

SHELGOG, DICK

INTERVIEW

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236

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John F. Daugherty, Field Worker
Indian-Pioneer-History
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237/

An interview with Dick Sheegog,
Sulphur, Oklahoma.

My parents were Edward Sheegog and Elizabeth
Manasa. (dates and places of births unknown) .

There were three children in our family. Father
was a stockman.

Four years before I was born the Comanche
Indians captured my mother, two cousins, father,
a baby sister and her negro nurse, west of Gaines-
ville, Texas. They tied mother to one of their
ponies and took the others in a wagon. Toward
night they came to mother and said "Papoose gone."
and pointed toward the sky. Mother knew they had
killed her child. They killed the rest of them
before reaching Gainesville. They turned her loose
at Gainesville during the night; leaving her a small
mule to ride, and a moccasin of pecans to eat.

I was born at Pilot Point, Texas, in 1872. In
1891, I received a letter from Bob Freeman (who was
an old friend and in the mercantile business in Davis
in the Chickasaw Nation) asking me to come there and
work for him. So I came. I worked for twenty-five
dollars per month and my board. In those days people
had very little money but there were no crop failures.

2

So many of our customers came in the spring and bought their summer's supply of groceries and dry goods, giving a mortgage on their crop. We would not see them again until Fall, after the crops were harvested and sold. They would come in and pay what they owed, and buy their winter's supply.

Once or twice a year was as often as they went to town. There were no banks. Everybody carried their money or hid it about their premises. We shipped money in from Gainesville, and kept it in a safe at the store. We never thought of being robbed. Such crimes were almost unheard of in those days.

We had only a frame building and an ordinary lock on the doors, which anybody could have opened had they so desired. There were many cattle and horse thieves and outlaws but they didn't rob people of their money.

This was an open range country when I came here. The first pasture which I remember being fenced was between Sulphur and Davis in 1900. It was owned by Mose Chigleyz, a fullblood Chickasaw. I used to go on hunting trips with him and Wyatt, his brother. There were usually a large number of us and we went

3

down on Blue River in the eastern part of the Chickasaw Nation. We had a chuck wagon, and we made the trip in covered wagons. We would be gone for a week or two, and have a great time fishing and hunting. We killed deer, turkeys, prairie chickens, and lots of snakes. We also hunted in the Kiamchi Mountains in the southeastern part of the Indian Territory in the Choctaw Nation.

Platt National Park was originally a cow ranch. Colonel Froman had a ranch house built of pickets southwest of the old Gum Springs. There was a store run by Mullenbrook on the banks of the creek, and a small dairy owned by Cunningham near the Antelope Spring. People, both Indians and whites, came for miles to camp near these springs and drink the water. Small stores began to appear. Cold drink stands were put in, and the town of Sulphur began in the park on the south side of Sulphur Creek.

When the United States Government segregated these eight hundred acres for the purpose of establishing a National Park, the town of Sulphur had to move, and they began building on the east and west sides of Rock Creek. There was much jealousy and wrangling between

4

the two sides. The county courthouse was on the west side and the east siders decided they must have it. So they insisted that it be moved. The west side wasn't in favor at all. Finally a cyclone tore down their building and the court house was moved to the east side, but only for a short time; as the west siders got busy and soon had another building under construction. This is the building which is there at the present time. Finally they decided there would be no more hard feeling and they "buried the hatchet" in concrete on the bridge which joins the two sides across Rock Creek.

I married Mary Polk in 1895. We are the parents of one boy, who is a park ranger in Platt National Park.