Cattle are being removed from the forest permits due to drought and low prices. The ranchers are concerned that with the elk in that habitat they may not be allowed to run cattle there once they are able to restock. The "sportsmen" and outfitters are involved in this committee as well as forest service and game department personnel.

He states that he thinks this is the worst drought "of all times." There was a severe drought in 1903 and 1904, but it is difficult to compare because now there are more options to provide water and feed for the cattle. His neighbors are not seeking pastures elsewhere; they are selling their cattle. Pastures are difficult to find; four border-states in Mexico are also experiencing a drought.

Pendleton was asked to serve on the board of the Heritage Institute by Dr. Bill Stephens and Rob Cox. He served on the board until approximately one year ago.

Fund raising for the Museum was difficult; "we didn't do a very good job . . . raising money . . ." He states that he did not serve on any committee of the foundation, and could not answer many of the questions on the questionnaire mailed to him prior to the interview.

Pendleton felt disappointed that he was not able to interest the board in buying the library and artifact collection of the Everhart family, former owners of the Hatchet Ranch near Hatchita. He states, "I couldn't get interest from our board. I didn't even get []em to come down and look at it." The collection was dispersed by the Everhart heirs.

TAPE TWO, SIDE A:

[There were problems in recording this interview. Some of the information discussed on tape two was also discussed on tape one.]

Pendleton was visited by Dr. Bill Stephens and Rob Cox to discuss the plan to build an agricultural heritage museum. He is interested in the collection of "early day implements and methods," and in oral histories.

He states that a difficult problem in fund raising for the Museum was that there was not "enough interest to . . . really approach them [his neighbors] . . ." He felt that the solution to the funding problem was to sell "industrial bonds . . ."

The Elk Depredation Committee was discussed again. He states again that beef cattle growers are facing a difficult time. Cows purchased eighteen months ago for \$750 would now sell for only \$250. When those growers who are now selling their cattle try to replace them later they will have to pay three times the present price.

TAPE TWO, SIDE B: Blank