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REMINISCENCES OF A RANGE RIDER.

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

The following reminiscences were left in manuscript form by the late James C. Henderson, of Jay, Delaware County, Oklahoma. They were dedicated to his two little grandsons, Scribner and Jimmy Henderson, of Oklahoma City. As they relate the experiences and observations of one of the very first pioneer cattlemen of Kay County and the Cherokee Strip, they are of unquestioned historical interest and value, especially to the people of that portion of Oklahoma to which they more particularly pertain. These reminiscences were written less than two years before the death of Mr. Henderson, which occurred in January, 1919.

There were two additional chapters in the manuscript volume, which is in Mr. Henderson's own handwriting. One of these was the story of the battle with the Indians at Adobe Walls, Texas, in June, 1874, between a large war party of Comanche, Kiowa, Cheyenne and other Indians of the Southern Plains region and a small party of buffalo hunters, as it was told to Mr. Henderson by "Billy" Dixon, who was one of the participants. Inasmuch as a detailed account of that affair in Dixon's own words is to be found in the "Life of 'Billy' Dixon," that chapter is not reproduced here. The other chapter which has been omitted pertained to affairs in the Texas Panhandle country at a much later period.

Although written primarily for the benefit and information of two little boys, who might not otherwise be privileged to remember the tales of a grandfather, these stories are well worthy of a permanent place in the historical literature of Oklahoma.

J. B. T.

INTRODUCTORY

In an unguarded moment I decided to write the following Indian and pioneer lore. After I had begun, I wondered if it was best to do so, for, when it comes to writing, I am as completely out of my element as one of Parson Slaughter's old long-horns would have been in a corral with an unbreakable fence. Yet, knowing that these wild western scenes will never be enacted again, I have concluded to add my mite of information to help the present generation to understand the condition of things as they existed when Oklahoma was still a primitive wilderness—a country of boundless prairies and beautiful rivers, where sleek horses and cattle stood knee-deep in its superabundance of blue-stem, grama and mezquite grasses. It was with deep regret that I saw Oklahoma pass from its pristine beauty, to be dominated and transformed by the relentless hand of civilization. But what is the use? The world hates a discordant person and, besides, I spent the best part of my life there, but fled before the man with the hoe. And now, at the age of sixty, I have found refuge on Cow-skin Prairie, between the Ozarks of grand old Missouri and the beautiful Cherokee hills.

JAMES C. HENDERSON.

THE OSAGE MOURNING PARTIES

It will be forty-three years in March, 1917, since I first saw the Salt Fork of the Arkansas River. In those days we had never heard of Oklahoma. What is now the state of Oklahoma was called the Indian Territory.

During my sojourn in that country as a cow boy, I saw considerable of the Osage mourning parties. I also got to be very well acquainted with many of the Osage horse herders. It had been the custom of these herders, for no one knows how long, to bring their horses to the valley of Salt Fork to winter them. When we first went to that country, in March, 1874, we found them in undisputed possession. They would bring their horses in the fall and, in the spring, the mourning parties would come.

It was a part of their religion that, when an Osage warrior died, a scalp was to be placed in his grave. This scalp was believed to form a kind of passport to carry the dead Indian to the "happy hunting grounds," in the land of the here-

after. They also killed the favorite horse of the dead Indian and left its body lying at the side of the grave. They also placed vessels containing meat and other food beside the grave. The dead brave was supposed to ride a good horse and the scalp was to show that he had been a good warrior, while the prepared food was to sustain him on his long journey. Their religion or superstition led them to believe that, without these accompaniments, the dead warrior would never be able to reach the fair land beyond the setting sun, where game was always plenty and where bad Indians and white men would never come.

After an Indian had died, a mourning party was sent out for the purpose of securing the needed scalp. It did not make much difference with them whom they killed, whether Indian, white or negro, just so it was not an Osage. At such times, they considered all other tribes and peoples as their enemies. In his stories of the prairies and during his travels from Fort Gibson through Central Oklahoma, Washington Irving makes mention of these Osage war parties. Although his party had an Osage guide and was accompanied by a squad of soldiers, they seemed to have some fear of both the Pawnees and these Osage war parties. In appearance, one of these Osage mourning parties made a sure enough wild, western scene. The warriors were painted and plumed and crested and the manes and tails of their horses were interwoven with tiny bells. Each brave also wore eagles' feathers and strips of otter skin as ornaments and was armed with a rifle, a revolver and a big knife. They certainly looked like the Devil's own.

In the spring of 1875, three Indians who belonged to one of these Osage mourning parties came to our camp and told us that there was a large party near by and they begged us not to leave camp until their party had left that part of the country. They were painted up in such gaudy fashion that it was some time before we recognized them as being some of the erstwhile friendly horse herders with whom we had gotten well acquainted a few months before. They said that most of the members of this mourning party were young men whom they could not control and that these would kill us as sure as we left camp. These mourning parties numbered anywhere from fifteen to thirty persons and, by most people who knew anything about them, were considered to be very

dangerous. But they were restrained to a certain extent by the fact that the leader was responsible for the safe return of the party. If they secured a scalp and all of the party returned safely, then it was all glory. But, if one of their number got killed, even though they secured a scalp, then the entire party was disgraced. Their intentions were to take no desperate chances and only to fight when the odds were mostly in their favor.

When a camp was located by one of these mourning parties, the main body would hide while three of its members would approach the intended victim, who, seeing only three Indians and not knowing that there were others near, would be more likely to be off his guard. The main party, being near, was always ready to assist in case of need. Although they had many different ways of trying to secure scalps, this small party of three figured in many of their escapades.

The last one of these mourning parties to visit the Salt Fork country was in May, 1876. I will say more about this party in the story called "The Negro, or Wau-ka Sabba."

There was a large Indian trail that followed up the Salt Fork on the north side of the river. This was called the Black Dog Trail. Many of the Osage mourning parties followed this trail in their quest of scalps, most of which were secured from among the tribes of Western Oklahoma. There was another trail, less used, which led up the north side of Red Rock Creek. This creek was called "Pawnee No-washie-cow-haw Shing-gah," which, in English, would mean Poor Pawnee Creek. The Osages told me that, several years before, they had found a lost Pawnee on this creek and that he was almost starved to death when they found him. They killed and scalped him. I will say more about this Indian in the story called "The Lost Pawnee." We knew no other name for this creek until the coming of the Otoes, and then people got to calling it Red Rock Creek.

Captain C. H. Stone told me of some of his experiences with some of these mourning parties. At one time he was coming up the Chisholm Trail with cattle and one morning the man who had stood the last guard during the night came running into camp and reported that an Indian was running off one of the cattle on the far side of the herd. All of the men were up but Stone was the only one who was on his horse at the time. He had his overcoat on and, in taking the hob-

bles off his horse that morning, he had tied the hobble around his body instead of around his horse's neck as was customary. He took after the Indian as fast as he could go. He had a revolver belted on but it was under his overcoat. He was rapidly gaining on the Indian and he reached for his revolver but could not get it on account of the hobble being so tightly tied around his body. He was now getting dangerously close to the Indian and still trying to get his revolver. He could see that the Indian had a revolver in his right hand. Suddenly the Indian turned and faced Stone and, as he did so, called the latter a vile name in English and began to shoot. The horse Stone was riding was a very high strung animal and Stone could not stop him so he turned and circled back to the herd. As Stone was running this circle, the Indian shot at him five or six times. By this time the other men had mounted their horses and were coming to Stone's aid but the Indian had now run the beef out of sight over the hill. Stone and the other men rode to the top of the hill from which point they could see about thirty Indians down in a hollow. The Indian got the beef. Stone said that he could hear the bullets sing and that most of them went over his head.

Stone also said that, at another time, one of these mourning parties attacked one of his men and that, although this man was shot four times, he swam Bluff Creek and got away.

In the spring of 1875, a band of about thirty Osages left the reservation and went up Salt Fork to the Chisholm Trail, where they began to raid the first herds of cattle that came up from Texas that spring. These Indians passed through our range but did not seem to pay any attention to our cattle. As soon as they struck the trail herds, however, they would ride right into the midst of one and drive out a beef. They also demanded money for letting the herds go by. There were hardly ever more than five or six men with a herd and the herds were nearly always too far apart to render each other any assistance. The cattlemen finally sent a runner to Fort Reno and, in two or three days, he returned with about thirty soldiers. The soldiers struck the Indians west of our camp and the Indians ran as soon as they saw the soldiers. Here they came, down the Black Dog Trail, with the soldiers in hot pursuit. The running was fine, but the soldiers did some of the poorest shooting that I had ever seen. They certainly wasted a lot of ammunition. They finally killed one

Osage and scalped him and ran the others across the Arkansas River. On their way back, the officer in charge wanted to know if we knew of any other Indians. We told him there were a few Kaws but that they were harmless. He said that if he found Kaws or any other Indians that he would put them on their reservation in a hurry. The soldiers' dash and pluck seemed to be very good but their shooting was "on the bum." This band of Indians were just common raiders. They were all well armed but they were not painted and their horses were not caparisoned like those of a mourning party.

At one time, when we were camped on Pond Creek, a band of Osages camped in the same bunch of timber in which our camp was located. These Indians had come to winter a herd of horses on Salt Fork. There was one of their number who could talk good English. Every few nights he would come over to our camp and stay a while. During the winter, one of their number died and that night there were several Indians in the tepee where their dead tribesman lay. They kept up a fire all night. This Indian who could talk good English came over to our camp. After he had been there quite a while and everything had become very still, as the mourners had stopped howling, he took a knife and cut a long switch. He then went quietly over to the tepee where the dead Indian lay and struck it with the switch. The canvas being stretched very tightly, it sounded almost like the report of a gun. He then ran back to our camp as fast as he could. About the time he arrived back at our camp the other Indians began swarming out of that tepee. Some of them had guns and others had firebrands. For a few moments they ran around the tepee, firing their guns and yelling. They thought it was the Red Man's devil or bad spirit. There was a thicket near the tepee and, as they could not see the Evil One anywhere else, they thought he must have taken refuge in this thicket. They therefore surrounded it and, after shooting and throwing fire into it for a while, they concluded that they had killed him or scared him away from the camp. The best part of it was that the Indian who had struck the tepee and caused all the disturbance ran back and joined in the fracas with as much zeal as any one and he was one of the last to leave the thicket after the tumult had ceased. This incident happened about forty-two years ago. The Indian who struck the tepee was no less a personage than Bill Conner, who was

a noted member of the Osage tribe and who, at one time, had the distinction of being the second chief.

THE STAMPEDE

In March, 1874, we put in a cattle camp on the Chikaskia River, near its mouth, and not far from the place where the Nez Perces Agency was afterward established. There were five of us in the camp that spring. I was sixteen and one-half years old and the others were all grown men. We had a kind of "straw boss" who was known as Colonel O. P. Johnson. He claimed to have been at one time a renowned scout and Indian fighter and, to judge from the great stories he used to tell, one would be led to think that he had fought Indians all the way from the Pecos to "the shinneries," and then some. There was no other camp in that country between the Arkansas River and the old Sewell stockade, at the Pond Creek crossing on the Chisholm Trail. The only other white people in that country were the Government employes at the Kickapoo Agency, which was located near the mouth of Bitter Creek. The Kickapoo agent was an old Quaker named Williams. The Kickapoos seemed to be nearly all women, most of the men having been killed in fighting the American and Mexican troops on the Rio Grande. There were a few Mexicans with the Kickapoos.

One day there was considerable excitement among the Kickapoos. One of the women was missing for about half a day. They thought the Osages had stolen her. The next day a Mexican told us that she had been fishing on the Chikaskia River.

The cattle we were holding belonged to my father and to old Parson Slaughter, of Texas. Parson Slaughter was the father of John, Bill and Colonel C. C., all of whom own some of the largest ranches in Texas at this time. The old Parson had moved to Emporia, Kansas, where John and Bill were going to school. My father's cattle were common Kansas stock but those of Parson Slaughter were from Texas and were of the vintage of the 'sixties. Some of them were eight years old and their horns were a fright. These cattle were regular old coasters. Our saddle horses had all kinds of Mexican brands. Such kinds of horses and cattle were very common in those days, but they would be a curiosity now. We did not realize at the time the kind of a menagerie we had.

One afternoon, after we had been at this camp about a month, we saw a band of Indians coming down the big flat east of the Chikaskia. They were coming toward our camp and, as they drew near, we saw that they were the Kickapoos. They were coming to pay us a visit and, incidentally, to ask if we would give them a beef. They had always treated us very well and had not molested anything of ours, so we gave them a beef. It was on this occasion that Colonel Johnson shone at his best. He told the Kickapoos that he owned all of the cattle and horses and that the rest of us were his hired hands. It was quite refreshing to watch him ride at the head of this Kickapoo band, showing them his big herd of cattle. After they had been given a beef, a Mexican shot it and, after it had been dressed, they brought a large chunk of it over to our camp, after saying "gracios" several times which, in Mexican, means "thank you." They then started back to their agency.

Early one morning, about the first of May, we heard a great commotion among the cattle. We were eating breakfast at the time. We jumped on our horses and ran to find the cause of the commotion. The cattle had been rounded up on the big flat between Duck Creek and the Chikaskia, about dark, the evening before. Right in the middle of the herd, we found an Osage mourning party, waving their blankets and yelling like Basha Bazooks. The way those old "coasters" did run was certainly a caution. We enjoyed the fun almost as well as the Osages did, but we had to do several miles of hard riding to get the cattle together again. The Indians ran west and crossed the Chikaskia when they saw us coming. They did not try to kill any of the cattle—they evidently just wanted to see them run.

These Indians then went on west, up the Salt Fork, and they killed a man near where the Black Dog Trail crossed Pond Creek. This man belonged to an outfit that was coming up the trail from Texas with a herd. Some of the cattle had strayed off and he was hunting for these strays when the Indians found him.

Shortly after this stampede, John and Bill Slaughter brought an outfit and took their cattle to the Flint Hills, in Kansas. We then moved our cattle up near the state line, as it was not considered safe to stay on Salt Fork in the summer time. That summer we helped to drive a herd of cattle

to Emporia. While I was there on the street, one day, I met old Parson Slaughter. He told me that his cattle had gotten fat and that he would ship them in a few days and that he would then go back to Texas. While we were talking someone halloed, "grasshoppers!" We looked toward the sun and we could see them passing over by the million. None of the grasshoppers lit that day but the next morning the ground was alive with them. I went home a few days later and, all the way down the Walnut River, they had eaten all green vegetation and, in some places, the trees had been defoliated by these insect invaders.

In the fall of 1874, the Deans put their cattle with ours and we moved by easy stages back to the Salt Fork. We went by the Kickapoo Agency but our friends, the Kickapoos, had left. There stood the Agency building, all empty. They had gone to another reservation, on the North Canadian River. We drifted on and established our winter's camp on Pond Creek, about one mile from Salt Fork.

THE LOST PAWNEE

When Arkansas City was first started, Captain Norton put in one of the first stores there. This was in 1870. Norton also did considerable trading with the Indians, in the Indian Territory. In 1871, a large band of Osages were returning from their fall hunt on the Ninneska River, in Kansas. These Indians camped a few weeks on the Chikaskia River, near the Arkansas City and Fort Sill wagon trail. There were three or four hundred of these Osages and they had secured several hundred buffalo robes and other furs on this Ninneska hunt. The Ninneska was a great range for the buffalo. I have heard my father tell of seeing the great herds there that numbered thousands. I never shall forget how I wanted to go to the buffalo range on the Ninneska, but I was told that I was too small for a buffalo hunter.

Captain Norton loaded some wagons with goods and went to the camp of this band of Osages from the Ninneska to trade for their furs. He had a large tent in which he displayed his goods. After he had been at this Osage camp for about a week, a Pawnee Indian rode into the camp. Now this was something that had never happened before, as the Osages and Pawnees had been at war for more than fifty years. In-

deed, there were none of the Osages on the Salt Fork who were old enough to remember when there was peace between the Osages and the Pawnees. Therefore, the Osages at once gathered around this mysterious stranger to find out the meaning of this unusual occurrence. The Pawnee told them that there were about fifty of the men of his tribe waiting near, that they had come from the south, where they had made peace with the Kiowas, and that they had now come to make peace with the Osages. The Osages told this Pawnee that they were willing to make peace and they then sent some of their men to welcome the Pawnees to the Osage camp. The Osages, having just killed their winter's supply of meat, made a great feast. They smoked and danced nearly all night and each tribe swore eternal friendship and vowed that they would never shed another drop of each others' blood as long as the grass grew and the waters ran. The next morning the Pawnees departed for their home in Nebraska but, before they left, they told the Osages that one of their number had left the party and had gotten lost, about two days before. They said they thought that he would find their trail and follow them. The Osages said that, if they found him, they would feed him and treat him like a brother and send him on the right trail.

A few days before the Pawnees came, an Osage brave had died. As soon as the Pawnees had left on their homeward journey, the Osages sent out a mourning party. Early one morning, a few days later, Captain Norton heard Indians yelling, horses running and guns firing. He did not know what it meant. He thought it might be the Cheyennes attacking the Osages. He ran up the creek bank to see what was the trouble. He saw about twenty-five Indians running toward the Osage camp. One was running about fifty yards ahead. He was carrying something that looked somewhat like a flag and he was waving this in the air as they were running toward the camp. It proved to be the return of the mourning party, the members of which had found the lost Pawnee and had killed and scalped him. They had also skinned one of his hands. They had cut a forked stick, about six feet long, and tied the scalp to the top. They had also stretched the skin from the Pawnee's hand in the space in the fork. This made a kind of banner and this was carried by the Osage who rode ahead of the returning mourning party.

The Osages told Captain Norton that the Pawnee was almost starved to death when they found him. He was the victim of a broken treaty of the existence of which he had no knowledge. He was the same Pawnee the killing of whom, on Poor Pawnee Creek, had been recounted to us by the Osages.

The Osages told us that the Pawnee used to come all the way from Nebraska to steal Osage horses. These Pawnee horse rustlers used to come in small bands of about twenty-five or thirty. As soon as the Osages discovered that their horse herds had been raided, they sent a strong force in pursuit. As these Pawnee raiders were fierce fighters, they generally escaped with a good bunch of horses, though sometimes the pursuers would be able to overtake them and recover a part if not all of the stolen animals. Sometimes, in the early spring, before the Pawnee horses had recovered sufficiently from the hardships of the winter to make the trip, the Pawnees would come afoot, carrying their rawhide lariats and walking four hundred miles in the expectation of securing their summer mounts from the Osage horse herds. While there was always considerable enmity between the Pawnees and all other tribes of the Great Plains—so much so that they were called the "Ishmaelites of the Prairies," their hands being against every man and every man's hand against them—the greatest hatred existed between them and the Osages. The Osages said that, at different times, they had followed these Pawnee raiders through Western Kansas for many days and that they had had a great many hard fights with them.

When the Pawnees were moved from their reservation in Nebraska to the new one in the Indian Territory, in 1875, they were located on Black Bear Creek, with the Arkansas River forming the boundary between them and the Osage country. For the first year or two after they were located there, we expected war to break out between them and the Osages at any time, but they managed to keep from fighting. One day, soon after the coming of the Pawnee, I was hunting some stray stock on the west, or Pawnee, side of the Arkansas River, when I met an Osage, who was hunting some horses that had strayed off. We were on the Pawnee side of the river and, after riding along together for a way, suddenly five Pawnees came riding over a hill. They were almost upon us before we saw them. I could see that the Osage did

not like the looks of these Pawnees. In fact, at one time, I thought he was going to run. But he concluded to stand his ground. The Pawnees did not pay very much attention to me—the Osage held the audience. They just crowded around him and I believe that he was the worst scared person that I had ever seen. The Pawnees knew that he was badly scared and they seemed to enjoy the situation. They asked him for some of his tobacco and he gave them all he had. He tried to be awful friendly, for the man who will give you his last bit of tobacco is a friend indeed, apparently. As soon as the Pawnees left, he lost no time in getting back to his own beloved country. The last I saw of him, he was about half a mile to the north, headed for the Arkansas River and running like a scared wolf.

THE NEGRO, OR WAU-KA SABBA

In the fall of 1875, we drifted back to Salt Fork and pitched our camp in the same place on Pond Creek where we had stayed the winter before. That winter, Luke Short brought in a herd of cattle and put in a camp on the south side of Salt Fork. This made three camps on Salt Fork that winter, namely, Hopkins', Short's and ours. Early in the spring we moved our camp about ten miles east and to the south side of the river. There had been four of us in camp all winter, but my oldest brother, Tom, had gone to Kansas and that just left Colonel Dean, Broncho Jim and myself in camp that spring. Along about the first of May, about twenty-five of our stock horses strayed off. We looked for them all of one day but did not find them. The next morning Dean sent Broncho and myself to take another look for the horses, telling us to go as far south as Poor Pawnee Creek. When we reached that stream, we found a fresh looking horse trail. It looked as if it had been made by about twenty-five horses. However, we noticed that the horse tracks were all of nearly the same size, whereas, our stock horses were of all sizes, from colts up. So we concluded that it was an Osage war party. We decided to follow it a little way, anyhow. We followed it about a mile when it led into the timber and there we found the camp fire still burning and everything looked like they had not been gone more than two hours. We then went northwestward to Salt Fork, near where the Bald Mound

is and found the horses on the very spot where George Miller put in a cattle camp about the year 1882. (This George Miller was the father of the Miller Brothers, who own the 101 Ranch. His cattle brand in 1882 was L K but either he or his sons afterward changed it to 101).

We started to our camp with the horses and, when we got within about two miles of the camp, we left the horses, as they were considered at home any where within three miles of camp. It was almost dark when we left the horses and, when we got within speaking distance of the camp, we told Colonel Dean that we had found the stray horses and brought them in. He asked if we had seen the Indians. We answered that we had not. He then said that an Osage mourning party had been there late that evening and that they had killed one of the cattle. He said they were camped for the night in a small bunch of timber about a half a mile away. And sure enough, Broncho and I had passed right by them without seeing either them or their horses. Colonel Dean had counted these Indians and there were eighteen of them. Why we did not see them or some of their horses has always been a mystery to me, as Broncho and I had passed right along the edge of the brush where they were camped. We could see their camp fire plainly while we were talking to Colonel Dean. This fire had evidently not been lighted when Broncho and I passed by. We then told the Colonel that another party had gone west, up Poor Pawnee Creek. After supper we began to discuss the matter of what was best to do about the stock horses. The Indians were headed right straight toward the place where we had left this bunch of horses. We did not think the Indians would want to take these horses on their expedition but we did think that they might stampede them for pure mischief. So we thought it would be best to try to move the horses. Colonel Dean proposed that we wait until toward morning before undertaking to do so, as we could hear the Indians beating their drums and singing their war songs, until about two o'clock in the morning, when it ceased. Colonel Dean then said that, if I would guard the camp and the saddle horses, he and Broncho would go and move the bunch of horses which we had brought in and left east of the Indian camp and put them with the main herd of stock horses.

Just before daylight I could hear tiny bells right close

to our camp; I knew it was some of the Indians horses and, just as it began to get light in the east, I could see four Indian horses about fifty yards northeast from our camp. It was the tinkling of the tiny bells on the manes and tails of these horses that I had heard as they grazed past our camp. They were all hobbled and were grazing slowly toward the east. I then saw three Osages coming as fast as their horses could run. They passed very close to me. Having secured and unhobbled the grazing animals, they started then on the run toward their camp. I had a revolver on and a Henry rifle in my hand, while a double barrel shotgun was leaning against a tree. I must have looked dangerous or comical, as the Indians kept watching me very closely while they were unhobbling their horses. I had become an expert with my superb Henry rifle and I could have killed all three before they could have gotten out of range, but Colonel Dean had cautioned me not to shoot unless I had reason to believe that they meant harm.

The sun was coming up and I could see Colonel Dean and Broncho on a sand hill, nearly a mile to the north, looking toward our camp. I then went out where they could see me, whereupon they started toward the camp. When they had gotten within about a hundred yards of the camp, Colonel Dean halloood for me to take off my hat to which I replied, "Never mind; my hair is all right." He then told me that, when they saw the Indians so near our camp, they thought that I had gone to sleep, that the Indians had killed me before I knew they were around and that the horses the Indians were driving off were some of our saddle horses.

About nine or ten o'clock that day, the Indians reached Hopkins' dug-out, on Pond Creek, about four miles below the old Sewell stockade. The men had all gone out to look after the cattle but a negro cook was in the dug-out. (I have forgotten the Osage name for negro, so I have substituted the Ponca word for black man, which is probably the same, as the languages of the two tribes are of common origin and many if not most of the words are identical.) This Wau-ka Sabba heard some one say "Hello" in plain English and, thinking that it was some one from our camp, he said, "Come in." But no one came, so he opened the door to see who it was and there were three Indians standing in the door. He tried to close the door but the Indians caught it and began to push

and, as he threw his weight against the door in an endeavor to shut it, one of them reached in and cut off a large bunch of his wool but did not reach his scalp. There was a loaded revolver lying a few feet away but the negro was afraid to let go the door to get it. After this struggle had lasted a few moments, Wau-ka Sabba saw that he could not shut the door, so he jumped back and let the Indians fall inside. Before they could get on their feet again, Wau-ka Sabba had grasped the revolver and began shooting and thus succeeded in driving the Indians out when he closed the door. He did not kill an Indian, although he said his weapon was within two feet of their faces when he was shooting. The rest of the Indians were hidden in the brush about a half a mile away and the three Indians at the dug-out began to signal for them to come, by setting fire to the dead grass and throwing it up in the air. Wau-ka Sabba was watching them through the cracks in the door and, when he saw the main band of Indians coming, he thought it was time to move. There was a rear door that opened out down under the creek bank and the negro ran out this door and through the woods but the Indians saw him and the three that were already at the dug-out jumped on their horses and took after him, shooting as they ran. The rest of the Indians were coming in full cry, but the negro had some advantage as there was lots of grape vines and greenbrier thickets which he could run through but the Indians, being mounted, had to go around these. Also, whenever he came to the creek, he would run down and up the banks, while the Indians had to ride around the big bends. The Indians ran him within a half a mile of the stockade (Sewell's) and they shot at him every time they caught sight of him. He said afterward that, when he reached the stockade, there was a tired nigger there. He certainly made a great run, as the Indians put him through under whip and spur for almost four miles. Had his shooting been as good as his running, he might have given a better account of himself.

We had been looking for help for more than three weeks to enable us to get the cattle out of the country. The grass was good and the Indians were always more dangerous when their horses were in good condition. Luke Short had moved his cattle a few days before and, the day the Indians left, we concluded to get things in as good shape as we could that day

and then try to move the cattle off of the Salt Fork ourselves. There was a small creek a few miles north, that the Osages called Ne-wheh-ka-ha Shinga, which, in English, would signify "little stinking creek." We worked hard all the next day and finally got all the cattle, horses and camp outfit moved to this creek. We knew that we had all of the horses but we did not know whether we had all of the cattle. Just before dark, my father and four other men came. The next morning we counted the cattle and found that we had failed to get them all, as about fifty head were missing. My father, Colonel Dean and myself started back to Salt Fork to look for the missing cattle. When we got near the Salt Fork, we separated, my father going eastward and Colonel Dean and I going toward the south. We had not gone far when we heard shooting, down the river, in the direction my father had gone. We rode in that direction as fast as we could. We found that the Indians were killing our cattle. Colonel Dean and I reached there just in time to see the Indians run. We could see an Indian on top of a large sand hill. He was their lookout and he gave the other Indians the signal that we were coming and then they all ran. We never got near enough to get in a shot. The Indians ran eastward and crossed the Arkansas River at the Black Dog Crossing. They had killed seventeen head of cattle and there was no doubt but that they would have killed the last one if we had not arrived in time to scare them away. They had failed to kill a man and get a scalp and were in such an ugly temper that they were trying to take their spite out on the cattle. There were some short horn cows that were too big and gentle to run much and the Indians had ridden their horses along side these and ripped them open with knives, without shooting them. We never wanted to kill any one so badly in our lives as we did when we saw the brutality with which these dumb brutes had been mutilated. This happened about forty-eight hours after these Indians had chased the negro. We never learned where they had been between times. That summer, my father and Colonel Dean went to the Osage Agency and filed a claim with the Government against the Osages for pay for the cattle, but this claim was never allowed.

THE PLUG HAT

A few days after we had located our winter's camp on Salt Fork, in the fall of 1875, I was looking after the cattle on the south side of the river, when I met a man wearing a plug hat. I was never more surprised in my life, for it was the first plug hat that had ever been seen on Salt Fork. His hat and clothes looked as if he might have been a pilgrim from the Potomac, but his horse, saddle and bridle looked as if he might have been a rustler from the Rio Grande—in fact, his outfit looked like a blending of the East and the West. His personal appearance was that of a good-looking man, but why the plug hat? He invited me to his camp, which he said was about three miles away. I accepted for two reasons, first, because I wanted my dinner and, second, because I wanted to see what kind of an outfit it was that would send out a rider on Salt Fork, wearing a plug hat. The fashion on Salt Fork had not yet reached the plug hat stage—it was still in its breech-clout and gee-string days.

While on our way to his camp, I learned that my new-found friend was none other than the notorious Luke Short, of Fort Worth and Dodge City fame. I found him to be a very interesting man. As we rode along, we came to a bunch of his cattle. They were each branded with a plug hat on the left jaw and each had the tip of the left horn sawed off. In referring to the outfit afterward, we generally referred to them as the "plug hats" or the "sawed horns."

Luke Short at one time had run the Red Dog Saloon, in Dodge City. There was an unwritten law in Dodge, in those days, against anyone wearing a plug hat. If a stranger from the East wearing a plug hat, he was immediately beset by the indignant populace and his hat was shot full of holes. As a result, plug hats were scarce in Dodge. One day, Luke Short thought he would have a little diversion, so he walked out of the Red Dog Saloon and started down street, wearing a plug hat. The plug hat, of course, magnetized the crowd. It was soon knocked off his head and shot full of holes. He put it on again but it was knocked from his head and shot several times, but he finally succeeded in making his rounds and getting back to the saloon, still wearing the plug hat. And he wore a plug hat every day that he stayed in Dodge after that.

There were gay times in Dodge in those days. One evening a stranger from the East got off the train at Dodge and,

as he was taking in the sights that night, he wandered into the Red Dog Saloon. This saloon also served as a club room for the sporting element, which included most of the population. The crowd saw at a glance that the stranger belonged to the immigrant class and they began to ask him what part of the country he was from. He told them he was from New England and that he had come west to spend his vacation on a buffalo hunt. He was told that buffalo were getting scarce in those parts but that there were some fine herds of antelope within a few miles of town. They told him to come to the Red Dog Saloon the next morning and they would take him on a grand antelope hunt. The stranger then departed for his lodging house, dreaming, no doubt, of the numerous big pronghorns that they were going to bring in the next day.

There were in Dodge at that time, several head dresses and blankets which had been taken from the bodies of Indians killed in the fight at Adobe Walls. Early the next morning, seven or eight members of the crowd donned these head dresses and blankets and went on ahead to the river, where, on a certain sand bar, they took off their boots and walked around in their socks, making tracks like those made by moccasins. After making these tracks, they remounted their horses and went down the river out of sight to wait for the hunters to come. Soon after this party left, the stranger came to the saloon and said he was all ready for the big drive. A good looking horse had been secured for him but it was known as the slowest running horse in town. The leader of the party made straight for the sand bar already mentioned. When they arrived at the sand bar, some one said, "Indians!" and pointed at the tracks. Sure enough, the sand bar was covered with these moccasin tracks. While they were looking at the moccasin tracks they heard the "Indians" yell and here they came, charging, shooting and whooping. The hunters started for Dodge, as fast as their horses could run. As they were mounted on good running horses, they soon left the stranger far behind, reaching town more than half a mile ahead of him. The whole town had been informed of the program that was to be pulled off that morning, so many of the people had climbed upon house-tops and other vantage points to see the race. When the stranger got to the edge of the town, he was so disgusted with the poor running of his horse, that he jumped to the ground and struck a bee-line for

the Red Dog Saloon, about three hundred yards distant. He just hit a few of the high places—they said he almost flew. He ran into the saloon and never stopped until he got to the rear end of the house. Luke Short ran to him and patted him on the back, saying, "My friend, if ever you run a race I will bet my money on you."

It was a custom of Luke Short's that, when he hired a negro to work for him, the latter was told that he was wanted to work for a certain length of time and that if he were to quit before the time was up he would be killed. About two weeks before Short moved his cattle from Salt Fork, in the spring of 1876, one of his negroes came to our camp and told us that he did wish that Mr. Short would move the cattle up near the Kansas line, as he was afraid that the Osage mourning parties would come and that he was afraid of them. We asked him why he did not quit and go to the states. He said that if he were to quit then, he would be killed, *sure*. Another clause that Short put in the contract with his negro employes was that if they ever called him any other name but "Mr." Short, he would kill them for that also. About a week after this negro was at our camp, Short moved his cattle up near Caldwell. After that I did not hear from him again until four years later, when he brought a herd of cattle from Texas and camped on Skeleton Creek. He had two negroes with him then but not the same he had in 1876. These negroes seemed to be working under the same sort of contract, as I noticed they always said "Mr." Short. In 1888, Short got into trouble in Fort Worth with a noted gambler, named Jim Courtright. Short killed Courtright. I never heard what became of Short after that affair.

LAME DOCTOR

In the winter of 1876, a band of Osages, under the leadership of a chief called Lame Doctor, camped a few miles from our camp. These Osages were renegades and outlaws of the worst kind. We never knew where they came from. They told us that they had not been on their reservation for more than three years. We expected to have trouble with these Indians. We thought they intended to live partly off of our cattle. But they hunted deer and antelopes and did better than we expected. About mid-winter, a part of them

moved west and pitched their camp at no great distance from the Salt Plains. That winter a party of hunters from Kansas camped about fifteen miles east of this new Indian camp. There was a boy at this hunters' camp. One day this boy was out hunting alone when three or four of these Osages found him. They took him west with them for several miles and then they took his horse, coat and shoes and left him. The ground was covered with snow but the weather was warm enough to melt snow all night. Instead of trying to get back to his own camp, the boy followed the Indians to their camp, which was not far from where they had left him.

When the boy arrived near the Osage camp, he saw a bunch of their horses. He picked out what looked to be a good horse, took the hobbles off and put them around the animal's neck, mounted him and went back the trail they had come. As it was a starry night, he had no trouble in getting back to his own camp. About a week after this, I was on the south side of the Salt Fork, about half way to Poor Pawnee (Red Rock) Creek, when I met an Osage. I knew he was one of Lame Doctor's men, but he had on a coat and a pair of shoes. I also noticed that the sleeves of his coat were very short—it did not look like it had been made to order—and I had never seen any of Lame Doctor's men wearing coats or shoes before. They wore blankets and moccasins instead. I pointed to his coat and asked him where he got it. He did not say anything but looked at his shoes. It was characteristic of the Osages that, when they had stolen anything and some one came looking for it, that they would keep looking at whatever had been stolen. For instance, if any one went to their horse herds where there was a stolen horse, the Indians would keep watching it. And so, by closely watching the Indians, one could pick out the stolen horse even though one did not otherwise know it to be such. As soon as I saw this Indian look at his shoes, I was satisfied that he was wearing the coat and shoes of the boy from the hunting camp. We both sat there on our horses, looking at each other. I knew the boy had been badly imposed upon and I was sure that this Indian was one of the guilty parties. I was then eighteen years old and had beaten all the Indians on Pond Creek shooting the year before. At one time I had about made up my mind to try my skill on this fellow, but I was afraid we might get into trouble. We had no fear of the Indians but we did

not want any trouble with them for fear the soldiers might drive us out and we did not want to give up our fine range. The Indian finally said in very good English, "Me hunt," and then rode on. These were the only words he had spoken.

When I got back to Salt Fork, I saw where two cattle had been running on the sand bar and there were horse tracks following them. I followed the trail a little way but, as it was getting dark, I had to leave it. It was about four miles to camp and I was late getting in. There were three of us, Colonel Dean, my brother Tom and myself. I told them of my meeting the Indian and of the cattle tracks. The next morning Tom went up the river to look after the cattle, while Colonel Dean and I went down stream to follow the trail of the cattle from the point where I had left it the night before. After following it for three or four miles, we found where the cattle had been killed, on the bank of the river, among the cottonwood trees. The Indians had taken the meat and hides but the heads and bones were left. They were not our cattle, as we could see by the heads that one was yellow and the other was brindled. We had no cattle of these colors. These cattle had strayed from a herd that was held on the Chickaskia River, up near the Kansas line. In the spring, Lame Doctor's band left but we never knew where they went.

I always thought that this band of Osages was in the battle of Adobe Walls, in the summer of 1874. This attack was made by renegade Indians of various Western Oklahoma tribes. I always believed that Lame Doctor's band went into Western Oklahoma when it left the Salt Fork. That was the last band of Osages that ever wintered on Salt Fork.

When I was in Kingfisher, Oklahoma, about fifteen years ago, I met a man who told me that he had been in that country a great many years. He also said that the boy from whom the Indians had taken the coat and shoes was his cousin. He also told me that the horse which his cousin had taken from the Indian camp was a very good race horse and that the cousin had won considerable money with it.

BIG SNAKE

As nearly as I can remember, it was about 1878 that the Poncas were located on Salt Fork. Their agency was built at the big spring and not far from where the river empties into the Arkansas. White Eagle was head chief; Big Snake was

second chief and Big Black Buffalo Bull was third chief; Colonel Whiteman was their agent. Bat Barnaby was the interpreter but was afterward succeeded by Joe Esau, a Pawnee. The Poncas were a quiet, good natured sort of people, but Big Snake had a rather bad disposition and had caused trouble at different times. Once he persuaded a part of the Poncas to leave their reservation and make a break for their old home in Nebraska. He led this band toward the Cheyenne country, hoping to induce them to join in the break for the north. But Colonel Whiteman sent a runner who beat them to Fort Reno and notified the commander, who ordered out the troops and captured Big Snake and his band before they got to see the Cheyennes.

Big Snake was put in the guard house at Fort Reno and the members of his band were sent back to the Ponca Reservation. Big Snake was kept at Fort Reno for six months and was then sent back to the Ponca Agency. He continued to cause trouble by trying to induce the Poncas to go back to Nebraska, so it was decided to send him back to the guard house again. Lieutenant Mason and ten soldiers attempted to arrest him, but he resisted and a young corporal shot him through the head. This happened in the east room of the old commissary building. In a few hours, the Ponca braves had gathered under White Eagle, armed and mounted on their best horses. The squaws were all crying and were sharpening their butcher knives. Every one thought that there was going to be war and most of the Poncas wanted to fight.

Big Black Buffalo Bull was very much opposed to fighting. He rode his sorrel horse up and down the line between the Indians and the soldiers and harangued as loud as he could yell. He told the Poncas that he knew that they could kill all of the soldiers who were there but he said that other soldiers would come and then the Poncas would be shot down like cattle. He also told them that Big Snake had been a bad man and had caused the Poncas a great deal of trouble. White Eagle did not say a word while Big Black Buffalo Bull was talking—he merely sat on his horse and watched the soldiers and Big Black Buffalo Bull. In fact, he seemed for the time being to have been completely superceded as head chief by Big Black Buffalo Bull. The latter finally prevailed upon the Poncas to disperse. And thus, by the persuasive power of Big Black Buffalo Bull, peace prevailed.

I had seen the soldiers go into the commissary building and I knew that Big Snake was there, but I did not think of serious trouble until I heard the report of the Springfield rifle. It was issue day and Big Snake had come with the other Indians to get their rations. As soon as possible after Big Snake was killed, Colonel Whiteman got a runner out to Arkansas City with a telegram asking for more troops. In three or four days, fifty more soldiers came from Fort Reno. But everything had gotten normal again before they came. These last troops brought three or four cannon with them—the first that I had seen since the Civil War.

The troop camped just north of the big spring and they certainly made themselves at home. Houghton & Sherburne, the traders, had some fat hogs running in the woods. The troops did not arrive until nine o'clock in the morning but they had one of those hogs dressed and cooked for dinner. One day, while I was hitching my horse not far from where the soldiers were camped, I saw an officer shoot one of the hogs, but he did not kill it and it ran off into the woods. I asked him why he was trying to kill that hog and he said, "Whose hog is it?" I told him that it belonged to the men who were running the store. He then went to the store and told Rube Houghton that, while shooting at a tin can, he had accidentally wounded one of his hogs. He said he was willing to pay for the hog. Rube replied that he supposed the hog would recover from the wound. The officer then said that he ought to have to pay for the hog for being such a poor marksman.

THE SUN DANCE

Every summer that I was on the Salt Fork, after the coming of the Poncas, the Indians held their annual "sun dance." The old saying, that "distance lends enchantment to the view," holds good in the case of the sun dance. People used to come some distance to see the sun dance, while men living near by never saw one of these dances, if a dance it might be called, for it was really a test of physical endurance under torture.

Whenever a young Indian became old enough to become a warrior, he was put through the ceremonies of the sun dance to test his mettle. These dances were held during the hottest part of the summer.

A tall pole or post was set in the ground, out on the hot prairie, away from any timber, and to this post long arms or cross pieces were fastened. When everything was ready, ordeal by making two small incisions in his shoulder or the the Indian who was to be a sun dancer was prepared for the upper part of his back, each about an inch long and about an inch apart. Then a stout thong, or cord was passed from one incision to the other, underneath the skin, and securely tied. The other end of the cord was then tied to one of the cross pieces above. The sun dancer would then look at the sun continually and dance and tug at the cord until the skin in the loop of the cord gave way. Sometimes it would require hours of effort before the skin would break or wear out. Sometimes the dancer would faint from gazing at the sun so long, but, after a while, would get up and go on with the dance. Those that fainted but finally broke loose were considered good warriors, but those who broke loose without fainting were considered better.

I was at a sun dance one summer, northeast of the Ponca Agency, when an Indian named Short Man was dancing. He broke loose without fainting, when a mighty shout went up from the crowd. Another Indian, named Fore Top, was also dancing and he, too, broke loose without fainting and the crowd cheered again. But Short Man was not satisfied when he found that Fore Top had done as well as he had done, so, in order to outdo Fore Top, he picked up a hatchet, laid his little finger on a stick of wood and cut it off at the first joint, amid great applause. We then thought that Fore Top would go him one better but he failed to respond—he probably could not see where the thing might end. This dance was held about thirty-six years ago.

I often wonder if the Poncas still hold these sun dances or if the Government put a stop to them as it did to the Indian mode of killing beef cattle. Every Saturday was called "issue day" at the Agency and, on this day the Poncas were issued twelve beeves along with their other rations. During the first two or three years, they killed these cattle like they used to kill the buffalo. The cattle were turned loose on the prairie and there were several Indians with guns, mounted on their best horses, ready to kill the cattle. Nearly every one at the Agency would turn out to see the fun, as it was very exciting sport. As soon as the cattle were turned loose,

the Indians would begin to shoot and, as the animals were wild range stock, they were easily scared and away they would go, with the Indians after them, and everyone yelling and cheering them on. Some of the cattle would be killed close by but others would run a mile or more, with three or four Indians after each animal and some of the animals that ran the farthest might receive several bullet wounds before one found a fatal spot. For the time that it lasted the killing of the cattle was more exciting than the sun dance.

But, alas and alack, the Government sent orders to stop the killing of cattle in that way as it was thought to be barbarous. A large corral had been built just south of the Agency and the cattle were driven into this corral and shot only in the head. Of course, no one turned out to see them killed in this way, as it was a very tame affair, compared with the old way.

THE STORY OF JOSEPH

A year or two after the Poncas came, the Nez Perces were located on a reservation just west of the Poncas. Their agency was built not far from the mouth of the Chikashia, on the west side of that river. There were a great many oak trees there and, instead of calling it Nez Perces Agency, it was called the Oakland Agency. Joseph was principal chief of the Nez Perces and Yellow Bull was second chief. James Rubens was their interpreter and Chapman was their agent or, rather, their sub-agent, as the Nez Perces agent was really subject to the orders of the agent of the Poncas.

The Nez Perces chiefs wore large black hats and fine Navajo blankets, which gave them a very picturesque appearance. Joseph was a very fine looking man. Yellow Bull was also a good looking man, but he was a persistent begger. This was a habit which was not characteristic of the Nez Perces, as he was the only one that I ever knew to beg.

The Nez Perces came from Oregon, where they had had two chiefs, Joseph and Lawyer. They had some of the finest land in Oregon. They seemed to think that the Wallowa Valley (which was a part of their ancient dominions) was an improved Garden of Eden. Lawyer and his band wanted to sell a part of these lands and did sell them but Joseph and his band refused to recognize the sale and, rather than do so,

they went on the war path. After a long chase, they were finally run down and captured but they did not surrender until most of the men were killed. After they surrendered, all of Joseph's band that survived (like the Kickapoos, mostly women and children) were taken to a place in the Indian Territory near Seneca, Missouri. They were there only a short time until they were taken to their new home on the Chikaskia.

The Nez Perces were the most dissatisfied people that I had ever seen. They said that the grass, the cattle and the deer were better in Oregon than on the Salt Fork. They wanted very much to go back to Oregon. Chapman had been with them since he was a small boy. He ruled them with an iron hand. One day he tied Yellow Bear up by the thumbs for getting drunk. One Nez Perce had a very ugly scar on his face and Chapman said that he had given him that scar several years before, in Oregon.

The Government built the Nez Perces a school house, some dwellings and a church. Joseph said that he liked all the buildings but the church. He said that the Nez Perces always had a religion and that they all believed alike and never quarreled over their religion. He also said that the white people did not all believe alike and that they quarreled over their religion. He did not want the Nez Perces to learn a religion that would make them quarrel.

One night, Chapman was passing a tepee where there were several Indians and he heard them planning to kill him that night. He mounted a horse and went to the Ponca Agency, by way of our camp, and told Colonel Whiteman the situation. Colonel Whiteman sent for the Nez Perce chiefs and they held a council in the east room of the commissary building—the same room in which Big Snake had been killed. The Nez Perces denied having any intention of killing Chapman. But Chapman understood the Nez Perce language as well as he did English and he said that there was no doubt but that they intended to kill him. During the council, James Rubens disputed Chapman's word and Chapman told him that if he did so again there would be a dead Indian in that room. Rubens did not dispute with him any more.

The Nez Perces were a brave people but they were afraid of Chapman. I always thought that they feared that Chap-

man might kill some of them and that they concluded that they would kill him first and then claim self defense. They never got their trouble settled satisfactorily and Chapman never went back to the Oakland Agency. He returned to Oregon shortly afterward and was a scout at the time the tribes of the Northwest were having their famous ghost dances, ten years later.

Everything comes to them that wait. The Nez Perces were finally allowed to return to their old home in Oregon. Joseph had seen the setting of many suns and he was now getting to be an old man. After seeing a goodly part of the country that the Nez Perces had owned for centuries pass into the possession of the white people, it was more than his proud spirit could bear and he died of a broken heart. And thus passed away one of the greatest Indian chiefs of modern times.

THE WICHITA CHIEF

Before the building of the railroads to Caldwell and Hunnewell, Kansas, most of the fat cattle from the Salt Fork country were driven to Coffeyville for shipment. Most of these herds encountered more or less trouble in getting through the Osage reservation. The cattlemen, of course, were trespassers and the Indians seemed to know it, therefore they always wanted a beef or two for the privilege of driving the cattle through their country. The worst place was in the hills near where old Big Heart lived.

About the year 1879, Ed Hewins, Eli Titus and Captain C. H. Stone purchased twenty-seven hundred head of fat cattle from Bill Williams and old George Washington, the Caddo chief. They took Bill Conner, an educated Osage along to help get these cattle through the Osage country. I had helped Captain Stone to get cattle through the Osage country two different times during the previous season and so, when they got near the Arkansas River (which was the boundary of the Osage reservation) he sent a man to get me to help get this herd through. After we had passed through all of the country in which we thought there were very many Indians, Bill Conner left us. The next morning, Captain Stone and Ed Hewins left the herd and that day, at noon, we camped on a little creek. There a band of Osages came to the herd. They

Titus told them that we would not give them any beeves. They then began to act in a threatening manner, as if they intended to take the beeves by force. There was a thicket of small bushes that grew on the creek and we took our knives and each cut one of these saplings. They were just of the right size to handle nicely and they looked as if they had been made purposely for war clubs. The Indians were more afraid of these clubs than they were of our guns. They knew that we would shoot only in an extreme case. They also knew that we would knock them over with these clubs on a slight provocation. We finally drove them off and proceeded on our journey. That evening we camped on Caney River, near the big mound, the sun being still two or three hours high. We had not been there long when Bill Conner came into camp, as he lived on the Caney. He stayed until after dark. He told us that, several years before, a white man had camped upon the same spot where our camp was and that he and some other Osages stole his horses while the man lay asleep in his wagon. He said that nearly every time they did mischief of this kind they heard some one talking about it afterward but that they never heard anyone say anything about these horses having been stolen.

Conner also told us about leading a mourning party; it must have been about 1871. He was then second chief of the tribe and his ambition was to be the head chief of the Osages. An Osage had died and Conner organized a mourning party. They crossed the Arkansas River and went west. They put in several days in the Pond Creek country and in the country south of the Medicine Lodge River, but they did not see anyone. They then went on out into Western Oklahoma. One night they camped in a deep draw. When they were ready to leave camp the next morning, one of the Osages went to bring in the horses. He soon came running back, saying that a strange Indian was hunting buffalo, just over the hill. The Osages slipped around and shot him. Then they saw an Indian boy close by, but this boy saw them and ran. The Osages knew that it would not do to let this boy get away, as he would spread the alarm, so three of them, who were mounted on the best horses, took after him. They chased him three or four miles but could not catch him. The three Osages had good horses but the boy had a good horse, too. The three Osages then went back to where they had killed the strange Indian

wanted two beeves as toll for allowing the herd to go through, and told the other members of their band that they had failed to catch the fugitive. There was, therefore, only one thing for the whole party to do then and that was to get out of that country as fast as they could.

The three Osages had run the boy almost into a large camp of Cheyennes and Wichitas, though they did not know it at the time they abandoned the chase. In a few hours one hundred and fifty Cheyennes and Wichitas were after them. The Indian they had killed was a Wichita chief and the one they had chased was his son. Conner said there never were Indians that ran as they did. They ran day and night and the Cheyennes and Wichitas were right after them. When they reached the Arkansas River, some of the Osages were afoot, their horses having played out. The pursuers were so close that, when the Osages had crossed the river and were yet on the sand bar, they could see the Cheyennes and Wichitas coming down the west bank into the river.

There was a small Osage camp near by and Conners' party ran to this camp. The Wichitas and Cheyennes surrounded this camp and demanded the leader of the party or fifteen hundred dollars. The first thing the Osages tried to do was to get a runner out. They knew that, if they could get a runner out, in a few hours they could have two or three hundred Osages there. A runner tried to slip through the lines several times but the allies turned him back every time. They parleyed for a long time—at one time a majority of the members of the party were in favor of giving Conner up but he said that he made the best talk of his life and that, finally, by giving up all the money there was in camp, and their horses, they satisfied the Wichitas and Cheyennes, who took their booty and departed for their camp in Western Oklahoma. The reason that they let the Osages off so easily was that they were afraid that, if they did much damage, a strong party of Osages would follow them. They could have easily killed all of the Osages in that camp but neither they nor their horses were in shape to make another long run like the one they had just finished.

Conner said that, if his party could have gotten away after killing the Wichita chief, he would have had no trouble in getting to be head chief of the Osages but that the raid had not been a success, as they had been caught and Conner lost the title of second chief and was reduced to the ranks.

THE PANTHERS

During my nine years' sojourn on the Salt Fork and the Cimarron, I never saw a live panther, but I heard them scream or yell several times and I have seen their tracks quite often. Other game, such as wild turkey, deer and antelope, was quite plentiful and every little while we would see a bob-cat. Late one evening, on the south side of the Cimarron, I saw what I supposed to be an elk and, on my way to camp, I met a Sac and Fox Indian and told him that I had seen an elk a short distance to the south. He then told me that he had seen it the day before and that he was hunting for it then. I never saw or heard of it any more. In 1874 and 1875, we saw a great many elk horns on the Salt Fork and on Pond Creek, which showed that they had been quite plentiful there at one time. In the spring of 1875, we saw large flocks of sea gulls along the sand bars of the Salt Fork. There were thousands of them. We expected to see them again the next spring but we never saw them afterward. Why they should come to visit that country just one time was something that we could never understand.

About the year 1881, there was a hunters' camp on Red Rock Creek. These hunters had a pack of hounds with which they ran down and killed two panthers.

In 1881, a company of soldiers came to our camp on the Cimarron River and said that they had orders to clear everybody out of Oklahoma. They said we were twelve miles south of the Cherokee Strip. These cattle belonged to Joe Sherburne and myself. I moved the camp about a mile from the river but did not move the cattle. I knew that the soldiers did not care for us being there—I had seen them so many times that we got very well acquainted. It was only Captain Payne and the settlers that they were after. That summer my brother John saw a panther not more than two hundred yards from our camp. The next winter, an Otoe Indian was hunting on Red Rock Creek when he saw a pile of leaves and grass stacked up. He began to scratch into it to see what was there and found that there was a dead cow covered up in the leaves and grass. As he was stooping to look at it, a panther jumped on his back and jerked his blanket off. The Otoe jumped forward, leaving the panther holding the blanket, and then the panther ran and the Otoe did not get a shot at it.

A few months after the adventure of the Otoe with the

panther, I was riding along a small creek on the north side of the Cimarron River, when I saw a stack of grass that looked like a shock of hay. I dismounted to see what I had found and, giving the stack a kick, I saw that there was a dead yearling covered up there. As soon as I saw the yearling, I thought about the Otoe and began to look around but I could not see any panther. Then I remounted my horse and followed on down the creek about a mile, looking into every thicket as I passed. I then came back to the dead yearling and passed up the creek, examining every place where I thought anything might hide, but I could not find any panther. He had scraped the ground clean around the dead yearling. I could see the marks of his claws on the ground. It looked like some one had raked up the dead grass with a garden rake. I do not think the panther had killed the yearling—it had probably died a natural death—but I have no doubt but that the panther covered it up. It was probably done to keep the buzzards away or, it may have been his way of filing a claim to it.

THE WILD HORSES

In the fall of 1880, Joe Sherburne (the trader at Ponca Agency) and myself put in a cattle camp on the Cimarron River. There was no other camp on the Cimarron at that time, as it was a rougher country and not so good for stock as the Salt Fork, so the cattlemen had not flocked to it like they did to the Salt Fork country. This camp was a mile or two below the mouth of Skeleton Creek and near a trail made by Captain Payne and his Oklahoma "boomers." A party of hunters followed our trail in and camped near us. They had two wagons and they said they were going to stay a week. The first thing they did was to kill their wagons full of turkeys. Then the weather turned warm and, by the time they were ready to go home, the turkeys had spoiled. The two wagon loads of turkeys were then thrown out on the ground. The wastefulness of it reminded me of the dead buffalo which I had seen in Western Texas, in 1877. I protested against the way they were doing. They said they were sorry it had occurred and that they did not think about it turning warm. When they got ready to leave, they killed a lot more but not as many as they had killed at first.

When we first put in this camp, we would see wild horses every few days but they were wilder than the antelope. They had two ranges—one on the Cimarron and the other on Black Bear Creek. Different outfits of cow-boys had tried to catch these wild horses in 1880 and 1881, but they failed. There was a bay stallion with them and, after the men had run them for an hour or two, this stallion would always get in behind the wild horses and run them so fast that the men could not keep in sight of them. At one time, a party of Pawnees tried to catch these wild horses. They ran them nearly all day and, late in the evening, one Pawnee who was mounted on a fresh horse, took a near cut and rode right among the wild horses. He threw his rope and caught one and held it for a while but, when the other Pawnees came up, the wild horse got so badly scared that he jerked his captor's horse down and, in the mix-up, the Pawnee's neck was broken.

In the fall of 1881, we sold the cattle to Ed Hewins. My brother John and I then decided to try to catch the wild horses. The first thing we did was to shoot the wild stallion and that was no easy job. I crawled on my hands and knees for a long time before I got a shot at him. As soon as I had fired, the horses went off like a flash, and the stallion with them. They did not run very far, however, before the stallion began to lag behind and, as he was carrying his head low, I knew he had been hit, for he always carried his head very high when disturbed. I then went to where I had left my brother John. When I got there, he had built a fire. We had six good saddle horses and a pack horse and we stayed all night on this little creek. The next morning we rode to the top of a hill from which we could see the wild horses, but the stallion was not with them. I took the first run, Brother John relieving me about ten o'clock. I took the horses again about two o'clock.

Our plans were not to run the horses if we could help it but, during my first drive that morning, I had to run most of the time in order to keep in sight of them. Our aim was to go slow and wear them out by not letting them eat or sleep. John took them the first night. The moon was shining brightly all night, so they were easily followed. The next day we moved our pack and saddle horses to Tom Hutton's camp, on Black Bear Creek. By the afternoon of the second day, the horses were getting very tired and we could ride close to

them. I relieved my brother late that evening and, between sundown and dark, Tom Hutton came to me and rode quite a distance with me. He said that he was sorry that he had to go to Caldwell the next morning, as he believed that we were going to catch the horses and he wanted to see the fun. He also told me that he had been at a certain camp on Red Rock Creek that afternoon and that the boys at that camp had told him that they were going to watch John and I the next day and that, when we had gotten the horses tired out, they were going to run in and rope a horse apiece. He said that he had told them that he did not know of a better way for them to get into a fight. They must have thought better of it afterward, for they never came.

About sunrise the next morning, I could see John on a hill, looking for me. When he came, I went to camp. Late that afternoon, we ran them to Hutton's saddle horses. The saddle horses started for the corral and we had the wild horses in the corral almost before they knew it. We had stayed with them two nights and three days. We took them to Arkansas City and sold them all but one.

POND CREEK

We first camped on Pond Creek in the fall of 1874. There was something wild and weird about this creek and this something seemed to be lacking with the other numerous creeks upon which we had camped. It looked like a deserted village. There were numerous signs of its having been a great camping place for the Indians. There were old ash heaps and the remains of old tepee frames and many burying grounds. On the bank of the creek, near where the Black Dog Trail crossed it, was a lonely grave. A chiefs' daughter had been buried there. The remains of these Indians laid in these graves for many moons undisturbed and unstartled by the yell of the fierce Pawnee, but it was not to be forever thus. With the opening of the Cherokee Strip, a stranger appeared in the garb of the white man and, today, this pale-faced stranger tills the soil unmindful of the fact that his fields contain lands that, to the Indians, were hallowed grounds. Moreover, this Pond Creek farmer never thinks with the poet who says:

“Behind the squaw’s light birch canoe
The Steamer rocks and waves
And City lots are staked for sale
Above old Indian graves.”

Pond Creek afforded good timber and water, neither of which were to be found on its near neighbor, the Salt Fork. But the two together furnished the best all-the-year cattle range that I have ever seen, before or since. And then there was the beautiful mirage! These mirages appeared at their best on a sunny morning after a rain, in the early spring time. We used to go out on the flat between Pond Creek and Salt Fork and gaze in wonderment complete at these mirages. There would appear sparkling lakes encircled with beautiful groves of timber. We could see in the distance some of Hopkins’ cattle and these cattle looked like they were seventy-five feet high. Old Buffalo bones looked like covered wagons. I have often wondered what we would have done had an Osage war party of twenty or thirty Indians had appeared in one of these mirages, showing the Indians to be a hundred feet in height and carrying guns fifty feet in length! In all probability, I would have said to Colonel Dean and Brother Tom that “it is getting late and we had better be going.”

There were several human skulls lying around in different places. These skulls seemed to be of two kinds. One kind had a seam running from the front, or forehead, to the back. The others had the same seam, only it forked and made two seams near the back of the head. We supposed that one kind was that of an Indian man and the other that of an Indian woman. They had probably been dug from the graves by the wolves. We killed a great many wolves the two winters we camped on Pond Creek and, among them, we got two fine specimens of the black wolf. These black wolves were of the same size as the gray wolves. We sometimes thought that, instead of being a distinct species, they were merely sports or phases of the gray wolf, as they seemed to differ only in color.

We always had from four to six saddle horses to each man. We soon learned that horses were cheaper than men. Three men, well mounted, will do as much riding as five men

can do with poor mounts. There were always lots of horses and few men at our camp.

In the spring we would have some great chases after young antelope. The longest chase of this kind that I was ever on was with Colonel Dean. When we first saw this antelope, we thought it too old to try to catch, but we concluded we would warm him up a little, anyhow. We ran it for a long time and we changed horses every chance we had. One would run, while the other waited on a hill with a fresh horse. I was running it about two miles south of where Colonel Dean was standing on a hill. I was crowding it very closely when it tried to hide by dropping down in the tall grass and I jumped off my horse and caught it. Colonel Dean said that he could see me jump off my horse and he knew that I had caught the antelope.

Colonel Dean was a remarkable man. He came to that country, right out of the wheat pit, at Chicago, wearing a silk hat and fine clothes. But, in a few weeks, he was transformed into a genuine westerner. He could adjust himself to different conditions as easily as any man I ever knew. He was cautious but fearless—in fact, fear and he never kept company. He would tell us boys not to provoke trouble with the Indians but this was not through fear. Colonel Dean's interest was there, as he owned about four hundred head of fine cattle, and it behooved him to preserve peace on the Salt Fork. He was a very pleasant spoken man but, when he got mad, he was a good cusser also. The first winter we stayed on Pond Creek, he had a very large cur dog and, during that winter, brother Tom and I witnessed many disagreements between the Colonel and this old dog. The dog's real name was "Spot," but the Colonel had sworn at him so much that the dog thought it was G— d—!

Colonel Dean sold out his interest on Salt Fork in 1883. He afterward received an appointment in the U. S. Department of Agriculture, with headquarters at Kansas City. When President McKinley was choosing his cabinet, in 1897, several western newspapers advocated the appointment of Colonel Dean as secretary of Agriculture. However, Colonel Dean was no politician and he made no effort in his own behalf, so the appointment went to another man.

In 1877, my oldest brother (Tom) and I took a trip into Western Texas to hunt buffalo. We were gone three months

and then came back to the Salt Fork. The following summer, Brother Tom started to Arkansas City on a visit. Before he reached the state line, he overtook a herd of cattle that was being driven into Western Kansas. Some of the men were trying to rope a steer. Tom took his rope and caught the steer at the first throw. The boss saw that Tom was an expert with the rope and began talking with him. He soon found that Tom was acquainted with the country, so he persuaded Tom to go with them to Western Kansas. Tom finally told the boss that he would go to Arkansas City first and that he would overtake them the next morning. He sent word to me that he would be back in three or four weeks. I have never heard a word from him since the day that he left to pilot this herd of cattle into Western Kansas.

About the time this herd would have reached its destination, Dull Knife and his band of Northern Cheyennes made their break for the Black Hills. On their way northward they passed through the country to which Tom was going. They killed a great many people in Western Kansas. Some people saw them and went to them in the belief that they were only a band of hunters and all of these were killed. I kept thinking for a long time that Tom would come back but it has been thirty-nine years this last summer since he left and I have long since given him up as having been killed during the Dull Knife raid. And so, of Colonel Dean and us three boys who rode the Salt Fork and Cimarron ranges together, I am the only one who is known to be living. John and Colonel Dean have passed over the Great Divide and Tom, where is he?

