

a Mr. Cowan as the banker. Still in its Indian Territory days a post office served the town, and a 30-room hotel added to its growth. Of its once busy times, all that remain now is the little Topping Country Store and the Oglesby School.

Back in 1904 Mr. Topping was working on a ranch as a cowboy in the Oglesby country. One day Mr. Crowder wanted to trade his blacksmith shop for his horse and saddle so he could leave the country. John did not want the shop but finally traded and turned it over to his father. The older Topping operated the blacksmith shop until he died. John continued work as a cowboy and finally got a little spread of his own, and raised cattle until he retired and moved into Oochelata.

Most of the early settlers of the Oglesby area were Indians or with some Indian ancestry. Some of these families were the Jackson, Acorn, Painter, Barker, Ringo, Watkins, Horse, Edwards, Savage, and Roadacre.

The old cemeteries of the Oglesby country each tell its own history of the people who have lived here. Some of the older cemeteries are the Tyner, Keys, Coonrod, and Oglesby. It is told that Coon Rod was a full blood Delaware Indian who served in the Civil War.

Unlike many other areas of the old Indian Nation, central Washington County did not have the little country stores scattered about. The only two such places that Mr. Topping recalls on this wide prairie country was a little store at Glenoak and another known as Truckey. To the west there was at one time a little store and sawmill on the bank of the Caney River called Ringo. When the Santa Fe Railroad came up thru Washington County in 1891, the Ringo store was moved over on the railroad to begin the town of Ramona. It is believed that Jim Greenwood, a part Indian, moved his store from Ringo and starting the first store in what was to become Ramona. Hardly had Ramona begun to grow when a fire in 1899 destroyed most of the town.

In his experiences as a young man, John tells that in 1902 he worked on different cattle ranches as a cowboy for 75¢ a day, furnishing his own horse and saddle. Once when work was slack he shucked corn for 2½ cents a bushel. He tells that his hand never did fit a shucking peg very good and he left the corn gathering to someone else. One time he tells he had to go way up northeast toward Blue Mound to get some long horn steers that had strayed. On the way he met an Indian by name of Scott Bruner. Bruner was also a cowboy, but nearly always had a pack of stag hounds with him. Bruner told him where he could find the steers. He also told him that one of the steers belonged to an Indian woman who lived near Avant, in the southeastern edge of the Osage country. That steer had strayed a long ways from home.

John remembers when there were no fences in the country, except around little grain patches. Cattle were free to graze and travel where they pleased. He tells that cow hunting was rough and hard work in the old days, and sometimes dangerous. He recalls a time when he and his partner were out hunting some wild steers. They found them and one of them turned and ran over his partner and horse. His partner was riding a little piffle tail pony that was too small for that kind of work. They got their ropes on the steer and saved themselves from getting hurt. Among Johns experience he has been a bronc buster, and used to break norses to ride for five dollar a head.