

SHERWOOD, CARL

BIOGRAPHY OF SELF. #12312

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Carl Sherwood,
Investigator,
11-22-37.

A BIOGRAPHY OF HIMSELF.

I, Carl Ray Sherwood was born August 19, 1882, in Peabody, Kansas. My father was a trader, merchant and cattleman of western Kansas in the 70's. In 1886 my father traded for two drug stores, one was located at Lawrence, Kansas, the other at Eolia, Pike County, Missouri. My mother, two brothers and a sister moved to Missouri, where my mother took charge of the store. Here my sister at the age of four years was taken sick, died December 20, 1886, and was buried in the church-yard.

In 1888 my mother sold the store and we moved to Checotah and at that time there were no houses to live in and there were not any schools or churches.

My mother moved us to Fayetteville, Arkansas, where my elder brother attended the university for three years, and during that time my father built a home for us in Checotah, and at the end of school in 1891 we moved to our new home.

The following year I attended school in a box house that was about 16' x 16' and consisted of one room with long benches to sit on and no desks. This school was

large enough at that time as there were only eight children of school age in Checotah.

Our teacher was Miss Pink Randall, a sister of R. R. Randall, who is with the City Chevrolet Company of Muskogee and his daughter, Miss Randall, is now teaching school at Edison here in Muskogee where my youngest boy is attending school.

At the age of nine years, during vacation, I would ride the line for James Todd, a Texas cattleman of Fort Worth, Texas. His pastures were very large; the Bond Switch pasture was eighty miles around and the north line was six miles south of Checotah; each line rider had so many miles of fence to ride each day and when two line riders would meet they were through for the day, except for riding back to the ranch which was a distance of fifteen miles or more.

The equipment of a line rider consisted of a rope, hammer, staples and a pair of heavy plyers, and in the other saddle pocket he carried a bottle of chloroform and cresylic ointment, which was used in doctoring stock where they had been scratched going through the brush or cut by the wire fences and in either case a certain kind

of a fly would lay her eggs in the cut on an animal which hatched out in a few hours into what was known by the cowboys as screw worms; these screw worms would eventually eat the beast alive if they were not doctored.

The pastures were so large that families in covered wagons moving in or passing through the Indian Territory would not go around the pasture fences, but would cut the wire and pass through; some would stop and patch the fence, while others would go on their way without thinking what trouble cutting the wire fences caused the cowboy line riders.

In 1901 I had a \$10.00 Indian pony and a \$45.00 saddle which was made in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

About the first of May, 1901, I decided to ride my pony from Checotah to Fayetteville, Arkansas, to visit my school mates.

I left Checotah at noon and ate supper in Muskogee and at dark that night I stopped on the branch in front of the Bacons College, unsaddled my pony, and tied one end of the rope around his neck and the other end to the saddle horn which I used for a pillow and used my saddle

blanket for a bed. The sun was high in the morning when I awoke saddled my pony and ate breakfast in Fort Gibson, and headed on towards Fayetteville; and that evening at sun down I stopped at a double log house up in the Greenleaf Mountains and asked the lady, who was a widow, if I could stay all night; she assured me that I could, but said that it would be better for me to sleep in the barn as she had some men to feed at midnight. I found out later that these men were outlaws. That night I heard them when they fed their horses at the barn and I heard the lady tell them that there was a boy asleep at the barn and for them not to bother him.

The next morning, I ate breakfast and paid the lady and that day at noon I rode up to the home of a Full Blood Cherokee Indian. This place was a boarding house for people passing through that country and the Indian also fed the people attending the Goingsnake Court which was only a few yards from the house.

The man of the house took my pony and fed him and as I walked up to the front porch of the boarding house there sat a man with long hair, two guns on his belt, and a 38 saddle Winchester leaning against the house. When dinner

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was called he took his Winchester to the table with him; this man was Zeke Proctor, an outlaw, who gave me good advice and told me while up in that country to keep my eye on my saddle, as some one up there might take it away from me, He said, "It is safe while you are here with me".

The next evening I arrived in Fayetteville where I visited for three weeks and enjoyed my visit while there among my schoolmates.. On my return home I arrived in Fort Gibson about eleven o'clock one night, and the old town of Fort Gibson was full of tents for gambling and eating places. The Government was paying off the Cherokee Indians.

In 1896 I attended school in Muskogee at the Henry Kendall College, which at that time was situated on West Okmulgee between the Plaza Hotel and the City Hall. Miss Crosby was matron of the boys dormitory and Miss Alice Robertson was our Bible and English teacher. Some of the large boys who played on the football team that year were Gabe Parker, Harry Bell, Eugene Gilmore, Milo Hendricks, Richard Swank, Lee Perryman, Dave Perryman, Tom Meyers, and John McGee.

In 1897 and 1898 I attended school at Maryville, Nedaway County, Missouri. And while attending school there the Spanish-American War started, and most of the boys in Maryville volunteered their services. I was not old enough for the call.

After school was out in May I came home and went to work for my father in his store; I worked in the shoe department and was Creek interpreter; the Indians then were very timid and would not speak English if they could.

At that time they hauled cotton a long distance to the Checotah market; on the west they hauled from Henryetta and Okmulgee, on the north Oktaha and Keefeton, on the east Webbers Falls, Starville and Briartown on the south, Eufaula, Brooken, Hoyt and Whitefield.

Then there were many ^{more} cattle shipped in and out of the Checotah stock yards than at any other point in the eastern part of Oklahoma.

In 1901 I entered Central Business College at Sedalia, Missouri, and finished a business course in 1902. I came back to Checotah and worked one year in Father's store and decided that Checotah was too small a town for me.

I came to Muskogee and went to work for the Woodward Dry Goods Company as window decorator and salesman. I worked here until the first of March 1905 and decided Muskogee was too small a town to live in, so I went to Chicago, and placed my application for brakeman on the Chicago and North Western Railroad Company; I took the examination and passed so here I was braking and switching until 1908 when I was transferred to the C. N. & W. yards at Huron, South Dakota; here the winters were very cold as it was from ten to thirty degrees below zero all winter and the summers were short but very hot, as there was no breeze in the day or night like we have here in Oklahoma.

In January 1908 I went up to Aberdeen, South Dakota, to register at the opening of the Cheyenne and Standing-rock Indian Reservation. It cost 25 cents to register and 2 cents for mailing your registration ticket.

I registered and took a chance, which was one against two hundred thousand, but a few weeks later I was notified by the Government that I was one of the lucky ones to receive one hundred and sixty acres of good wheat land. My lucky number was 6490.

In 1910 I came back to Oklahoma and worked for my father in a country store which he had at Onapa, which was six miles south of Checotah on the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad. In 1911 I went to work for Small Brothers Dry Goods Company at Porum.

The early part of the summer of 1911 was the time when Luther Hester and his posse of men staged the battle with Joe Davis and Pony Starr. Joe Davis bought some young cattle from an elderly lady living west of Porum. Joe brought them home and branded them. And Luther Hester said he had bought the same cattle and had the cattle retrieved and Joe did likewise and this was done several times by each. Luther and his friends organized a posse of men to meet at a certain place and at a certain time and the morning of the battle Joe Davis and Pony Starr rode their horses into Porum, and the posse sent Clifford Hester into town to locate Joe and Pony.

Luther Hester, a boy of about seventeen years of age, stayed in Porum too long, as Joe and Pony rode back to Pony's house which was about a mile and a half northeast of Porum and on the east side of the Midland Valley Railroad tracks. Joe was at Pony's home and saw the posse of about

twelve men on horses. Some of the men wore straw hats with black masks, others wore dresses and sunbonnets. Clifford left town and met the posse and told them that Joe was at Pony's house. Joe and Pony noticed that the posse was headed straight for the house, so Pony said, "Joe, what shall we do? Get on our horses and run?" Joe said, "No, we will stand hitched and shoot it out with them."

Pony's wife Lucy and their little girl Minnie were in the house and the mother told her child to get under the bed and lie flat on the floor.

Pony's kitchen had a slide window where he stood ready to fight. Joe went outside and stood at the corner of the house. When the posse rode up they started shooting. The battle only lasted for a few minutes. Clifford Hester was the first one killed, two Maxwell brothers were killed, Sunny Dunnagan was shot in the hip and George Blackstone was shot in the leg. Several horses and men were killed in this battle and the posse made a fast retreat.

There were one hundred and forty-four steel bullets which passed through Pony's house. Lucy, Pony's wife,

stayed in the house and loaded the magazines as fast as Joe and Pony would empty them.

The bullets stripped the keys off of their organ and one hit a cast iron pot of beans that were cooking on the stove and the smoke which this caused made a good blind for the boys.

Joe and Pony had only three shells each left when the battle was over and Joe, Pony and his wife and his daughter did not receive a scratch.

Conductor Anderson on the morning passenger stopped his train until the battle was over.

On New Year's Eve, 1913, I was married to Mrs. Nannie Breece West, the youngest daughter of Captain John C West.

In 1913 and 1914 I farmed the John West homestead which is a mile and a half southwest of Porum.