

GARRETT, FRANK.

INTERVIEW

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Interviewer  
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Interview with  
Frank Garrett  
Lake Station, Sand Springs Line  
Tulsa, Oklahoma.

While not a native of this state, I came here with my parents in 1889. I was then a year old. I was born in Green County, Kansas, April 25th., 1888.

My parents settled near Nowata. My father was a farmer, so had a good team that he used for purposes of his own, and in addition turned a lot of sod for other farmers. He did not have much money so had to work on the side to support his family. He received very little money for his work but got produce and things he had to have.

This sod was plowed from three to five inches deep. Usually in the fall, and by spring the grass, which had been turned completely over, was rotted, and corn and other crops would be planted. The soil would be mellow then.

As for sowing wheat, this was done in the fall, after

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the turning of the sod. This sod, in most places, was good soil and produced good crops; that is with sufficient rain, and we usually had enough rain to make good crops.

My father and I lived up near Nowata until 1896 when we came to Tulsa. I was eight years old then and had a sister six years old. Of course, the first thing thought of was school. I was sent to school to Miss Hughes who had a subscription school on what is now North Boulder Street, between Archer and Brady Streets. This school was conducted in a one room building. My sister went to school to Mrs. Lilah Lindsay, whose school was where the Osage Grocery now is on the northeast corner of First Street and Boston Avenue in Tulsa. Mrs. Lindsay had about forty pupils, all pay pupils, as there were no free schools for whites then.

When we came to Tulsa, we lived near the Frisco tracks where the Midland Valley Railway crosses it now. Most of that immediate vicinity was in a peach orchard. I remember <sup>H.</sup> Thompson, U. S. Marshal, was our nearest

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neighbor then. The Frisco Depot, then was in a box car. One half of the box-car was used as a ticket office and the other half was used as a waiting room.

The Tulsa Post Office was in Tate Brady's store, which was a frame building with rooms above, which were used for transients. In fact, it was known as the Brady Hotel. It was north of the Frisco Tracks on the west side of Main Street and south of the present Hotel Brady. The old building faced the railroad but sat back some twenty-five feet from the track.

The post office was in the rear of the building. Brady had a big trade with the Osage and Creek Indians.

Chauncey Owens ran a feed yard in between <sup>where</sup> the Osage Grocery store now is and the Frisco tracks. It was just north of First Street and east of Boston Avenue. He was popular with all the cow hands of that time. They would come to town to trade and have a good time and would put up their horses at this yard. He had sheds and stalls to put horses in and would feed and take care of them for fifteen cents per day. He had a building there with a few cots in it; he would rent these cots to men spend-

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ing the night. There was a stove to cook on. In those days, a fellow carried his own bedding, as no bedding was furnished at the yard. The cow hands always carried their bedding though. This bedding was loaded in a pack on a horse for that purpose.

Everybody did his own cooking too, while Owens furnished the stove and the hitch-yard skillet, you had to bring your bacon and coffee and do your own cooking. A cowhand rarely ever spent the night at a real hotel. He was used to sleeping out all the time anyway, so a cot in a feed yard was home to him.

I did not like school, so one day my Uncle J. H. Stonebreaker, rancher, came to our house and said he thought that the ranch was where I ought to be, so while only eight or nine years old, I went out into the Osage country north of Tulsa and began to learn ranch life. This was in 1896 or '97.

I was first a wrangler, that is, I rounded up, fed and saddled the horses for the men early in the morning.

The Stonebreaker ranch was bounded on the east

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by the line of the Cherokee Nation, on the south and west by the Arkansas River and on the northern line it reached to Hominy. It consisted of several thousand acres.

Stonebreaker was from Kansas and while young was interested in live stock. His first business started with a sow and nine pigs, and when he died his check was good for \$250,000.00.

When he first came here, and all through his activities here in the cattle business, he was agent for the St. Louis & Kansas City Commission Company and handled as high as 60,000 steers in one year.

He bought his cattle in Texas and used to pay from \$1.50 to \$3.00 per head and most of his cattle were brought in over the Turkey Track Trail. I have helped to drive great herds of cattle from Texas. We would gather them up in the spring when they were all there and some were so weak that they would fall by the way. We, however, had a man or two to ride in the rear to take care of the strays. Often a steer, even when down, after resting a few hours, would get up,

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graze a while and be ready to resume the trail.

At night we circled them and when they bedded, we took our rest, that is some of the cowboys slept until midnight then arose<sup>and</sup> watched until dawn and the first shift of watchers slept.

The Stonebreaker Ranch had several side camps. One was west of Turley, where we rounded up fat cattle to ship out. The side camps were at various places over the range, where a cowhand could spend the night when darkness overtook him.

Our main side camp or headquarters was called 3 D, and was north of Tulsa, about half way to Hominy.

Our chuck wagon came to Tulsa to get supplies. It would take one day in and one day back to make the trip. The drivers of the chuck-wagons put up at Chauncey Owen's feed yard.

I used to haul salt. We usually drove four horses to the wagon, as we would get from eight to ten barrels of salt at one load. When we returned with the salt, the barrels would be sawed in the middle and one half of a barrel placed here, and a mile or more further on.

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another  
one half barrel would be put out. This enabled the cattle to get salt almost anywhere over the ranch during that time. Sulphur was added to the salt. This was to rid the cattle of ticks. It was effective too.

J. H. Stonebreaker was one of the first cattle men in this country. He leased land through the Osage Agency, and just used a lot of it without contract.

Horses were cheap too, then. An Osage would give you two horses, anytime, to break a horse for him. You could pick the best horse from an Osage's herd for \$5.00. Often we didn't even bother to buy a horse, when we needed a new one, and saw a nice looking animal, we just roped him, saddled up and soon had him broke. I rarely ever took over a day to break one of these ponies.

Of course, we took ponies only for our personal use and not to sell or trade. Ponies were plentiful and we never had to feed them grain. Sometimes we fed them oil cakes. The Indians never feed their ponies.

Later on, Stonebreaker handled only white faced, grass cattle. However, rustlers came into this country

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and took up section after section. Then oil-wells were discovered and little by little Mr. Stonebreaker had to restrict his activities until he finally withdrew altogether.

Mr. Alfred Drummond now owns this ranch.