

MAXBY, GEORGE

INTERVIEW

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An Interview with Mr. George Maxey, Atoka, Oklahoma.  
By - Etta D. Mason - Interviewer.  
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I was reared at Tishomingo and on the Washita River. I knew all the noted men in the Chickasaw Nation sixty years ago.

When I was a boy my father farmed and raised stock. All the country around Tishomingo was covered with cattle and horses. We had no pastures nor fences and everyone's stock just ran out. The Washita bottom was full of wild and tame hogs. I remember one evening late when we called our hogs, a bunch of wild hogs came to our lot with the tame ones. We all ran for our guns and killed seven fat ones before they got away.

At that time the country was unsettled and wild but the few people who lived in the settlements were honest, hard working people. They were uneducated and rough, but one very seldom found dishonesty among them.

A cattle buyer who came to that part of the country often to buy cattle was much amused when he bought a herd of cattle from a man and found that the man would not accept a check for the amount of money. The man who owned

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the cattle did not know what a check was for and told the cattle buyer that it took money to get his cattle, not paper. The cattle buyer went to Tishomingo, got the cash and came back and paid for the cattle.

After I became a man I went into the grocery business at Tishomingo and ran a credit business one year when there had been a crop failure the previous year. I lost only \$7.00 out of \$800.00 that I had out on credit. Indians and whites both traded with me.

Food and clothing were cheap in those days. The best flour was \$1.25 per hundred pounds. A good yearling would bring from \$3.00 to \$4.00. A good milk cow might bring \$10.00. A fine pony could be bought for \$8.00 or \$10.00. Ham meat was 7¢ a pound. Calico was from 3 to 5¢ per yard, and one could buy a wool suit, man size, for \$7.00. I do not think butter was sold; at least I never heard of any being sold in that part of the country.

When stamps were needed in a home, enough eggs were gathered up and traded to the postmaster for stamps.

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A dozen eggs were worth two 2¢ stamps. There were not many letters written and I suppose no one thought of selling the eggs to the merchant and buying the stamps; they left that for the postmaster to do.

There were no ferries at first and everybody forded the rivers, but later the Joe Moore ferry was put in. That ferry only helped the people in that part of the country.

The noted outlaws of the Chickasaw, Choctaw and Cherokee Nations made raids on us occasionally but they were generally friendly raids for the outlaws were looking for bigger game than we were and we just fed them and sent them away.

After I left Tishomingo I went into business in the Choctaw Nation at Goodland. From there I moved to Tushka and stayed in business at that place for twenty-five years. I have been in the grocery business in Atoka for the last five years.

I find that the old time honesty of the Indians and white man, too, is lacking today.