

## [J. D. Shannon]

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Wm. V. Ervin, P. W., Wichita Falls, Texas.

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Interview with J. D. Shannon, Early Settler, Iowa Park, Texas(Wichita County).

“We came here from Pottsboro, Texas, over near Caddo in the Choctaw nation. But I was born originally in Illinois, and the family came to Texas about 1872.

“When we came here there wasn't anything here but ranches and a store or two. I worked on ranches/ as cowpuncher around here and in the Territory. There ain't no more real cowpunchers any more. This ridin' fence ain't nothin'. We ain't got any but Sears-Roebuck cowboys now, and what do they know about real cowpunchin' [?], like when we had eight or ten thousand head of longhorns. Ever' mornin' we'd have to top off our horses. Maybe there'd be forty or fifty horses pitchin' at once, most of 'em four-year-olds that'd been runnin' loose on the range and hadn't felt a rope since they was branded. The cowmen wouldn't let you use a [bridle?] with bits. You had to use a hackamore so the horses wouldn't get their mouth sore and cut up. Then they wouldn't graze good and would get in bad condition. Then, too, they'd run run along in chasin' cattle and sling their head from side to side which kept them from watchin' their rootin' and they was liable to fall, and maybe break a leg. Drivin' a herd on the trail you couldn't take your own horse. You had to use the cow outfit's horses so you couldn't quit the outfit on the trail.

“One time we was goin' up the trail and got into the Territory, and we had a good big bunch of horses and about ten thousand head of cattle. I was about thirteen years old. A bunch

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of Comanches and Kiowas jumped [?] the boys [?] ridin' guard on the herd and killed four of the boys. I wasn't in that as I was at the camp at the wagon. They come up on us soon after sundown, so we couldn't skyline 'em.

“We punchers maybe wouldn't get to town more than once in six months, but the folks in town would probably remember us till the next [?] six months was up.

“A bunch of/ about twelve [?] of us went [?] over to Denison once, when it was the nearest place of any size. We were all armed with sixshooters and saddle guns. We got drunk, and decided to raise a lot of excitement by [?] doin' some shootin'./ We wanted to be as showable as we could. The sheriff and all the citizens it looked like got after us and run us plumb to the Red, and we jumped in and started swimmin' across, leavin' the sheriff and his bunch lined up on the bank because they couldn't follow us into the Indian Territory. We made it all right, none of us got drowned. But one of the bunch, Key Durant; he was a fullblood Choctaw, saw a forked log comin' toward him and his horse with one fork stickin' up. He thought it was an alligator, 2 and got scared and left his horse and swam off downstream. He had a sort of a hard time gettin' across because the Red [?] has got a mean current for [?] swimmin' across to the Oklahoma side, it keeps goin' toward the Texas side. Key had been down about Bonham and saw some alligators in the swamps around there.

“I am a small man, but I got pretty small feet. I don't believe they developed as much as they ought to because I started ridin' when I was so young.”