

**NEW MEXICO
FARM & RANCH
HERITAGE
MUSEUM**

**ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
INTERVIEW ABSTRACT**

CONSULTANT: Lois Doyal

DATE OF BIRTH: June 26, 1920 GENDER: Female

DATE(S) OF INTERVIEW: September 4 and 5, 1997

LOCATION OF INTERVIEW: Doyal Residence, Roswell, NM

INTERVIEWER: Jane O'Cain

SOURCE OF INTERVIEW: NMF&RHM OTHER _____

TRANSCRIBED: Yes: July 2, 1998

NUMBER OF TAPES: Four

ABTRACTOR: Barbara K. Wheat

DATE ABSTRATED: April 6, 2001

QUALITY OF RECORDING (SPECIFY): Very good, however, Mrs. Doyal's voice becomes inaudible at the end of some sentences.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE: Father's veterinarian practice in Roswell beginning in 1926. Her education was in public school and college in Silver City, New Mexico, and Emporia, Kansas. The bulk of the interview details the consultant's experience on a cattle ranch in the Caprock area of southeastern New Mexico, 1943-1955.

DATE RANGE: 1915-1955

ABSTRACT (IMPORTANT TOPICS IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE):

TAPE ONE, SIDE A:

The consultant is asked for pertinent information: name, date and place of birth, genealogy and family background, when she moved to New Mexico (1926).

Mrs. Doyal indicates that her father had some education in Iowa and Canada in veterinary science. She lists her siblings and their birthdates. She also indicates her mother's illness, which prompted the move to New Mexico.

She discusses the family's early living arrangements in Roswell and the help her father received from Dr. Crile, chaplain at the New Mexico Military Institute. She remembered that it was 1927 when her father first opened his veterinary practice, mostly large animals as she remembers. He traveled to outlying ranches by car. He never owned a pickup. The family moved to several houses in Roswell and her father moved his offices also.

Mrs. Doyal remembers going on calls with her father occasionally and especially the children filling nicotine capsules for worming chickens. She tells about her father taking vegetables and other things as payment during the Depression. She says that her father helped ranchers vaccinate animals and "drench" sheep.

Mrs. Doyal indicates that her mother never worked outside the home except to work in the apple sheds when the family first moved to Roswell. Mrs. Doyal knew only one grandmother who visited them once. Her grandfathers had both died. She spoke about her father being a likeable person.

Part of her father's practice was taking care of the polo ponies at the New Mexico Military Institute. She remembered being quarantined because of that when there was a case of meningitis at the Institute.

Her father continued in practice during World War II and up until 1960. She says that during later years he had a kennel so he could board dogs and he stabled horses. He had dogs and horses of his own.

Mrs. Doyal addresses the hard work that her father did. She also indicated that after her mother's death he remarried.

She begins to discuss the dust bowl days at the end of this side of the tape and this discussion is continues on Side B.

TAPE ONE, SIDE B:

Mrs. Doyal tells about the dark clouds and then rain, about people getting rid of animals, the government ordering them slaughtered and some of the meat people were allowed to can. She comments about the dust, but doesn't remember many people leaving Roswell.

There is a question asked about the beginning of World War II and this leads to her memories of going to college in Silver City for two years to become a teacher and then going on to College of Emporia for two years. Her sister also went to Emporia. They had scholarships and worked to help pay for college.

Here is a discussion of grade schools and she points out there was a separate school for Hispanic children in Roswell although some attended school with her. The African American children attended Carver School. There was no Spanish spoken in school. When asked Mrs. Doyal says African Americans were mostly in service jobs. The Hispanics did more farm work.

There follows a discussion of Roswell as an agricultural and ranching center, alfalfa, cotton, orchards, cattle, and sheep. The orchards froze in 1939 and were not replanted. She spoke about irrigation.

Mrs. Doyal speaks about schools, businesses, and churches in Roswell. She indicates that the family socializing centered around the church activities. There was one couple, Summerskill (?), with whom they visited and had New Year's Day and Armistice Day festivities.

She says that her father charged a dollar or two for his services in the early days, more if he went out to the ranches or farms. She remembered when they couldn't go to the store to buy groceries because the family didn't have a regular income. Her father took care of the business and her mother was not involved in that.

She was asked about post-war introduction of new medicines, and replied that it did seem to help especially with the small animals. She indicated that her father had the reputation of being very good with animals, very caring.

Mrs. Doyal told about teen activities centered around church activities and Kipling's soda fountain. She was asked about friends who might have had more money. Her mother liked to sew and made most of their clothes. She babysat to earn money.

When she went to college she didn't take much with her but her clothes and her bible.

TAPE TWO, SIDE A:

Mrs. Doyal had a scholarship for tuition her first year at Silver City and waited tables her first year. Her courses were teaching courses; math in elementary schools, geography, and bilingual education, for example. She indicated they were to teach in English and help the students learn English, no Spanish.

She indicates she chose to go to Silver City because she knew people who had gone there. Her sister was going to Emporia at the time and even though Doyal also had a scholarship to Emporia, she chose not to attend college there. She was never employed as a teacher.

Her father was Republican and voted and urged her mother to vote also though he was not especially politically active. She remembers that their first radio was a car radio. Her brother made a crystal set and it was on that they heard of Will Rogers's death. She told about listening to the neighbor's radio: "*Amos and Andy*" and "*Fibber McGee and Molly*".

When questioned, Mrs. Doyal said they had no household help. Her father hired help for office work later on.

Mrs. Doyal said her mother was a good cook, especially rolls. They always had three meals a day. She remembers coming home for lunch in junior high school. They would also share meals with the casual visitor.

Her father made the financial decisions and often did the shopping, as did her husband later. Mrs. Doyal indicates she was permitted to date, but did not date much in high school. She and her sister were married at the same time, double wedding. They went to Saturday movies as a group, brothers and sisters and friends.

She was asked about Fourth of July celebrations and indicated they were just with friends. She didn't remember citywide festivities. They did attend the rodeo and the fair. That was the Cotton Carnival in her early years and then the fair and parades. They got out of school for the parades.

Mrs. Doyal spoke about the CCC camps in the Roswell area and their activities. Some of the boys she was in school with didn't graduate but joined the CCC or the military services. Her brother attended New Mexico A&M for a short while and her sister, Barbara, was at Silver City with her. Her sister taught after her two-year course.

TAPE TWO, SIDE B:

Mrs. Doyal describes her course work at Emporia, primarily English. Her mother wanted her to go to Kansas to get a bit of refinement. She said that when World War II started most of the boys left college.

TAPE THREE, SIDE A:

She had known her husband since 1933, and was engaged the second year she attended college in Kansas. They were married June 26, 1943, her birthday.

The Doyal family came to New Mexico from Mason, Texas, by covered wagon in 1915. They drove several conveyances. A cousin came to help drive since there were the parents and five children. Mrs. Lois Doyal's husband, Floyd Velma Doyal, had not been born at the time. The Doyals bought a ranch on the Caprock, or they may have homesteaded. Mrs. Doyal's husband was born in April after the family arrived in December. They lived in a dugout for a while until they could build a house over it. Floyd's mother had ten children, two passed away.

Lois Doyal was a friend of Floyd's sister. Lois knew Floyd because he stayed in Roswell for high school. The Doyal ranch was about seventy-two miles from town, sixty miles to the turn-off and twelve miles down the Cap. The younger children went to school near home (Mescalero School).

Many of the homesteaders did not prove up on their land or moved into town or to other places. Her husband was the only one of the family to stay in ranching. He stayed on the home place. Floyd's mother moved to Roswell and left the ranch for the young couple to manage. Mrs. Doyal remembered having many visitors the first summer, and going to brandings. She was not lonely. The ranch was fenced and improved with corrals, barns, and outbuildings. The house was stuccoed. The family had acquired two other properties, Wren's and Childress' places. Mrs. Doyal comments that it wasn't a very large ranch, she thought about seven sections. Some of it was leased land. They paid Taylor Grazing fees.

Her mother-in-law had Hereford cattle on the ranch and her husband had some sheep, but lost many to predation. He trapped during the first years they were married and sold the furs. In 1946 they bought out all the family members but Floyd's mother. They finally sold the ranch in 1952. Meanwhile Floyd worked in the oil fields. Mrs. Doyal told about the children riding the bus to Tatum for school forty-some miles one way.

Mrs. Doyal lists her children and their birth dates. She had four children on the ranch and four later. She said they had bought another house to move onto the ranch but there was difficulty financing it. That helped to precipitate the sale of their ranch.

She said she milked the cow when necessary, baked bread and took care of the children. They had good neighbors, the Grahams. They played cards and had a domino club. She did not feel lonely often since they came to Roswell frequently to visit family. Her husband did grocery shopping at those times. They didn't have refrigeration or electricity, but she did have a gasoline-motor washing machine.

They had a milk cow and kept the milk in cans in a cement trough filled with cool water. They had eggs, butter, milk and meat. The first summer her mother-in-law helped her can meat in tin cans.

TAPE THREE, SIDE B:

Mrs. Doyal comments on using tin cans for canning meat. She thought perhaps it was easier to pressure-can meats that way. Her mother-in-law cooked the meat first then canned it. Mrs. Lois Doyal said she didn't can meat since they got the refrigerator and had lockers in Roswell.

When she was first on the ranch she washed everything by hand with a scrub board. She ironed with flat irons. She heated them on the propane stove. They had gotten propane on the ranch before her father-in-law died. Her father-in-law was shot on a neighbor's property while he was working at an oil well. There was an argument and Mr. Doyal was shot. The person who shot him was acquitted on self-defense. Mrs. Doyal commented that some of the big ranchers didn't want the homesteaders there, that there were bad feelings. The family had homesteaded in 1915 or 1916 and Mr. Doyal was shot in 1940. So the bad feelings had lasted a long time. She felt that some of the homesteaders had been scared off but Mr. Doyal refused to back down. Some of Floyd's brothers were afraid of people out there but she says that Floyd was not, that he didn't back down. He learned to get along with people, to call their bluff.

Mrs. Doyal was asked about brands. She describes the two Doyal family brands and Floyd's brand and draws sketches of some of them – Bar Circle V, KF Quarter Circle, C Bar B, Double Bar J. She says that her father's brand was Slash Lazy J (drawings of brands contained in the file at New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum).

Mrs. Doyal said that some of the conflict between the larger ranchers and the homesteaders might have been over branding and some about fencing. She said that at the time of his father's death Floyd had to leave college (New Mexico A&M) and go home and help his mother. He had wanted to ask Lois to marry him, but said he couldn't marry anyone then. She went back to school in Silver City and on to Emporia. They were not married until 1943. She comments that Floyd, his father and brothers all worked at various jobs off the ranch to make money to live.

Mrs. Doyal and Jane O'Cain discuss soap making. There is discussion about the elder Mrs. Doyal's tragedies of losing an infant daughter in 1916 and a son of about twelve (of a ruptured appendix) in 1922. She was asked if they might have had a car at that time and said that the elder Mr. Doyal did wool freighting to the wool warehouse in Roswell so they did own a vehicle.

The elder Mrs. Doyal lived to be ninety-three. Lois Doyal said she thought her mother-in-law did not feel too lonely on the ranch. They had moved to Texas to get away from family but then the elder Mr. Doyal's parents came out and stayed with them. Lois Doyal commented that her mother-in-law was sensitive about not living with her and Floyd and moved to town. Lois Doyal speaks about visiting the ranch while she was a girl and what a good time she had. She made up her mind that was where she wanted to live.

All of the elder Mrs. Doyal's children, except the last born in 1925, were born at home with the help of neighbors. Mrs. Lois Doyal's children were born in the hospital (St. Mary's) in Roswell.

There is a description of the cellar house on the ranch over which a frame house was later built and that house was eventually stuccoed.

TAPE FOUR, SIDE A:

Mrs. Doyal describes ironing with flat irons and says that now she doesn't iron anything. She describes her daily routine of getting breakfast, washing dishes, getting the oldest off to school. She says that she managed on the ranch to train the little ones so she wouldn't have two in diapers at the same time. She would wash, hang clothes out to dry and then try to take a nap with the children. Her schedule was uncertain since it depended on when Floyd would get back for lunch. If he was working in the Sands – the area under the Caprock – he might be very late.

She discusses the problems with shinnery oak and locoweed with the cattle and horses. She said that winter weather was occasionally cold with snow and they had to break the ice on the tanks.

When she was first on the ranch she enjoyed riding horseback but she didn't have time to ride later. She said that Floyd would take the children riding. When asked, Mrs. Doyal said that ranch life was a little different from what she had imagined but she liked it. She missed church activities. They moved an old schoolhouse onto the ranch and had Sunday School there, sometimes with a minister. Some of the children of the oil field camps came.

There were two or three camps for oil workers on Skelt Williams's ranch and two on Sam Williams's ranch. When asked, she thought there were several oil companies involved. She said Floyd worked for British-American. She thought the families who lived there were mostly from Texas. She said that Floyd made good money when he worked for the oil companies. Some of the wives of the oil workers joined their extension club. Floyd had milk cows and sold milk and meat to those families.

Mrs. Doyal said that the ranchers borrowed money from the bank. The banked with First National Bank, as did Lois's father.

Mrs. Doyal told about Floyd buying her a piano when he was working in the oil fields. He worked as a roustabout and a supplier. When he decided to sell the ranch, Mrs. Doyal agreed with him. After they moved to town he worked at various things including working on Armstrong's road crew. He helped pave the runways at the base. He hated to leave the ranch because he loved his animals but she felt it was probably best because of the drought that came shortly after they sold the ranch and they kept the mineral rights to the land.

TAPE FOUR, SIDE B: Blank