

MADDOX, SAM, (MRS.)

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Interview with Mrs. Sam Maddox,
Investigator, Bessie L. Thomas
January 18, 1938.

We lived at the old Sub-Agency, later called the Rai Store, north of the Indian school, long before Lawton was dreamed of. My uncles, Geo. K. and R. H. Paschal, were Indian traders and owned one of the three stores there.

This tiny settlement boasted of perhaps fifty inhabitants, not including the Indians with the horses and numerous dogs owned by the Indians.

There were few laws and conventions in those early days and life was lazy and restful and quite uneventful, save for an occasional flood in Cache Creek, and the annual Christmas tree at the Indian church - school house.

Fort Sill was our only contact with the outside world.

The Indians camped all around us. We knew them all and were friendly with them and we children played with the Indian children. We liked the Comanches best. We knew Geronimo well, but never took any liberties with him. There was a rumor around among the children that he had ninety-nine scalps and was scouting for one more to make it an even

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one hundred. We never took the trouble to ask him about it.

We also knew Quanah Parker and used to adore going to his home when he lived with several wives in perfect harmony. My uncle considered him one of his best Indian friends.

Often we would go with the Indian children to their tents and eat "jerked beef." This is not a pleasant thought to me today, considering the hazards involved in eating beef jerked during summer weather in this hot Oklahoma climate.

The Government issued to the Indians at certain intervals one beef to two families. On slaughter days the cow would be turned loose and they would run it for awhile, to make it tender, and then shoot it, and dress it wherever it fell. I have seen them fall in our yard. The squaws did all the work and it would take them only a few minutes to complete the job. When they finished with the distribution of the cow, there was nothing left to tell where the act had taken place - nothing went to waste.

We children were always present at the Indian funerals. When an Indian died the tribe would congregate and wail for

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a whole day. They would stop eventually but upon the arrival of each relative or friend would begin all over again.

One of the high-lights in our life was the Mt. Scott camp meeting every summer. It was quite a social event and was looked forward to with much pleasure by the white people. There would be two divine services each day and for the sake of appearance and the preacher, some of the white people would try to be on hand for each service, but however great may have been their need of salvation the need of recreation was given preference. The services were long and tiresome and the seats hard. Once during an evening service my sister went to sleep and fell backward off the seat, which created a great deal of mirth even among the Indians. The Indians usually sat on blankets on the ground which I'm sure was much more comfortable than the hard seats.

Our seat of learning was the Indian church which was used for a schoolhouse. I'm positive nothing was undertaken but "readin and ritin" and ever so little "rithmetic" and the last day of school was just one hoop drill after another, with an occasional "recitation" thrown in for good measure.

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On that hot August 6th, in 1901, at the Lawton Lot sale we considered all the people who came to the opening of Lawton intruders on our domain. I can still see the endless caravan of covered wagons, domestic animals, children and a cloud of dust that hung over the country side for days. The good old days were gone but a new country must always be opened to settlement, and progress.