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INTERVIEW WITH W. J. MONTGOMERY
Comanche, Oklahoma
Warren D. Morse, Field Worker
May 18, 1937

I was born January 22, 1870, at Harrison, Arkansas.

My father, W. H. Montgomery, who was born in Arkansas, was an early day doctor.

I came to Oklahoma Territory with my father in 1891. I drove one of the ox teams. There were twenty-two in this wagon train. I was eleven years old then. I had feed in this ox wagon. I was behind one with furniture in it—the chairs were tied to the back. These oxen kept battering them until they had to move my wagon farther back in the train.

When the heel flies got after these oxen they struck out for water. Sometimes the water was in old buffalo wallows. It didn't make any difference how rough it was to these holes they carried me, wagon and all, right to the water. They ran into a creek and almost turned the wagon over. Why, when those bulls got started, all the men in the train couldn't stop them.

We had to build our own bridges. We came in by the way of Boggy Depot, and Stonewall. We had about fifty head of cattle with us. As we came through certain parts

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of the country, some whites would demand a tax or payment for passing through. No, it wasn't the militia, it was renegade whites who were out for money. They would hear us coming for miles before we got in sight. They rode in front and dropped notes, demanding payment. We fired our guns to keep them away and kept guards up at nights for we didn't know what to expect in this wild country.

We came on to a settlement on the Chisholm Trail called Tacker. There must have been between four and five hundred here. There were a few houses, mostly dugouts, or half dugouts.

Father bought a lease and built a half dugout. The upper part I used for my room. The kitchen and other room were below.

We had thrown our cattle with the Fred Brown outfit and some others. My father was a doctor and the only one around here then. That was the reason the men offered to care for our cattle, so my father could take care of his practice. He went as far as the Suggs on the south and as far as Mud Creek to the east. He went horse back all the time.

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Living so near the Chisholm Trail, we saw many big trail herds of cattle. I have seen as many as twenty thousand at one time go over the trail. They would be in sections, five thousand to the section. I saw a stampede once. The whole country was alive with cattle.

We did our trading at Belcherville and Henrietta, Texas. Why, there was only one house between the Tucker settlement and Red River. It was a half dugout. It would usually take a week to make the round trip. We took our grain to Henrietta and our cotton to Belch^{er}ville.

We went out in the Comanche country one time and caught two fawns. We brought them home and raised them as pets.

When the Rock Island Railroad came through here, most of Tucker moved to the new location, and was called Comanche.

The first daily newspaper was started here by J. C. Copeland. It was the first daily paper in Stephens County.