

[Robt. Lee Fuller]

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Phipps, Woody

Rangelore

Tarrant Co., Dist, #7 [77?]

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Robt. Lee (Tex) Fuller, 70, was born in Rockwall, Tex. His parents moved to the Morris Ranch in Gillespie co., which was owned by N.Y. financiers who had foreclosed on the Morris Ranch and sold the stock without restocking, and Tex's grandparents were nesters on the place. After leaving Tex with his grandparents, his parents went West, where they disappeared as many of the old settlers did. In 1881, his grandparents moved to Llano co., on Spring-Creek, where they owned a few head of cattle and squatted on the land. When Tex was 20, he was employed on a trail drive to Fort Cobb, Okla. From there, he drifted [?] to N. Dakota, where he entered another business. After years of drifting, he went to Ft. Worth, Texas, and now resides near the Hub Furniture Factory. His story:

“Yes suh, I reckon as how I know a little about wet nursin' critters an' all, but my recollection has nigh on to got away from me. I'll try to give you a picture of the Old West as it was when I was a punk kid. [The?] thing about it is, that if I could recall it all, you'd be able to write a book that would outshine any I ever read when it comes to action because I've been in the thick of it without ever wanting to be there. It just nacherly happened all around me.

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“My first [recollection?] is when I was a kid, living with my grandparents on the Old Morris Ranch in Gillespie county. 'Twarnt no critters thar, because the people that had it, had got the place on a foreclosure from the Morris's, sold what beef ther was, and never run any mo' while we all was livin' thar. My grandpa used to sit around and tell me about my folks, and he said that I was born in Rockwall, Texas, on September the 12th, 1867. He said that as soon as my mother and me were able to travel, that my dad came to the Morris Ranch, where my grandpa was a nester, livin' neah a watah hole whar he could git watah fo' his use. C12- 2/11/41-Texas- 2 Grandpa said that my folks never stayed but a week, then lit out for some place in the west, and as soon as they could git set right well, they was to send for me. Well that was the last anybody ever seed or heard of them.

“Grandpa's place thar on the Morris place, was a small stock farm because he run a few head of critters and [farmed?] on a small scale. On account of nobody pestering' them, the nesters had a mighty good time thar, and about 10 or 12 families come thar to work a place. They all had hosses, and a few head of critters, so I got a mighty good chance to learn to ride a hoss pretty soon. Reckon as how I could ride as good as the next one, when I wasn't but about six yeahs old. When I was eight, I was ridin' herd on all the critters around thar.

“Grandpa made up his mind to move away from thar when I was about 14, because they was so many nesters a-comin' in that they wasn't no land to range on. I reckon it was in the Spring of '81, when we got to Spring Crick, in [Blano?] county.

“When grandpa decided to throw up thar, we all went to work, an' made clearin' to put a log house, then built a two room outfit with a small lean-to that was used as the kitchen. that was shore a good place to light because thar was so much game and all around thar. They was, so many wild turkeys that when a flock came by, you couldn't see the ground for a long ways. Grandpa used to stand in the door at times, and shoot deer for our meat. The first yeah on that place, we found about 80-90 unbranded critters just grazing around, didn't [b'long?] to nobody. Well, to make a [long?] story short, it didn't take us but a short

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3 time to slap the Triple T brand on them critters. They wasn't no big [ranch?] closet to us, so we was safe. In fact, that was the way all the ranchers carried on in them days. [Any?] unbranded maverick runnin' around, would get it'self branded as soon as a cow poke found it. The Triple T was a T burnt on the shoulder, rib, and hip.

“We wasn't on Spring Crick but a short time 'til several other squatters showed up, and threwed themselves up a place. They all had a few critters they brought with them, and we all went together on a roundup.

Since I worked the critters, my granddad allowed me a head or so for myself every year, and I got me a herd together that way. My brand was the 'Triangle [HW?]. Every unbranded maverick I found after that, I slapped my own brand on him. I kept that up 'til I was about 30 years old, when I had right at 500 head in my own iron. Of course, I spent my money pretty fast in them days, as a youngun will, and didn't get ahead like I would have if I'd have used my noggin and saved.

“That was a mighty wild country between '81 and '85. Every 10 days or two weeks, somebody was shot down. While I can't recall the date, I can call the turn on a gun fight that was typical of the Old West I had just rode into town to go on a bender at Blanco. As I got down off my nag, and flipped the reigns over tho hitching post, I noticed a man standing just outside the door of the saloon. He seemed to be a-staring at a wagon, and just as I looked at the wagon, another fellow stepped in just sich a way that we could see the back of his neck and his head. The man by me hollered out, 'I'll break your neck!' 4 “Next thing I knew, the man that hollered had lifted a Winchester rifle that he'd had half hid behind him, and fired at the other. [The?] man behind the wagon fell like he'd been pole-axed. Reason he fell like that was because the shot struck him in back of the neck, and had the same effect as if he'd been hit with a pole. About that times a shot from some other direction struck the man that fired, and he fell dead. As he was falling, a cow puncher stepped out of the saloon, and I says, 'Guess I'd better be a-gittin' away-from heah'.

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“He said, 'Yeow, business is gonna be pickin' up around heah mighty soon.' I hurriedly walked [towards?] the door of the saloon, and as I was passing in, a bullet struck the door facing. Therewas a crowd in the saloon, and all of them seemed to be a-paying no attention to the fuss outside. The drift of most of the talk was on cattle prices and trail drives. I stayed inside and done as the rest of them. While we was in thar, I reckon they was 125 shots passed outside. When it was all over, we all come out, and a fellow helped my pick up one of the men that was down, and toted him into the blacksmith shop, then told the Doc.

“If you'll look up your history, you'll find out right when that happened. It was the Coggins and Carter fight. A couple of outfits on the Little Llano River that had fell out with each other. You know, they'd all fight in them days. Kids fought just like men. [?] couple of nine year old kids was sent out by their school teacher to get a bucket of water on a hot day in '82, and they fell to squabbling over who was to tote the bucket. Result was, that they got into a fight. The next day, one of the kids brought a knife, and the other had a rifle. [?] 5 Smith and [Wesson?] rifle. The kid with the knife made a dive at the other, and the other shot him in the hip with the rifle.

“Another thing about those days was that the 'Star Toters' had more respect for a man. They never give you the lip you can expect any minute from these jelly beans we call officers in this day and time. The Constables and Sheriffs had to be real men in those days. because they had to bring in men who were real men them selves. Sometimes the sheriff and his deputies would have an argument. [Well?], they never believed in n lot of lip. They just stepped out on the side walk and settled it right then.

“After the crash broke me in '96, I took to booming over the country. I worked cattle sometimes, and whatever else I found to do where I was. I don't recall any of the places I went to, or worked for I didn't work so awful much anywhere.

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“One of the [things?] I did after I left Llano, was to go to Wildrose, North Dakota. That was a rough, frontier town, that dealt with range hands and so on. I lit there in the winter time when it was so-o cold. The day I got in, some cow hands had brought in some nesters that had froze [?] in their cabin. They'd burnt their wood, then burnt their furniture. The cow punchers found them froze stiff, and still in bed. [Well?], they just brought these nesters in just as is. They was still stiff as a board when they got to Wildrose, so they took the stiffs to the saloon. The saloon keeper sent a bar sweep to the proper authorities, and had the cow punchers lean the [stiffs?] up against the wall. Do you know?, them stiffs leaned that way for two days, and the gamblers sat around, making bets on when they'd cave. They never did cave 'til the right people got there to handle it. 1 [Folkstuff - Rangelore?]

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FEC Robt. Fuller

Robt. Lee (Tex.) Fuller, 70, residing at Hub Furniture Co. plant at Ft. Worth, barn at Rockwell, Tex. Was left with his grandparents who nested on the Morris Ranch in Gillespie Co. while a young infant. In 1881 they moved to Llano Co. on Spring Creek with a few cattle and squatted. At 20 Tex worked on a trail drive to Ft. Cobb, Okla. from where he went to N.D. and after years of drifting he came to Ft. [Worth?].

“I reckon I know a little about wet nursin' critters an' all but my recollection has nigh on to got away from me. I'll try to give you a picture of the Old West as it was when I was a punk kid. I first remember living with my grandparents on the Old Morris Ranch in Gillespie Co. 'Twarnt no critters thar because the people that had it had got the place on foreclosure

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“Grandpa's place thar was a small stock farm because he run a few head of critters and farmed on a small scale. On account of nobody pestering them the nesters had a mighty good time thar and about 10 or 12 families come thar to work a place. They all had hosses and a few head of critters so I got a mighty good chance to learn to ride pretty soon. Reckon as how I could ride as good as the next one when I wasn't but six yeahs old. When I was eight I was ridin' herd on all the critters around thar. C12 - 2/11/41- Texas 2
“Grandpa made up his mind to move away form thar when I was 'bout 14 because they was so many nesters comin' in that they wasn't no land to range on. I reckon it was in the Spring of '81 when we got to Spring Creek in Llano Co. When Grandpa decided to throw up thar we all went to work an' made a clearin' to put up a log house and built a two room outfit with a small leanto that was used as a kitchen. That was shore a good place to light because thar was so much game around thar. They was so many wild turkeys that when a flock came by you couldn't see the ground for a long ways. Grandpa used to stand in the door at times and shoot deer for our meat. The first yeah on that place we found about 80 or [90?] unbranded critters just grazing around that didn't belong to nobody. It didn't take us long to slap the Triple T brand on them, critters. They wasn't no big ranch close to us so we was safe. In fact that was the way all the ranchers carried on in [them?] days. Any unbranded maverick runnin' would git it'self branded as soon as a cow poke found it. The Triple T was a T brant on the shoulder, rib, and hip.

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went together on a roundup. Since I worked the critters granddad allowed me a head or so for [myself?] every year and I got me a herd together that way. My brand was the Triangle [HW?]. Every unbranded maverick I found after that I slapped my own brand on him. I kept that up 'till I was 30 when I had at 500 head in my own iron. I spent my money pretty fast in them days as a youngun will and I didn't get ahead like I would have if I'd used my noggin an saved.

“That was a mighty wild country between '81 and ['88?]. Every 10 days or 2 weeks somebody was shot down. While I can't recall the date I [can?] call the turn on a gun fight that was typical of the West. 3 I had just rode into town to go on a bender at Llano. As I got down offmy nag and [flipped?] the reins over the hitching post I noticed a man standing just outside the door of the saloon. He seemed to be staring at a wagon and just as I looked at the wagon another fellow stepped in just sich a way that we could see the back of his neck and his head. The man by me hollered out, 'I'll break your neck.' Next thing I know he had lifted a Winchester rifle that he'd had half hid behind him and fired at the other. The man behind the wagon fell like he'd been pole-axed, the shot struck him in back of the neck. About that time a shot from some other direction struck the man that [fired?] [and?] he fell dead. As be was falling a cow puncher stepped out of the saloon and I says, 'Guess I'd better be gittin' away from heah.'

“He said, 'Yah business is gonna be pickin' up around heah mighty soon.' I hurriedly walked towards the door of the saloon and as I was passing in a bullet struck the door facing. Thar was a crowd in the saloon and all of them seemed to paying no attention to the fuss outside. The talk was on cattle prices and trail drives. I stayed inside and done as the rest of them. While we was in thar there was over a hundred shots outside. When it was over we came out and a fellow helped me pick up one of the man that was down and tote him to the blacksmith shop than told the Doc.

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nine year old kids was sent out by their school teacher to get a bucket of water on a hot day in '89?', and they fell to squabbling over who was to tote the bucket, they got into a fight. The next day, one of the kids brought a knife and the other had a rifle, a Smith and [Wesson?] rifle. The kid with the knife made a dive at the other and the other shot him in the hip with the rifle. 4 "Another thing about those days was that the "Star Toters' had more respect for a man. They never gave you the lip you can expect any minute [from?] these jelly beans we call officers in this day. The Constables and Sheriffs had to be real men in those days, because they had to bring in real men. Sometime the Sheriff and his deputies would have an argument. They never believed in a lot of lip, they just stepped outside and settled it right [then?].

"One of the things I did after I left Llanowas to go to Wildrose, N. D. on a trail drive Ft. Cobb, Okla., with Utah [?] who was a government beef contractor for several Indians reservation. That was a rough, frontier town that dealt with range hands. I lit there in the winter time when it was sooo cold. The day I got in some cow hands had brought in some nesters that had froze up in their cabin. They'd found them froze stiff, and still in bed. Well, they just brought these nesters in just as is. They was still stiff as a board when they got to Wildrose so they took the stiffs to the saloon. The keeper sent a bar sweep to the proper authorities and had the cowpunchers lean the stiffs up against the wall, where they stayed two days and the gamblers made bets on when they'd cave. They never did cave 'till the right people got there to handle it.

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