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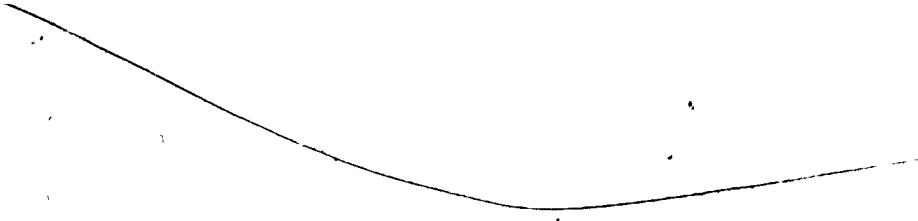
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BARBOUR, J.E.

INTERVIEW.

12813.

Billie Byrd,
Journalist.
January 27, 1938.

Interview with J. E. Barbour,
Okemah, Oklahoma.

Life in Cheyenne Country

The early Western Indians, more especially in the Cheyenne country, would have no thought or regard for their appearance and how they went around their homes and in their community. Some did not bother to put on any clothes, and they did not seem to mind about that either. They would just go around doing their work without ever thinking about it and they did not realize that anyone thought it strange when travelers not accustomed to these sights saw them in that mode.

As the settlers entered the country and began to make their first homes, they would live in dugouts until better homes would be built. They chose the sides of small hills and knolls, to build their dugouts.

Some of the farmers did their own work, while some engaged extra help during the spring when there was work in the clearing of the land and the plowing had to be hastened.

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These patient helpers did not look forward to any pay until sometime in the late fall when the crops were gathered and sold. One spring I began working for a guy but when I found out I wouldn't receive any pay very soon I left and went to Texas where I stayed until fall and then returned to the man whom I had worked for to collect my pay.

Much debating went on in the country at one time about which was treated the worse, the negro or the Indian. The negroes were under slavery by being bartered, put to hard work and often received ill-treatment from the masters. The Indians were under a sort of bondage but they did not receive much ill-treatment as did the negroes. The negroes coming under the slavery laws were punished by being whipped for any little crime. The Indians were never fully classed as slaves but they did not escape punishment for their crimes or misbehavior for they had their own system of law and own methods of punishment which they strictly observed and upheld in their tribe and community.

There was not much schooling for any one but the debating covered different subjects and was entered into with

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enthusiasm for what was right or wrong. Many of the questions put out for debating were not obtained and cleared by the aid or knowledge of books but told from the actual experience and knowing about the situation as it was at the time.