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Greer County

Mangum

Farming

Kiowa Indians

Field Worker: Eunice L. Mayer
April 19, 1937.

Interview with Mrs. G. A. Goodman
Mangum, Oklahoma.

Born July 12, 1883,
Stevensville, Texas.

Parents Preston Bell, father,
Richmond, Virginia.
Salina Beckham mother,
Gracin County, Texas.

Mrs. Goodman made the trip to Greer County with
her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Preston Bell, in 1888.

Mangum or Tin City, as it was called by cow-men,
consisted chiefly of a log house covered with a tin
roof in 1888.

The family settled on Spring Creek, east of Delhi,
where her father was a stockman. He owned 720 acres in
that vicinity at one time, and lived on the place 30 years.

Mr. Bell operated a market garden, and was widely
known in the county as "Cabbage" Bell, since he freighted
fruit and vegetables to Vernon and Quanah, Texas.

In 1901 Mrs. Goodman was married to G. A. Goodman,
a native of Dallas County, Texas, who came to the county
about 1900. Ten years later the couple established a
farm east of Willow, and in 1918 moved to Mangum.

Before coming to Greer County, Mrs. Goodman lived at Harrill, Texas, near Beaver Creek, where her father operated a sheep ranch. The settlers organized a watch party to protect their herds.

On one occasion, a panther entered a neighbor's home and overturned a baby's crib. The child was lying at the feet of the animal when discovered by a man of the household. One of them plunged a knife into the intruder, and the child was rescued.

Prior to settling in Greer County, Preston Bell, Mrs. Goodman's father, was a very successful buffalo hunter at Fort Griffin, Texas. Mrs. Goodman still has three mattresses made of buffalo hair from animals he killed on the range.

Her father maintained a herd of swine on Beaver Creek, which was frequently attacked by panthers. On one occasion, Mrs. Goodman rode to the pen on horseback and she reported a large panther in the vicinity on her return to the house. The men of the household were skeptical, but decided to investigate. On their return they brought a huge panther, almost as large as a jersey cow, which had been killing the stock.

In 1889 settlers in the Delhi community were frightened by reports that the Indians were planning an invasion. The Kiowas were angry because white settlers had failed to pay them rent on grazing lands in their reservation and were planning to loot their houses for revenge. A group of Kiowas did enter the white settlers' territory but made no efforts to attack, as it was feared. One morning the Bell household awoke to find the residence surrounded by whooping redskins. Men of the families were at an adjacent cow camp, and Mrs. Bell told her youngest daughter to run to a neighbor for help. The child made her escape from the house through a window, and returned with a neighbor who frightened the intruders away with his Winchester.

Indians were occasional visitors in the community and delighted to frighten the children. They would chase them on horseback and whoop with laughter when the children showed fright. For revenge the children carved two very good duplicates of army rifles and turned the tables when the redskins tried to frighten them on the next trip. The dark skinned visitors wheeled their horses and fled for the open country.