

PALONE, MARY STARR

INTERVIEW

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Mary (Starr) Palone was born in Goingsmake District, Cherokee Nation, in 1872. She was the daughter of Joe Starr and Sarah Starr, full-bloods, who came from Georgia about 1838.

Mrs. Palone's grandparents on her mother's side were Harry and Susie Crittenden.

Nune Starr and Lila Starr were her grandparents on the father's side. The Starrs settled on Baron Fork Creek about two miles west of the present village of Baron, Oklahoma, now known as Buster Scrapper farm. Joe Starr was a well-to-do man in his time. He and his brother, George Starr, formed a partnership in stock raising. They also owned race stock. This family was related to the other Starrs who live near Evansville, Arkansas.

EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

Mary was not reared in poverty as others had been reared. She had a better chance to receive an education. She attended school at Starr Chapel as the school was called, that was founded near the present Duncan Springs just a half-mile west of the

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present village of Baron, Oklahoma.

Starr Chapel was also used as a church house. The building was a log construction. No windows, one door and a few benches; the blackboards were painted boards.

Tablets did not exist at that time, slates being used instead. Only a few children attended this school. Among those going to school with Mrs. Palone being Lick Crittenden, Ned Downing and Tawnie Shell.

Neighbors were scarce in Baron Community at that time. The nearest neighbor they had was Ave Thornton, who lived about two miles away.

When she was about nineteen years of age, Mary Starr married "Stute" Walkingstick, later a noted peace officer. To this union there was one child born, Zeke, who lives at Piney neighborhood. Several years afterwards she married Mr. Frank Palone.

ROADS

The roads in those days were poorly constructed. By-roads were the only roads at that time. The only one that is of any interest at all was the road that they

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frequently used in going to Siloam, Arkansas.

This road started at Piney, through the Piney Flats to the Dutch Mills Creek, across this creek, up Chewey Hollow to the present Union Hill school house. This route missed Westville about a mile to the east. You followed the Ballard Creek to the present site of Watts, Oklahoma, crossed the river at Watts, then straight to Siloam.

Siloam was the trade point of the Starrs. Evansville, Dutch Mills and Cincinnati were all early day towns.

SAW MILLS

The only sawmill was the one located at Duncan Springs. This sawmill belonged to Felix Duncan and Joe Starr. Many houses have been built from the lumber that was sawed at this mill. People from miles around came to this mill to get lumber to build their homes with.

MILLING POINTS.

Evansville, Dutch Mills, and Cincinnati were the early day milling points. But there was a grist mill located at Eli Wrights on the Dutch Mills Creek about three miles from Piney.

Most of the people around Baron went to this mill with their corn. For wheat they went to Cincinnati. Most of the family milling was done by the women at that time. Mrs. Palone has gone many times to the mill on a wagon. They usually went twice a month.

FARMING

Farms were small at that time, especially those on the hills but the farm on which Mrs. Palone was reared was about forty acres. All kinds of vegetables were raised on this farm. But corn and wheat were the principal crops. Most of the farming was done with homemade implements.

Mrs. Palone has seen land broken by a yoke of oxen. Most of the logging at her dad's sawmill was done by oxen.

The farm people at that time travelled mostly on horse-back. The women used the old "side-saddle".

CIVIL WAR.

She does not know much about the Civil War except what her father has told her, although, her uncle George was killed during that war. He was killed somewhere on the Red River.

She does not know of any battles that occurred in that war. The battle story of Caney has been told to her by her friend, John Looney, who took an active part in this battle.

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HORSE RACES.

Uncle George who was killed in the Civil War owned a bunch of race horses. He matched several races during that time.

The only race she knows anything about was a race that was matched between Clem Starr, her uncle, and a man from Kentucky. This race was run near Evansville.

MEDICINE AND DRUGS.

The Cherokees doctored among themselves by the use of herbs. There were only a few white doctors to be found at that time.

Among the white doctors to be found at that time was Dr. Johnson at Dutch Mills, Dr. Walters at Evansville, and in case of emergency they were sometimes called to come to the Indian country. They charged a very small fee for their services. The charge from Dutch Mill to Baron was three dollars.

Among the Indians were to be found Ave Thornton a noted Indian doctor, William Wolf, and several others.

Summer chills was the most common disease among the Cherokee people at that time. Consumption was the most dreaded disease. This alone killed many people in a year. There was no cure for the old time consumption.

There were many snake bite doctors among the Cherokee people.

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CUSTOMS.

The early Cherokees had many beliefs and customs. They believed that when a person died the deceased would visit the home once more on the seventh night.

And if a deceased left anything that he thought much of that his spirit would always remain in the household until that belonging was done away with.

It was the custom of these old timers to take the little children every new moon to the medicine man and let him doctor them for four mornings. This doctoring was done before the sun came up.

Any pregnant woman was not allowed to visit the sick, or enter into a room where there was a sick person.

Any person that was taking medicine from an Indian doctor was not allowed to eat the cooking of any pregnant woman.

All medicines must be kept on the outside of the room where the sick was.

DREAMS

They were believers in dreams also. They believed very strongly the three dreams that I am going to tell. The dreaming of a dead cow or beef cowhide was a sign that some one in the family was going to die in the near future.

The dreaming of a naked person was a sign that you were going to have bad luck. Children were taught if they had this dream they should immediately tell their parents or it so they could be watched closely and they were instructed not to climb or swim or do anything that was dangerous or whereby they could get hurt.

The dreaming of a certain person dying was a sign that he was going to live a long time.