

## [Charles L. Ballard]

Redfield Georgia B.

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Charles L. Ballard

Pioneer story Interview

“I was eleven years old when my parents A. J. Ballard and Katherine Redding Ballard and my brothers and sisters and I left Fort Griffin, Texas during the winter of 1878 and came to New Mexico to live.

“While on the trip we saw and did many things that have been lasting memories.

“Lots of water has run under the bridge since that time, and I have seen history made, in several places in New Mexico.

“Father had hunted buffalo on the plains as far west as the Pecos River in 1875-76. He liked the Lower Pecos Valley country and decided to return to live.

Traveled in Covered Wagons.

“We traveled in covered wagons and it wasn't an easy journey across the plains.

“The country was different from that around Fort Griffin so there was plenty to keep us interested every day.

Saw Herds Of Buffalo.

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'While we did not see stampeding herds of thousands of buffalo, that we heard would run over campers on the plains we did see hundreds, but they caused no trouble.

"We expected Indian attacks every day and night, especially around watering places, but we were not molested by Indians either.

"I remember we had one especially hard drive - all one day without water. Along about dark we saw what we thought was an Indian 2 camp-fire. Father said for us to slip up and see what kind of people were camped there. You may be sure we went very quietly and were happy to find a friendly Mexican camp and a spring of fine water. It was Portales Spring.

Located In Fort Sumner.

"From Portales Spring we went to Fort Sumner and remained, though when we left Fort Griffin we had not decided to locate in that place. There was no school at Fort Sumner so I boarded in Anton Ohio and went to school.

Moved To Lincoln.

"After our home was demolished in Fort Sumner, we moved to Lincoln.

"The destruction of several of the houses built around a plaza or patio in Fort Sumner was caused by an explosion from a drunk shooting into a keg of gunpowder, in a store.

"In Lincoln we found ourselves in the excitement of feuds and Billy the Kid's escapades.

Raced With Billy the Kid.

"I remember good times I had with Billy the Kid. He was not an outlaw in manners - was quiet, but good company always doing something interesting. That was why he had so

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many friends. We often raced horses together. He was not very large - weighed a hundred and twenty five or thirty pounds. He was a fine rider.

“Billy was credited with more killings than he ever did. However, there were plenty that could be counted against him. It was reported he was the one who killed Chapman, when Chapman refused 3 to dance when ordered, but Billy had nothing at all to do with that shooting.

Moved To East Second Street-Roswell.

“We moved to Roswell in 1881, or three miles out on East Second Street.

“I went to school to Judge Asbury C. Rogers who was the first person to teach school in or near Roswell. He taught in the first school house built in 1881 - a one room adobe with a dirt roof - which was built on the southwest corner of school section thirty-six, three miles out on East Second Street.

Drove Eight Yoke Oxen.

“I helped make the pioneer Irrigation ditch, called the “Ballard Cunningham Ditch” and used eight yoke of oxen to the plow and scraper in the work.

Rough Rider - Spanish American War 1898.

“governor Otero was Territorial Governor when war was commenced against Spain. He wired me and asked if I would accept a regiment. I did accept and took about thirty men from around Roswell to Santa Fe. From there we went to San Antonio and Teddy Roosevelt who had first conceived of the idea of the Rough Riders - met us there. There was a squadron from Oklahoma, Arizona and our state New Mexico.

“At the request of Roosevelt, Dr. Leonard [Wood?]-physician of the Secretary of War, Russell Alexander Alger-was made Colonel in command of the Rough Riders. Theodore

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Roosevelt resigned his place as assistant Secretary of the Navy and was made Lieut. Colonel.

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“On the 29th of May 1898 we left San Antonio, Texas for Tampa, Florida where we embarked for Cuba.

“Colonel Roosevelt after seeing that his men had been made as comfortable as possible for the journey, waited for the last and poorest train. He never spared himself at all. He gave his sleeping car [berth?] to a sick soldier. It has been truthfully said that rank, money, and occupation meant little to him. Cowboys, ambassadors, prize fighters and clergymen were afterwards entertained and sat together as guests of the Roosevelt family at the White House table.

“When hostilities were suspended and we were mustered out of service at [Hontauk?] Point, Long Island, August 12, 1898, Colonel Roosevelt invited five of us to go to his home at Oyster Bay for a visit. The five were John C. Greenway - whose wife Isabelle Greenway was Congresswoman from Arizona for two terms-David [V.?] Goodrich-who is now chairman of the board of Goodrich Rubber Company - Hal [Sayre?], Robert Ferguson, and I - Charles L. Ballard.

“While I can't say we were considered heroes as Dewey and Hobson were, we were royally entertained, by the Roosevelts and others, with dances, fishing, parties, and dinners.

Guard of Honor Theodore Roosevelt

Inauguration

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“Forty of us Rough Riders formed the Guard Of Honor from the White House to the Capitol Building when Teddy Roosevelt was inaugurated. There are very few left of those men I don't know of any here in Roswell.

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Interview given By Charles L. Ballard,

Artesis, New Mexico.