

.TEEL, LAFAYETTE

INTERVIEW

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 Pioneer History, 5-149

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BATTLEFIELDS

I may ramble, but I will tell you something that might be of interest and bring various subjects, as you may suggest. I remember a battlefield near or three miles north of Pensacola, and in Craig County. Armit Martin, rich man, lives near this battlefield. If the field or battle had a name, I don't know of it, but it was a major fight, fought between the North and South. Both sides had Indians in their ranks. The armies were big enough to have artillery. I visited the battle field soon after the fight and found the big solid cannon balls and could see where the trees had been shot off by the big shot. I don't know who was in command and don't know which side won but I know several were killed, for they were buried near by in a small graveyard in some location and remained there until removed by the government to a national cemetery. I don't know where the bodies were taken. I was just a kid when this battle took place and it was along towards the last of the Civil War.

I remember too about another fight. It was a running fight and started about three miles west of Mayesville in Delaware County and the fight continued about ten miles west, or into Mayes County. This battle didn't even have a name as far as I can remember, but was along near the close of the Civil War and was between whites and Indians, led by whites on both sides.

A few were killed, I know, for a neighbor and I were roaming about the country and ran into the battlefield and saw plenty of dead men scattered about. The worst part of it was the dogs and coyotes were eating and dragging the bodies about the ground. The troops that were on the run left their dead and the other troops then lay.

MARSHALS

Well, I've known a lot of U. S. Marshals and deputies. Deputies Jones, on and Dan Maples, Bud Ledbetter and a negro deputy. His name was Leovos. as part Creek and was used to make arrests among the Creeks.

Jake Yoles is one marshal who served under Judge Parker. When I served interpreter in Judge Parker's court, Mulligan was the hangman. While I am talking about the courts, I will tell something about Cherokee Bill, a noted and vicious outlaw of his day, or about fifty-five years ago.

Cherokee Bill, like most of the noted outlaws, or what is now known as the enemies, had a price on his head. He was hiding out at the home of his kin, cousins. The cousins, a man and his wife, knowing of the reward or alive-- decided between themselves how to capture him without killing him. It was in the winter and Cherokee Bill, who was one-half negro and one-half creek sitting by the side of the fireplace and with his back to the corner where the door led to the woods. Well, the man went out and brought in an ax and in the woods was a smooth green heavy stick, so when he ran through the woods and was behind Cherokee Bill, he picked up the stick and brought it down on Cherokee Bill with such force as to completely knock him out. They got all the rope they could find and tied and bound him up good before he came to. One of them went for a deputy marshal and the other stayed and guarded Cherokee Bill.

The cousins got their reward and Cherokee Bill was tried in Judge Parker's court. I was sitting right behind Cherokee in the court room. He was being tried for murder, any of which he committed, in the Federal Court at Fort Smith. Judge Parker in his preliminary remarks and questions, directed one to Cherokee when he asked Cherokee, how many people have you killed? Cherokee remarked, "Not near as many as you, Judge". You know Judge Parker was known as the "Hanging Judge".

CHURCHES

Well, speaking of early churches, the first I knew of was a mission at the northern edge of Delaware County. That was away back when I was a kid and I am

eighty now. The government hired a man, known to us as Parson Mack of Mara-
 He was paid by the government to teach and preach to the Indians. They
 a church and mission, or kind of school, there at Oaks and Parson Mack
 ched and taught there. He would travel among the Indians too, and hold ser-
 at the homes of the Indians. I know and remember him coming to our house
 holding meetings or services. This was right after the Civil war. This was
 e the Cherokees had an alphabet and before the Testament was translated, or
 ast before we had the translation of the Testament. Later, we had the Bible
 r own language as well as song books, one of which I now have.

we played too. It wasn't all war. One sport we enjoyed and engaged in was
 otting match with bows and arrows. I was about grown then and like all Indian
 was a pretty good shot. We, a crowd, would meet at a certain place and would
 us a target. We would drive down stakes about eight inches apart one way
 bout two feet apart the other and would select straight corn stalks and place
 between these stakes until full and packed up to about two feet high. Then we
 place one stalk upright in the center between the post and the one getting
 st to this center was the winner. We chose up, two boys would be selected
 ad each side, then these two would wrestle and the one throwing the other got
 choice. Then the shooting would begin. We would shoot from a mark one hun-
 yards from the target. The contest was always exciting and the betting was

The leaders often would bet their horses on the outcome. However, these
 sts were always friendly, we never had any serious trouble. I have a bow now
 I bought for a quarter sixty five years ago.

we used black locust for the bows. The timber had to be perfectly straight
 from the center of the bow, on each side, the wood was trimmed down so as to
 , and each side or end had so many layers of wood or grains. In this way it
 equal strength and was perfectly balanced.

MASSACRE

Turning to something more serious, I remember the Beck and Proctor fight

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It turned out to be a massacre. This took place in Coingsenoke District, east of Squah. Charlie Thompson was chief of the Cherokee full bloods at this time. His brother-in-law was sheriff. John Crocker, Cherokee, had killed Mrs. Wilderbrand, a man who lived at Old Wilderbrand later still on the Illinois river north of Squah, had been arrested and was being held prisoner in a log house. In those days, according to Cherokee laws, a man charged with murder was guarded by four men until tried. They did not have a jail to hold them. John Crocker, charged with murder, had a guard of three men and the less for the crime the fewer guards, until only one was used. One of the four men guarding Crocker, was his brother. Beckling was over the killing and a bunch of Indians headed by a man named Beck decided to take Crocker and escape with themselves and not wait for the action of the council. So, they moved on to where Crocker was held in a log house. The house had one door and one window and an open fireplace. When the guards saw what was up, they began to answer the fire. Since the sheriff was a brother of one of the guards, they gave him a gun to help them. The battle raged for some time and when finally over, only two of Beck's men were alive, and one of them, Beck, who had kept himself in the background and under cover. Beck had fifteen men and thirteen were killed. That was the time the sheriff failed to get their men.