

THE TXT & FLYING W RANCH

1885 - 1945

The ranch was located three and one half miles northeast of Felt, Oklahoma. The following information about the ranch has been furnished and verified by: Ed Selders, Lamar, Colorado; Gid Nobles, Gruver, Texas; Lee Thaxton, Boise City, Oklahoma; and Burton Ikard, Boise City, Oklahoma.

Selders, Nobles, and Thaxton knew of the ranch and were present near Felt as far back as 1905. Burton Ikard was present on and near the ranch from 1912 to 1945.

The location of the ranch buildings was near the Beaver (North Canadian) River on the south side of what has been for many years a running stream of fresh water. This water has not been so plentiful since a flood in 1914.

The first inhabitants near this fresh water were Indians. On the north side of the river and about a quarter of a mile east was an old Indian camp ground. Up until the blowing time in the 1930's, it was easy to see where campfires had burned for many years, as the ground was black in many places. Arrowheads and other Indian articles were found here.

About the time the railroad came to Clayton, New Mexico, a man by the name of East hired Pete Martinez, Sr., as foreman of the ranch to run sheep for him in the area.

The first improvement was a dugout in the side of a hill just west of the house as it is today, Later, perhaps in the first of the 1890's, a three room adobe house was constructed nearby. Then a few years later, a large two room adobe was constructed near the other house. Later they were joined together.

At first there were no barns or corrals, just sheep pens in various places across the range.

Two wells with windmills were put into operation north of the river for additional water. The first of these wells, called the Mailey Mill, was dug in the later part of the 1880's. The other well was called the North Mill.

Mr. East acquired a partner, J. D. Shufford of Amarillo, Texas. Mr. Shufford was the General Livestock Agent for the Fort Worth and Denver Railroad. They formed an organization designated as Shufford and East, and they maintained an office in Texline, Texas.

At first all of this country was open range. There were no fences except the XIT fence on the Texas border. These sheep, of course, were cared for by shepherders and fences were not necessary.

This ranch site and watering place was also used by traildrivers following a branch of the Western Trail from Texas to Wyoming and Montana. After the Texas cattle were quarantined and not allowed into Colorado or Kansas, a corridor ten miles wide was established near the Colorado-Kansas state line for the cattle to go on north. This site was sometimes called Middle Water, as it was nearly halfway between Buffalo Springs to the south and the Cimarron River and its creeks to the north.

Sometime around the turn of the century, Shufford and East went out of the sheep business and stocked the range with cattle. There were no fences when they first stocked the area with cattle. Line camps were established on the north side to keep the cattle away from the Cimarron River. On the south side of the ranch was the XIT fence.

After the cattle were put on the range, Johnny Jones was foreman until 1912. At one particular time around 1910, they shipped fifteen trainloads of cattle from Texas and unloaded them at Texline and

