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Bessie L. Thomas,
Investigator,
January 21, 1938.

An Interview with Mr. G.E. Cox,
Cache, Oklahoma.

My father owned and operated the Red Store north of Lawton, near Fort Sill, for years, coming to this country in 1899 from Bonham, Texas. Through my many years association with the Indians in my father's store as clerk I learned the Comanche language and from these Indians I have learned the names and history of some of the creeks in this part of the country.

Cache creek timber was for many years the rendezvous for many strangers and travelers and when pressed by the Indians, they would "cache", or hide, their food and belongings until they could come back and get them. By hiding them, they would escape being plundered by the Indians. In telling the folks back home the best trail out west they would caution them to come along the stage line to the big timber of the creek where they could rest and hide from the Indians and, if necessary, "cache". Thus the stream became Cache Creek, and to quote early day papers, "Majestic stream, upon whose western bank

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the town of Lawton now stands?

The little branch, running through the land drawn by Mattie Beal, was appropriately named by the early settlers, "Squaw Creek". Its beautiful timbers now embrace many of the lawns in the town of Lawton; most of the timber is today gone, however, replaced by shade trees. Union Park, on the south side of the creek, has a beautiful "natural" setting; the site for this park was donated to the city by Mattie Beal. Tourist park, also donated by her, has been renamed "Mattie Beal Park", in her honor.

While rounding up some cattle one day on the Waggoner Ranch, a young cowboy fell from his horse and was seriously injured by his horse falling and giving him a quick throw, thus causing the boy to become unconscious. The cowboys used every means they knew but were unsuccessful in "bringing him to". Some said he was already dead, others that he surely would die, so a number of their bunch was sent to Wichita Falls for a doctor. In this bunch were some of the boys, who believed the cowboy was already dead and, when they reached Wichita Falls, convinced the others that he was dead

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and after the "fashion" of cowboys "took a drink or two on it." They then decided, it was a coffin they should take back, instead^{of} a doctor, but when they reached camp with the coffin they found the injured boy up and about the camp, so the coffin was useless. The boys took the kidding good naturedly, paid for the coffin, then, wondering what to do with it, finally took it to the bend of the creek near the ford, hung it between two trees which gave good, cool shade and used it for a feeding trough for their horses. Travelers coming that way were directed to go to the bend in the creek where the coffin hung, cross the creek, and find the trail "out west", thus this stream became "Coffin Creek".

One of the early day highways follows the indistinct line of Goodin Creek. This creek was named for a rancher, Goodin, who had a large grass acreage sub-leased on the range lying south and east of the present town of Lawton, on the farm owned by Mrs. Margaret L. Furr. Goodin made a number of tanks, or ponds along the bank of this creek which are fed by springs, affording an abundance of water. An old

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trail follows the creek from the Chisholm Trail to the northwest into Fort Sill and the Wichitas. Although the Goodin is a fast dimming trail, it is still/distinct, and where it crosses the cultivated land, gives the farmer several good reminders of Ranger Days.

Whiskey Creek was so named because a moonshiner in those wild and wooly frontier days cached his supply of "fire water" in the wilds along the banks and from there he fared forth amongst the Indians and the soldiers and sold his wares. Finally the government boys came that way and found the "cache" but the moonshiner, who had been warned in advance of their coming, had mysteriously vanished, left for parts unknown, down on Snake Creek, near the old stage coach stand, they said. The creek became "Whiskey Creek"; it meets Cache Creek near the site of the old Indian Agency.

It is the clear, cool waters of Medicine Creek, its source from the mountain springs of the Wichitas which the Lawton people have dammed back to make the lovely Lake Lawtonka, from which Lawton and Fort Sill receive their abundant water supply.

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Early day settlers around Cache would often hear the blood curdling cry of a panther wailing out in the night. These cries would occur more often in the country traversed by a lovely little stream flowing down from the mountains. Settlers, at these cries, would come inside and bar the doors, terrified. Hunters and trappers formed big hunts and went out to get the beasts and succeeded in at least quieting the fears of the settlers for the time being, until more cries were heard. Thereafter the little stream was called Panther Creek. This creek runs up into the Wichita Forest and is becoming one of the beauty spots in the forest.

Beaver Creek and Little Beaver were, of course, named by the Indians in honor of that industrious little creature that sawed down their timbers and dammed back the creek waters. Dry Beaver, a branch, has many springs along its banks, although its bed is dry most of the year. Blue Beaver's waters, because of the shadows cast by its steep banks, in early days really seemed blue. Today, and for years, since the coming of man and civilization in this part of the country there have not been seen any more

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beavers or any other wild life. The panthers, coyotes, and even most of the cotton tail rabbits have been killed out.