

MITCHELL, MARTHA HORN. INTERVIEW #13884

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Journalist, James R. Carselowey,
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Interview with Martha (Horn) Mitchell,
Vinita, Oklahoma.

DEPICTING BECK-PROCTOR FIGHT
In Goingsnake District in
1872.

My name is Martha (Horn) Mitchell. I live on North Foreman Street, Vinita. I was born near Stilwell in Goingsnake District on March 17, 1862.

My father's name was John Horn and he was born August 23, 1823, and died in 1888. My maternal grandmother, Elsie Hicks married Jeremiah Horn, a white man. She was the daughter of Chief Charles R. Hicks of a branch of the Cherokee Indians in Texas. My mother's name was Susan (Hicks) Horn.

I was married to George W. Mitchell on June 13, 1886. We are the parents of Lee R., Joseph F., Clay A., Beulah V., George W., Jr., Ross B. and Foreman Drew.

My husband, George W. Mitchell, was first married to Susan Cherokee, daughter of Stephen and Pollie C. (Beck) Hildebrand, and they were the parents of

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Dr. Robert L., Levia L., Savola L. and Claude S. Mitchell. I raised both families of children and they all look upon me as their mother and come to see me yet, the same as if they were all my own children.

When I was first married we lived in a little log house near Oaks now in Delaware County. My husband and I both taught school near there for some time. I usually had a full blood school. When we lived at Oaks we traded at Tahlequah.

My step-son, Dr. Robert L. Mitchell, was born April 12, 1876, in the little log house we first lived in after my marriage to his father. He is a graduate of the Male Seminary of the class of 1895. He was instructor in the Cherokee Orphan Asylum from 1895 to 1899, and at the Male Seminary from 1900 to 1902. He graduated from the Medical Department of the University of Arkansas in 1904. He was married to Josephine G. Barker on June 1, 1915, and they are the parents of one son, Robert Thurston Mitchell, born May 23, 1916.

Dr. Mitchell entered the service on May 18, 1918,

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in the Medical Corps, was in France and Germany for eighteen months, during which time he was advanced to a Captaincy and was mustered out of the service with the rank of a major.

After Dr. Mitchell returned from overseas he was selected as one of the first doctors in the Veterans' Hospital at Muskogee and is still with them. His wife died in 1930 and was buried in the Fairview Cemetery at Vinita. Dr. Robert L. Mitchell was a grandson of Polly (Beck) Hildebrand, who first married Stephen Hildebrand, and later a man by the name of Chesterton.

The Beck-Proctor Fight in 1872.

I was ten years old when this fight took place, at the Goingsnake Court House near our place. I cannot give a detailed account of it, nearly so good as Dr. Mitchell, who has all the facts in the case but will give it as nearly as I remember it.

Zeke Proctor rode up to Hildebrand's mill in Goingsnake one day in 1872 and started a fuss with Pollie Hildebrand's second husband, a man of the name of Chesterton whose first name I do not remember.

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Proctor drew his pistol on Chesterton and at the same time Pollie stepped in between the two men, just as Proctor pulled the trigger and she fell to the ground dead.

Proctor was being tried in the Cherokee court at the court house in Goingsnake District with Mose Alberty as judge on the bench. The charge was assault with intent to kill on the person of Chesterton and the Beck boys, who were brothers of Pollie (Hildebrand). Chesterton were very angry at Proctor, and succeeded in getting a writ for Proctor in the United States Court, at Fort Smith. The trial was already in progress before the Becks secured the writ and they secured three United States Marshals and together with Sam Beck, Sut Beck and Bill Beck, all brothers of the slain, Polly (Beck) Hildebrand Chesterton, George Selvege, Bill Hicks, George McLothlin, they went immediately to the Goingsnake Court House to take the prisoner, Zeke Proctor, whose trial was under way, to Fort Smith to be tried there on a more serious charge.

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They had hardly gotten inside the door of the court house before shooting started and a pitched battle ensued. The guards who had Proctor in charge returned the fire, Proctor grabbed a gun and assisted in "shooting it out" with the Beck crowd and when the smoke of battle had cleared away three of the Beck crowd had been killed and about as many on the other side with the prisoner, Zeke Proctor, and several others badly wounded.

I cannot remember any of the names of the men who were killed in this battle, but Johnson Proctor, a brother of Zeke Proctor. They brought him by our house with a crowd following, and I never forgot that scene. I was told that Isaac Vann and Andy Palone were two of the guards who had Proctor under guard, but I do not know if they were killed but it is hardly likely they escaped.

Moves To Craig County in 1894.

When it came time to take allotments, we sold our place near Oaks, in Delaware County, and moved to Craig County about twelve miles north of Vinita in what is now West Point District. We took allotments for our entire families there, but there was no school near when we

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first moved there and my husband immediately set out to get a Cherokee school established there. We had to have at least fifteen scholars before they would give us a school and we did not have that many so my husband went out of the district and got children enough to come and stay at our house and go to school to make up the fifteen pupils.

My husband was appointed as the first teacher and they paid him \$35.00 per month. The school was called "West Point" and is still going.

My brothers and sisters all moved to Craig County when we did. They are Bark F. Cleveland, Kate Garrett, and Fannie Morris.

Dr. Mitchell Buys Log Hut
In Which He was Born.

Dr. Robert L. Mitchell of the Veteran's Hospital at Muskogee owns a fine prairie farm of several hundred acres in the West Point District, but he is a great hand for relics and is just closing a deal for our old home place near Oaks, in Delaware County, and has bought the old log house in which he was born and will move it

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on his father's old home place and have it rebuilt for a summer home and keepsake.

Husband Died in 1923.

My husband, George W. Mitchell died on our farm twelve miles north of Vinita, January 15, 1923, and was buried in the Fairview Cemetery at Vinita. Sometime after his death I moved to town, (Vinita) where our boys went through high school and where many of them have gone in business. My son, Lee R. Mitchell, served two terms as court clerk of Craig County after Statehood and later engaged in the farm loan business. He is now living in Tulsa and is with a building and loan company. My husband served two years on the National School Board at Tahlequah before Statehood. John F. Butler and Lee Payden were the other two members of the board who served with my husband. All my children are living except Percy, who died February 3, 1884.