

MONTGOMERY, J. P.

SECOND INTERVIEW

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Interview with J. P. Montgomery.
Return of Quanah Parker's Mother
when Father was a Texas Ranger.
Field Worker, Grace Kelley.
Interview at Kusa, Oklahoma.
June 15, 1937.

When Chief Quanah Parker's mother was a little girl the Comanches raided her home and took her with them and raised her to womanhood. She married the Comanche Chief and had two sons by him.

Later the Texas Rangers had a battle with the Comanches, killing the Chief and one son, and captured Cynthia Parker and returned her to her parents in Texas. She died two years after her return and it was supposed she died from grief as she was never happy after her return.

My father told me this story many times as he was one of the Rangers making the capture.

COMANCHE BURIAL CUSTOMS.

There is a high hill north of Fort Sill where the Comanches buried their dead; I guess we would call it a cemetery. They would set the dead body up and stack his belongings around him, then lay rocks on top of each other making a wall around him but not using any mortar or chinking and the tops were arched over with

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rock. Some of the Comanches dug holes in the ground and buried their dead. The graves were longer than they were wide and contained the war horse or the best horse, saddle and everything the brave would need when he waked up in the next world.

THE COMANCHES ATE DOG MEAT.

Quanah Parker, the Comanche Chief, came to our camp and invited us to some big blow-out they were having. I couldn't understand a word but some of the older men could and we went up there. They had some meat in some big pots. These men told me it was fat dogs and that the Comanches, Kiowas and Apaches ate dog meat.

THE COMANCHES LAST WAR PATH.

The Comanches had been killing cattle and they had a battle with the cowboys. They put on all their war paint and went on the war path, when the soldiers were sent out; they were going to fight them. The soldiers killed nineteen Indians and put a stop to their war path. I think that was their last war path.

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DOAN'S STORE.

This was like the Fleetwood Store on the Chisholm Trail only it was on the Western Trail, where it crossed Red River. It was in Texas: Fleetwood was in the Indian Territory.

THE WESTERN TRAIL.

The Western Trail was not used as much as the others for it was dryer, and the cattle needed a lot of water.

It crossed the Goodnight Ranch, about thirty-five or forty miles southeast of Amarillo, passed Doan's Crossing on the Red River, went through No-Man's-Land and on into Dodge City, Kansas.

THE SANTA FE TRAIL.

The Santa Fe Trail passed through Checotah. It started in Southern Texas and went due North to Abilene, Kansas. I have never followed this trail.

The cattle were usually contracted for before the herd left Texas, but the owner had to deliver the stock. Some were sent East to be butchered but other herds

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were bought by the Government and ranchers who had their own drivers to take them to pastures in Montana and Wyoming.

DRIVING ON THE CHISHOLM TRAIL.

When I was fourteen years old, in 1886, I worked for the Du Wees Brothers in Texas. They sent three thousand head of cattle to Dodge City, Kansas, in 1886 and also in 1887, and I was on both trips. This trail, the Chisholm, was like a road or beaten path only two or three hundred feet wide.

It started in Adascosa County, Texas, in south western Texas and went through the western part of the Indian Territory. I guess you would say through the western central part and crossed at Fleetwood Crossing. Fleetwood Crossing was named for an old Chickasaw Indian who had a store and post office, due north on the way to Dodge City, Kansas.

That was as hard and tiresome a job as I ever had. You had to be in the saddle all day and a third of the night no matter what kind of weather there was. There were wagon sheets to cover the wagons which had our

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supplies in them but we just had to take the rain. Each man had a tarpaulin that was better than the army poncho or pup tent. When he made his bed this tarpaulin was spread on the ground and his bed-roll or blankets were put on that. If it started to rain he took hold of the edge of the tarpaulin and rolled over, making a rubber covered roll, with himself inside. He hardly ever got wet either.

The drive started about the first of March and it did not end until the last of June, or the first part of July, depending on luck and weather. The drive extended over a thousand or eleven hundred miles. Eight miles was an average day's drive; some days we had to drive the cattle hard to get to water and even then their tongues would be hanging out. Other days there would be plenty of water and we would let them graze along and not really drive them at all. That way they were fattening as they went along. If we got to the Red River or the South Canadian when the rise was just on we might have to stay a week or more for we could swim the horses and cattle but not the

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chuck wagon. Once we did tie the wagon bed on when the river was high enough to swim the horses but not flood high. There were twenty-two cowboys and three thousand head of cattle that time.

I CAME BACK TO INDIAN TERRITORY IN 1887.

When we came back from the second drive I went as far as Fort Worth where I turned around and came back to the Indian Territory, getting to Whitebead on the twelfth of August, 1887. I guess I just wanted to be in a wild country and I thought that section would be a wild country, and it was, too.

WHITEBEAD, INLAND TOWN.

When I first came to Whitebead, in Garvin County, it was a pretty good town but there wasn't a railroad there. There was a post office, a hotel, and a drug store. It was a regular Cowmen's Headquarters, or Cow Town. I thought that country was the finest all-around, every purpose country there could be and I still think it is. I liked those days better than now. I went to work for the biggest cowman in the

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country and worked for him for a long time, and married there, too.

S. J. Garvan owned the Triangle Bar Ranch; Δ the ranch house was four miles west of Whitehead. Mr. Garvan owned 65,000 head of cattle and a big general merchandise store in town so he built a home a quarter of a mile from town. The post office was in his store. There was a subscription school and the Methodists held church in it too.

Other ranchers were: W. S. Mays whose brand was WS, the first one west of us. Northwest was Bob Love, whose brand was three bars crosswise of the thigh \equiv and southwest about thirty-five or forty miles was Bill Stone's ranch. His brand was a Gable Cross. Δ

SHIPPING CATTLE AND FREIGHTING.

Until the Santa Fe came to Pauls Valley all the freighting was done at Boggy Depot on the M. K. & T. (Katy Railroad) from Red Fork.

BOGGY DEPOT.

Boggy Depot was fifteen or twenty miles north of Tishomingo but the route to it was better and

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more open so it was easier to get the cattle there.

It was a small place.

RED FORK.

When the cattle were taken to Tulsa the Arkansas River would get up so high that the cowboys would have to wait for it to go down. The railroad built a spur across the river to Red Fork to help the cowmen so that the cattle wouldn't have to cross the river. Millions of cattle were shipped from Red Fork.

BIRD'S MILL.

Bird's Mill, in Pontotoc County, was run by a large spring and was four miles south of Stonewall.

OKRA.

This was really a saloon town having two or three saloons and one or two stores. It was on the north side of the South Canadian River opposite from Tom Isaac Crossing.

TOM ICKE OR ISAAC CROSSING OR FORD.

This ford was four or five miles southwest of Violet Springs in the old Pottawatomie country; a

few miles from the Chickasaw country in the Pottawatomie country, between the Chickasaw, Creek, and Pottawatomie country, on the South Canadian River.

VIOLET SPRINGS.

Violet Springs was four or five miles northeast of Tom Isaac's Crossing and it had two stores, a blacksmith shop, and a lot of saloons.

YOUNG'S CROSSING.

Seven or eight miles up the river, west, was Young's Crossing. Sometimes when we would cross it there wouldn't be a drop running over and the next time it would be bank full.

One time we crossed when it was pretty low and made our camp about a mile from the river. That night we were awakened by the roar of the river and got there in time to see a four foot wall of water, clear across the river, coming down.

We hardly ever went to the crossings but just crossed wherever we came to the river for our horses could swim unless the tide was high and rough.