

H. G. Jordan Interview

H. G. Jordan sat and looked across the street to the vacant lot between Duke and Jackson, on fifth and reminiced.

"Right over there, on that lot, was the only house on what is now the townsite of Hugo, and the only one for miles around. A man by the name of Sharp lived there, and one night a man slipped up to the window and shot through the window and killed him. I've forgotten his name and whether or not he was ever arrested. I just remember the accurence. But we didn't notice killings in the Indian Territory in those days like we do now. He owed Mr. Sharp, and that was his way of settling the debt.

I've seen deer and turkey running up the road that is now North 5th street. That was the road from Paris to Fort Smith. Or rather a trail, on this side of the river. It was rough, rocky and boggy and everything else. We didn't mind riding horseback, but the one who had to drive the chuck wagon for a party of hunters thought his lot was indeed hard.

"A bunch of us would plan a fishing and hunting trip over here, load up our wagon and send it on over here a couple of days ahead of us, to establish a camp. Then one morning real early we'd mount our horses and ride over. There were very few

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horses along the way. There was the home of the infamous Starr gang about 3 miles south of here. It was a big double log house, and even then, people knew it to be a place to shun if you were honest. No doubt many a raid was planned right in that house. We never stopped there on our way ever if we could help it.

The trail led on NW to the railroad station of Goodland. Joel Spring owned the store there. Sometimes we'd go by there and get some of those fellows to go with us hunting or fishing, then go down to Kiamitia river to Rock Chimney or Spencer crossing, and on over to Big and Little Cedar and One creeks.

If the river was low we would cross at Rock Chimney, Spencer was the easiest to ford. And no matter what happened at home, if the river was up, no word could be gotten to us till that river ran down. Neither could we get back across. There were no telephones in this country then. Once we brought our wives along, and a runner came on a horse and told us that a brother of one of the party had died. He swam his horse across the river, rode to Antlers and hired another horse to ride home, as the daily train had gone when he got to Antlers.

I'll never forget the day that the Frisco Railroad was connected with the Paris and great Northern at Red river.

It was in July, and hot as blazes, but lots of folks rode from Goodland to Paris and from Paris to Goodland, Indian Territory, just for the novelty, because the two lines had been connected." The line from Paris was short, and was privately owned, then The Santa Fe leased it, and later the Frisco leased it. I fired on it for two years, making the run from Paris to Talihina, later the division was extended to Fort Smith. We'd have to work and stay at this end 30 days, then stay in Paris 30 days. The boys would take turns about staying nights in Talihina.

"This was a pretty nice country then. A perfect wilderness, with lots of deer, turkey, small game and fish. Wild straw berries early, then dewberries, and blackberries. Also lots of big wild onions. One didn't have to go hungry, unless he was too lazy to go out and get the food that abounded on every side. Bear would come close to the camps., and wolves, They would go up in the yards of settlers, where children were out at play, and try to take the bread and meat out of their hands. Settlers would go out nearly every day and kill wolves, just to protect their pigs, chickens, and small calves and other stock. It was a long time before they could sell the pelts."