

HONNOLD, ARTHUR B.

SECOND INTERVIEW.

#7983

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Effie S. Jackson,  
Interviewer,  
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An Interview with Mr. Arthur B.  
Honnold, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

My parents came from Illinois to Kansas in 1884 when I was eight years old. My father was a carpenter by trade, settled at Winfield, Kansas, and soon owned two grocery stores and became very prosperous and built an eighteen room house in Highland Park. Those were the boom days. Later my father traded this mansion for a ranch on Silver Creek, five miles east of Winfield. When it was known there was to be a strip opening in Indian Territory, my father carefully planned "his run". This "planned run" is so different from the ordinary story of the run that I would like to tell it.

We picked our three best horses and I was to train them. Everyday I took them out and put them through a mile and back, two miles and back- three -until we knew the time per hour they could make at

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a steady gait. My father planned more than that, he even got his line on his prospective land grant in the territory. To do this, about two months before the run, we drove into the Cherokee country in a surrey. My father tied a white rag to the wheel and counted the revolutions per mile-this gave us our distance. With a scantling and compass he got his bearings. We drove to the line of the Ponca Reservation, found the corner stone and computed the distance to the desired location. With this data at hand it would be interesting to see how nearly he could find his prospective claim in the actual run.

The day before the run we had driven to Arkansas City and had camped on the bank of the Arkansas River. There seemed to be thousands of people with every kind and every type of equipage.

We had our covered wagon and our three tested horses. We drove six miles west of Arkansas City-which put us about three miles west of the Chillico Reservation. It was between ten and eleven A.M.

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Everybody along the line was drinking water which was selling for ten cents a bucket. Twelve o'clock came. We did not hear the gun but the mad start told the tale.

I jumped on one of the horses, my father was on another and was leading the third. Even as we started a man started plowing; he was smart enough to know that once across the line he could claim immediate possession while the mob went racing on. We passed all kinds of conveyances. The most popular was a stripped wagon, just a running gear with two wheels and a tongue, topped with a spring seat. Various suggestions were made to my father about how fast to run his horse, but he had timed the horse's gait and knew just where he was going and felt that a steady gait would win in the long run. When we had gone ten miles, about where Blackwell is today, my horse struck a prairie hole and threw me.

My father then changed horses- he did not even use a saddle, just a pad so that the change could be

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made quickly. On his fresh horse he went on to seek his prospective claim.

On my horse I rounded up the horse which my father had turned loose and made my way back to the Kansas line to join my mother and sisters in the covered wagon. I shall never forget the sight as I came to the ford of the ~~Chikaskia~~ River. This was a narrow ford and hundreds had tried to cross it at once. It took hours for it to clear out. Some of the horsemen tried to charge through and make it over the steep bank.

I joined my mother and sister at the line and we started into the strip to join my father. We had some idea where he would be if he had succeeded in getting the location he had spotted in this survey trip. We drove to the north line of Ponca Reservation and did not find him and then we lost our bearings. We finally got them again and found that my father had staked his claim quite near the spot he had picked about one mile north of the present Round Grove.

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The men on the adjoining claims and my father were witnesses for each other. This was somewhat complicated by the fact that a former neighbor of ours in Kansas had slipped down an adjoining ravine before the firing of the gun that opened the run. This was about seventeen miles from Kansas and this former neighbor claimed an adjoining claim, my father knew unfairly. The matter got into court making an important test case in Kay County. It was finally settled by compromise.

Years after when I was a guest of Henry T. Hall, president of the Bank of Manhattan County, New York, in a group meeting of twelve bank officials we took turns in relating our experiences. I told how I "made the run" and was much surprised when one of the officials spoke up and said, "Yes, that's how it was, I know because I was there, too".

I remember also that my son, when he was at West Point used this story of how his father's family "made

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the run" as the basis of a prize essay. At least our method was different from most of the men and women who made the "run".