

ADAMS - A man who worked as a cowboy on several big south Alberta ranches after the turn of the century, Walter Adams, 79 has died. A lot of memories of the days of the open range were buried with him Saturday, August 14, 1965.

Service was conducted by Rev. (Fr.) S.A. Hanke in Our Lady of Perpetual Church at 9:00 a.m. with interment following in Brooks cemetery, Arrangements were by Smith Funeral Home and pallbearers were Art Perry, Eli Beauchene, Dietrich Dyck, Henry Cyr, Jim Rhodes and Charles Hale. Born in Minnesota, his family moved in 1894 to Fayette, North Dakota when Walter was only nine years old. Although only a youngster he took up cowboy work there by wrangling saddle horses for some of the roundup outfits. It was the only occupation of the land, The farmers had not yet plowed up the grass and Texas trail herds were being dumped by the thousands of head near the badlands of the Little Missouri River.

But the country was very dry; there were no markets for grain and no roads, so the Adams family picked up stakes and came to Canada.

They landed in The Hat in March 1898, but the elder Adams soon realized that this was a drier country than the one he had left, so they moved on to Camrose to take up a homestead.

Young Walter, hearing of the vast cattle ranches of British Columbia, landed a job with the Douglas Lake Cattle Co, in 1901 and worked there awhile. But he didn't like the mountain country and drifted back to Calgary looking for a job and thence to Medicine Hat.

He was hired by John Quail who had established a ranch on the Red Deer River the previous year, at the going rate of \$35 per month.

The ranch was 76 miles northwest of Medicine Hat or 45 miles north of Brooks, which was only a whistling post at that time. "There wasn't even a station," and if you wanted "to catch a train there, you had to stand in the middle of the tracts and wave'er down!"

Quail ran some 800 cattle, 100 horse and had nearly three townships of land under fence on both sides of the Red Deer when Walter was their main cowboy. He was with Quail for eight years during which time he worked with the SC outfit which ran some 3,000 steers, mostly Mexican cattle shipped in as yearlings.

The SC Ranch was owned by Gordon Ironsides and Fares, Winnipeg packers, was established before the turn of the century and was operated by Andrew Gordon, a cousin of the owner.

Another ranch outfit that Adams worked with a lot while in the employ of John Quail was the Mexico ranch, about 12 miles up the river which had

been established in 1903 by DeLaval J. Beresford, a British peer. Beresford had shipped two train loads of yearling steers and 70 horses plus equipment from Casas Grande in the province of Chihuahua, Mexico.

Adams in his ranch days, rode with such men as John and Chester Eide, Jim Spratt, Tom Owens, John Ware, Charles Powlett, Sam Howe, Charles Park, Chris Christianson, Crooks, Paul Rychman, Baillie Buck, Rod Macleay and others. He knew every rancher from Empress to Drumheller on the Red Deer river at that time.

He faced many killing blizzards in the winter of 1906-1907, the worst in the history of Alberta.

Adams married Florence Ward the summer of 1908 while still with the Quail Ranch. Homesteaders were coming into the country and Adams quit the ranch to locate land for homesteaders all over the country north of the Red Deer.

He knew the country well and this was more money than punching cows. This proved to be about the last of Walter's active cowpunching for he moved to Brooks in 1910 and bought out Jim Gregory's dray business the next year.

The Adams lived in Brooks until 1918 when they took up farming, first on dryland and later irrigation, until they moved back to town in 1941. He worked for the town for the next 20 years.

The epitaph of Walter Adams was written by Chris Christianson, of Duchess, another of Alberta's early rangemen;

"When I think of the last Roundup
On the eve of Eternity's dawn
I think of the past and the cowboys
Who have rode with us here, and are gone."

Mr, and Mrs. Adams raised a family of nine; five boys - Walter (Wally), Johnnie (killed in Italy), Pat, Gordon and Peter; girls - Mrs. W. Ray (Bertha) of Chehalls, Washington; Mrs. Dandnault (Edna), Kamloops, B.C.; Mrs Jimmy Jenkins (Lucille) of Duchess.

Mrs. Adams passed away in Brooks on December 12, 1961.

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