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Interview no. 21

Eve Ball

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UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

INTERVIEWEE: Eve Ball
INTERVIEWER: Leon C. Metz
PROJECT: _____
DATE OF INTERVIEW: May 14, 1969
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BIOGRAPHICAL SYNOPSIS OF INTERVIEWEE:

Southwest author.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW:

Information on the early settlement of New Mexico, including the Cree Ranch, Brandon Kerby, Pat Garrett; also information on Asa, nephew of Geronimo, and on Apaches.

21 pages.

Mrs. Eve Ball interviewed by Leon C. Metz and S.H.Newman on May 14, 1969.

M: Mrs. Ball, I ran into some difficulty trying to find out about the Angus Ranch, The VV, Captain Kerby and those people.

B: The Angus VV was owned by the Crees, of Scotland. This Scot family had made its fortune by making scotch whiskey and mackintoshes; raincoats, we call them. This was a time when the Scots and English were imbued with the idea that they could come to America and make a fortune in cattle. The Adairs were another family who did that.

M: Where were the Crees from in Scotland?

B: Glasgow; they might have had country homes elsewhere but they were from Glasgow. They owned the land at the top of the Capitans, up towards Stanton.

M: How much land did this encompass?

B: At least 200 sections; that wasn't unusual in those days.

M: Do you know how they got the land?

B: Well, they just bought the waterhole and used the rest of the land.

That's the way they all did. What I mean is, if you owned the waterhole, you could keep the cattle out and station a guard at the waterhole and not let any cattle come in but yours to drink. The land wasn't anything if you didn't have water. A cow won't travel more than five to seven miles for water. Did you know that they invented babysitting? If there is a group of about twenty-five and thirty cows, they'll leave one of the old cows with the calves and they'll go off and get a drink. I don't know the year. I knew a man who was their foreman, Jimmy Woodward. He is

dead now, of course. When I knew him, he lived at Lovington. The cattle were bred in this country. When they were about a year old, they were driven north to pasture. They were fed there; they went up in the spring and marketed in the fall.

M: When you say north, where was north?

B: Clear into Canada, some of them, or Montana. The Crees had a huge ranch up at Clarenton, Texas, and they sent Jimmy up there to be the foreman. The family was very wealthy and the son married a titled lady. Here, they called her Lady Margaret Cree. This Captain Kerby posed as being the owner but he was the foreman for a while. But he was really just an adventurer.

M: Do you know anything about this Captain Kerby, where he was from?

B: Almost nothing, but the Crees wanted their daughter to marry him, But she refused to marry him. He was a phoney. I don't like that word but it's the only one I can think of to describe him. He made everyone around here believe he owned that ranch but he didn't; the Crees financed it. They took the attitude towards their cowboys that they were Scotch peasants. Well, you can't treat cowboys that way. Old Sam Jones told me one time that, "I wouldn't go so far as to say we don't look down on nobody but we sure as hell don't look up to nobody." Well, that's just about the truth about it. They resented that terribly. They had a bunkhouse for the cowboys and a big comfortable adobe house for the family. They bought thousands of cattle. A good many of them were Mexican cattle; they had been improved by cross-breeding them with the bulls here.

M: What year was all this going on?

B: I'd say about 1888 or 1889. They had surprisingly few calves to brand in relation to the mother cows they had. So they decided that someone was stealing the calves. They didn't know anything about the cattle business and it was very easy to deceive them since they didn't know anything. But they assumed since they were educated and wealthy, that the cowboys were ignorant and knew nothing. They brought 150 Aberdeen Angus bulls from Scotland and they are black, of course. Then they would have no difficulty in finding where the calves were going, because there were no black cattle in the country. They brought them to Corpus Christi and shipped them to San Antonio, New Mexico by train. Then they drove them overland to the ranch. Well, these old Mexican cattle could travel fifteen or sixteen miles a day; they're so long-legged and skinny. But these new cattle had probably never walked over a quarter of a mile in their lives; it was a job to get them to the ranch. They lost a lot of them on the way; it was dry and they just couldn't walk. Then when they got the first calf crop, they didn't have any trouble determining whose they were. They didn't have these black Angus on the ranch six weeks until they didn't have a bull in the bunch. The cowboys knew how to take care of that.

M: Did they steal them.

B: No, they castrated them.

M: To keep them from breeding this Angus stock?

B: Of course!

M: Why would they do that?

B: Because they were stealing them, their own cowboys. Wingfield was their

foreman; this was Ike's brother. He and every other cowboy on the place was suspected of doing it. Eloise Sutherland, who lives here now, and Ted Sutherland, his father was Jim Sutherland of the Diamond A ranch, down towards Roswell. It is right off the reservation and it ran all the way to Pecos in those days. It's a much smaller ranch now.

M: Were these the Sutherlands from Las Cruces?

B: No, there were Sutherlands in La Luz, too, but they weren't related. Jim Sutherland was wonderful cowman. Someone ought to write a book about him. He would make a beautiful biography. He was a superb cowman and a gentleman in every sense of the word. In those days pneumonia was almost a fatal illness always here in this altitude. There was no penicillin and Jim Sutherland said that there were only two things he was afraid of; one was pneumonia and the other was Lil Casey.

M: Coming back to Brandon Kerby, do you recall what he looked like?

B: Well, he was tall, nice looking and very well dressed, a little too well dressed to suit the people of this country. They had the idea if a cowboy was well dressed, he wasn't a very efficient cowboy. He was more of a show-off. Brandon Kerby wasn't a cowboy at all.

M: Do you know what ever became of him?

B: No, I don't know. They called him Captain Kerby, but I don't know if he was a captain or not. If a man had enough cattle in those days, he was a captain. If he had more, he was a major and even still more, he was a colonel. It had nothing to do with the military.

M: He was actually foreman of the Cree Ranch but not the owner and he never married the Cree girl? Did he marry anyone that you know of?

B: No, he could have married after he left here. People didn't write letters much in those days or keep in touch with each other. There was a Cree son who lived in Albuquerque. Eloise Sutherland might be able to give you more information. The Crees really went broke. They left the ranch and John W. Poe went into the ranch after the Crees left and then I think Pat Garrett and his cousin, Gray, too. Ted and Eloise Sutherland delivered a herd of cattle to the Cree headquarters after the Crees were gone. They got in there late that night, watered the cattle and turned them out to pasture and spent the night in the Cree house. There was no one there. There were trunks of papers left in the house. She said she never wanted to do anything worse than go through those papers. They had postmarks from Scotland or so on addressed to the Crees.

M: Do you know what happened to those papers?

B: I suppose they were burned. Like the Grattans we met, their father kept big boxes of paper of all the records of that trading post and the income that the Apaches made. They had cattle and horses and farmed a little, but they didn't like farming. Anyway, all those records were destroyed. They didn't realize the value.

M: Did they, the Grattans, ever mention owning a motel or auto-camp up on the other side of El Paso, close to the country club?

B: No, but the oldest brother, Joe, has rental property in El Paso; that might be him. He lived in Maryland for many years. After their father's Indian wife died, he went back to Mount Vernon, Alabama. Their mother was a Cannon; she lived there. After he quit being an interpreter, these boys were born there.

M: Do you recall the circumstances that Garrett went to work for Kerby?
The accounts that I've read give the impression that Garrett was foreman for Kerby.

B: There might have been a contract because that sounds like something he would do. I know about Brandon Kerby because I knew the Woodwards so very well. Mrs. Woodward was a McKeon, Eva McKeon. They lived at Angus which is now under the water of the lake, Bonita Lake. The little village of Angus is now under the lake. They moved all the houses that could be moved but some were adobe and there's no moving them. When Eva and Jimmy were married, Mr. Cree was going up to Clarendon by train. So after the wedding, Mr. Cree and the new Mrs. Woodward rode the train and Jimmy had to drive the herd through. When they got up there, there was a disputed waterhole. There was no surveying at that time and a neighboring ranch claimed the waterhole and Mr. Cree thought he had bought it. So they had to patrol the waterhole. She rode with him and carried a Winchester all the time.

M: Do you know what caused the falling out between Poe and Garrett?

B: I know one cause; Garrett borrowed money from Poe and gave a note for it and Poe was never able to collect any of that money. No one was ever able to collect money from Garrett. That was one cause. And then Edith Coe Rigsby told me this in strictest confidence, Frank Coe's daughter. There were six daughters, only two are living now, Winnie Hunt in Oklahoma City and Edith in Alamogordo, who is a very good friend of mine. When Frank Coe first bought a car, he didn't know how to drive; the daughters did learn and when they went anywhere they drove him.

Mrs. Coe wouldn't allow the Lincoln County War or Billy the Kid to be mentioned in the house; they never discussed it in the home. Whatever Frank Coe had done in his other life, he was very considerate of his wife. But when he would go out with his daughters he would point out, "This place is where we hanged a Negro," or so on. Well, Edith drove her father down to Roswell after he went into bank. Mr. Coe was pretty affluent. When he went into the bank, Mr. Poe saw him come into the bank and sent a clerk to invite him into this office. Edith went in with him and Frank got to asking what really happened at Fort Sumner the night that the Kid was killed. And Edith said her father never had the slightest doubt but that the Kid was killed. You'll hear stories all over the country of how Frank and George Coe would make a trip to Arizona or Montana or somewhere to see some man who claimed to be Billy the Kid. Edith said that was positively untrue. Both her father and George, his cousin, believed that Billy was killed. They got to talking to Poe about this and Poe had written this little paper, THE DEATH OF BILLY THE KID, and he had substantiated Pat Garrett's story. But he told Frank Coe that day that they had all lied to protect the reputation of a woman, and positively it was not Paulita Maxwell.

M: What would that have to do with it, lying to protect a woman?

B: Well, no one went into details but Billy was evidently there visiting this woman. She was a relative of the Maxwells but it was not Paulita Maxwell, Pedro's sister.

M: It wasn't Deluvina, was it?

B: No, Deluvina was a Navajo servant.

M: She had been a former slave, I think.

B: She had been a slave; you know the Navajos and the Apaches would capture Mexicans, especially, and sell them into slavery to wealthy Mexican families or they'd buy Apache and Navajo slaves. They both traded back and forth and there were white people who were slaves.

M: Lucian Maxwell had a lot of slaves, didn't he?

B: Yes, they all had slaves. There was as much slavery here as there was in the south with the Negroes. This story had always been that J.W. Poe had never seen the Kid and wouldn't recognize him. He said he did recognize him and scared to death. And of course the other man, McKinney recognized him because he had known him a long time. He said Pat Garrett deliberately shot him down and it was nothing but cold-blooded murder.

M: Well, Garrett does seem like the kind of man who could shoot a man in cold blood.

B: Well, I'll tell you, for the last twenty-five years, I've interviewed the old people around this country but I never found one who could say a good word for Pat Garrett. Now, I'll tell you one who did. Lily Casey did, now she hated the Kid with a vengeance. She thought Bob Olinger was darn near perfect.

M: Bob Olinger wore a halo?

B: Well, she was going to marry him and she was just seventeen at the time. Her father had been killed on the streets of Lincoln and that was the famous double hanging she describes in detail in the book. Mrs. Casey was an invalid, a cripple, and Lily's two older brothers she described as puny, Will and Ad. Ad was paralyzed as a child of about three years old,

he crawled into the corral where they were milking and a cow had hooked him. They thought for three days that he wouldn't live. He did recover but his left side as almost helpless. Now, he could mount a horse but he couldn't rope and get off and tie and do things like that. He could ride with the cattle but he couldn't do much active work. So, Lily was very proficient at that. Will wasn't too healthy either. When she was about thirteen, she became the defender of the family. And boy, she was thorough and efficient at it, too. Her mother was a victim of people who would have cheated her out of all her land. They had laid claim to all that Feliz country, on the right of discovery. Of course, the land laws were very indifferent in those times. Did you know that there were over five thousand laws passed to enable settlers to obtain land without paying for it? What people recognized in those days, if a man settled at a place, he didn't have to build a house, if he had a horse and a bedroll all he had to do was camp at a certain spot and sort of make it his headquarters and people would respect it as his. Of course, it was always at a source of water. As Sam Jones said, "Nobody thought much of the land, it was all over outdoors; what they wanted was water." They called it 'squatters rights', if he stayed there as long as three months, even if he just showed up one or two times a month and spent the night there, it was his land and ordinarily, it was respected. McSween was the boy who broke the rules; well, he didn't break the rules but he told the people in that country that there were laws concerning those things. Now, when Casey had bought this place, he had been a scout of Fort Stanton. He had been looking over the land in this country and when his period of

enlistment of three years was up, he decided to buy the mill down on the Hondo, four and a half miles east of what we call Hondo now. And there was a grist mill there, crude but effective, and two adobe rooms, big rooms with a fireplace in each room. His family was at Manard, Texas. He decided to buy it and he did. The man who sold it to him was named Klenne and all he could give him was a quit claim deed which meant that he released any claim that he had on it. It hadn't been surveyed and there was no way in the world to tell where the boundaries were; they weren't specified. He decided to bring his family from Manard, which was a 800 mile trip, back there to the Hondo. There was not another family of Anglos anywhere around. So he bought wagons and eight yoke of oxen and he hired a Mexican boy who couldn't speak any English and he couldn't speak Spanish. He didn't want to go back to Texas without any commodities, he wanted to take something saleable. They went to the salt flats, you know how they did that? They would drive the wagon into shallow water where the salt would settle in the bottom and shovel the water into the wagon and the water would drip out and then the salt would dry. So he went to Texas with this salt and he brought his family back to the Hondo. And when Lily was thirteen, her father was killed and this was the famous double hanging. So she grew up fighting and working like a man and capable and shrewd. Old Ash Upson was the tutor; they had him to stay there and he ran the ranch commissary, too. That was another reason Murphy and Dolan didn't like him, because it was competition.

M: Didn't like who?

B: Robert Casey, they had him killed. They hired a man to kill him, Wilson.

Murphy was to pay him \$500 to do it and guaranteed him he wouldn't be punished.

M: What was Wilson's first name?

B: William, I believe, he had worked for Casey. Now this is the story: I'm not saying it's true or not because it can't be proven. Robert Casey had many friends and he had enemies, everybody did. There was no in-between measure in those days. You were one thing or the other. Ranchers paid their men when they sold their cattle, which in some cases was only once a year. Now Casey had a little income from the mill for that reason. Everybody took their corn down there to be ground. They didn't pay him in money; they paid him with a percentage of the meal. He could sell this to the fort. So he had a little money. Very few people had cash; it was mostly barter all together. So when they sold their hay crop or their cattle, they would pay their men and it might be once a year. These men would come in with their horses and a bedroll and sometimes a packhorse, usually not. And they would get their food and they would work for \$30 a month, sometimes \$25. And if they needed a pair of boots or a saddle, their employer would charge it. And there was no one to buy it from except Murphy and Dolan--that is until Casey put in a little commissary. People sometimes sold their crops to Murphy and Dolan and they could pay what they pleased and charge what they pleased. Then when Casey was paid off, he'd pay his men and I doubt that they kept any accounts. Well, the claim was that this Wilson had worked out there as a cowboy for five months and when he was paid off, he only had eight dollars coming, and of course he questioned that but he didn't say anything, but they knew he wouldn't

like that. They got up at 3:00 in the morning and worked until 10:00 or 11:00 at night and they always ate after dark. And if there were chores to do around the ranch, like milking cows, it was always done by lantern. They spent every bit of daylight out in the fields or with the cattle. He paid him in cash and got a receipt, he was the only one who did that except John Chisum. Then the man left after having his supper and having been paid and he said that Lily and one of the boys had roped him and took the money from him. That was his story. So he went to Lincoln and hung around for a few days. A lot of people would come from Pecos in wagons and buy from Casey. It would save them twenty miles. Even if they had to go to Fort Stanton on business, it would save having to haul their supplies that twenty miles to buy from Casey and he did sell a little bit cheaper. That helped cause the hard feelings between Murphy and Casey. Casey had very good friends at Fort Stanton and even went as scout with the cavalry after he left Fort Stanton, after he got his discharge. So there was this situation left, and Lil was a much better man than either one of her brothers. But she fell in love with Bob Olinger and he was a swashbuckling adventurer and he wore beaded buckskin clothes and let his hair grow long even after other men had ceased doing it. He called himself 'Pecos Bob' and swaggered. He ingratiated himself with Mrs. Casey and Lil. And by that time, Jimmy Dolan had taken possession of their land up on the Feliz. They didn't have a deed, of course, but no one had deeds. McSween had given these adventurers the idea that if they beat the rightful owners to the land office and filed on it, it was their land. You can see the trouble that

could be caused. Of all the criticism that was made against Lil Casey, I never heard anything to question her chastity. And if anything had been said, I would have heard because some of these old gals would have told me. You can trust the neighbors for that.

M: Well, Bob Olinger was just a terrible person, wasn't he?

B: You are so right; but you tell a seventeen year old girl that about a man ten years older than she is and who she loves...

M: How did this effect her feelings about Pat Garrett?

B: Well, she hated Billy the Kid because he killed Olinger. He had gone to Mrs. Casey a week before he was killed and made a contract with her to take over the management of all her property... the mill, the sections where they lived, and the Feliz land, etc....and to pay her \$6,000 a year. Now, that land wouldn't produce that in ten years. But he was killed a week after that and there's no telling what he would have done.

M: Why is Billy the Kid so popular around here? I mean people act like he was great and you shouldn't say anything about him.

B: Let me tell something, A.B. Fall, Oliver Lee, and the Kid are good men in the eyes of the people and you can't say anything against them.

M: What else can you tell us about the Coe family?

B: Regardless of what has been said about the Coe men, the women were above suspicion. I haven't a friend who I am prouder of than my friendship with Edith Coe Rigsby. Frank Coe was shrewd and Mrs. Coe was a very superior woman, she was a Culley. Do you know Jim? You ought to know him, he is the nephew of Frank Coe, his aunt married Frank Coe. His father, Jim Culley, moved out here because his sister married Frank Coe.

So, who's the man who wrote THE SAGA?

M: Burns.

B: Yes, Noble Burns. He came to this country with the purpose of writing up the Lincoln County War. Well, I don't know if he came and ask for Frank Coe first, but nevertheless Frank Coe met him, learned his purpose for being here and invited him to the ranch and kept him there for four months. Frank took him around to interview people and he took him to see poeple who he wanted him to meet. The Coes got their story before the public and they were smart enough to know that the first version would be the accepted one. And it is, you take nine-tenths of the people who aren't students of the situation and THE SAGA... is it, don't you think that's true?

M: Yes, it is. I've had a hundred people tell me when I've asked about Pat Garrett, "Well, haven't you read THE SAGA OF BILLY THE KID?" And I would say, "Yes, I have read it." "Well," they reply, "that's got everything you've got to know."

B: That's what they think, too, and you can't tell them any different. So, it's a legend and it grew up. Now the old Jones boys liked Billy and when he was down on the Pecos, he'd stay at Seven Rivers at their home just like one of the family. And when he was up here, he stayed mostly with George Coe. After they hanged that negro, they went out there and arrested them. McSween put them wise to one thing-- that whatever they did, not to kill a soldier because then they would be in bad with the federal government. And they mean business. It didn't matter about all the other people that they killed, but this was a negro soldier. And he

had stolen a horse. Frank and George Coe had gone to Lincoln and I suppose they were in a bar. But anyhow when they got ready to go home that night, George's horse was gone. They borrowed a horse from someone, anybody would lend you a horse. And the next morning, they tracked George's horse. So they hanged the negro but they didn't hang him until he was dead. They were just trying to teach him a lesson. Well, you see, he was a soldier. Well, Billy came up here to George's ranch and they came by and arrested him because it was a federal case, you see? So, they put him on a old bony horse without a saddle and took him to Lincoln. By the time they got him there he was in pretty bad condition. He said that as far as he was concerned that right then was when the Lincoln County War began.

M: Where was Garrett's ranch?

B: They began to break up the Angus VV. You see, it was a pitchfork, /the brand/. It was too easy to alter the brand, so they put a bar across it and called it a handle and made a pitchfork. Garrett's ranch was part of that ranch. Garrett and Poe first and the Gray, his cousin, was in it awhile.

M: Do you know how big the ranch was?

B: Probably not too big, because Garrett never had enough money to go into anything big.

M: Did you ever hear anything about a John A. Miller?

B: Well, let me see... There were several Millers around here, Fountain Miller was the youngest and Slick Miller was the oldest. He was called Slick because he was so slick as a performer with horses, you know,

stealing horses. And he could have been one of these Millers, in fact, I don't even know what Slick Miller's real name was. He married a Gilmore, their home was down here at Alto about a mile or so. That's where Gene Rhodes lived when he taught school at that little school out there.

M: Well, Mrs. Ball, that's just about takes care of everything. I was more interested in Captain Kerbey, the Crees and the Angus than anything else. Eastland, Barncastle and Miller, I guess I can find them in THE GOLDEN ERA. All these people were involved in the splitting up of the territory into counties and Garrett was around at that time, too.

B: That's mostly all politics, I just heard of those men and really couldn't help you much.

M: Garrett was running in 1882, he lost to Easton by 39 votes or something like that. They were running for territorial councilman which is the same thing as state senator because they had territorial representatives, too.

B: Yes, they had a two-house legislature.

M: I've read something about Lt. Stanton, what can you tell me about him?

B: It was Captain Stanton when he died. He was from the Rio Grande and they made this raid up in here. Nana was the name of the Indian leader who attacked and killed Stanton. It is pronounced Nay-na. That's how the Indians said it. Juh is another. I would have called it 'who', but it is pronounced like 'hoe'. Asa used to talk about his father, Juh. Asa's mother was Geronimo's sister. Juh married her and she was the favorite wife. He said he was a 'bugger'. He asked me if I hadn't

read something about him in all the books I was always reading. So, I was reading aloud to Asa, for instance, I was reading about Cebaque(?) and in this reference to Cebaque, I came across the Juh. It said that Juh and Geronimo were the leaders there. And Asa said, "What do you mean Juh?" I said, "Juh, J-u-h, 'who'." Then he said, "That not 'who', that 'hoe'." I said, "Well, how do you know?" And he said, "That my father."

M: Who is Asa?

B: The white people gave him the name when he went to Carlisle. He said that when they put him in school, he was 6'2" and had worn nothing in his life but breechcloth and moccasins and his hair came to his knees. The first thing they did when they got to Carlisle was to cut his hair and make them all wear trousers. They were absolutely indignant and thought it was unbearable. And they put them in this classroom, George Gratten went with them, and they were told to take their seats. He said, "I went up and sat in the first seat, that's where the chief belongs." These were all boys in this room, the girls were in another room. Someone went down the aisle, Asa, Benjamin, Charles, Daniel... They gave them Christian names. He hated that name because the white men had given it to him. His name was Daklugie, which means 'he forces his way through the thick of the battle'. I asked him how he got the name and he told me they gave it to him one time after a skirmish and that was all I could get out of him.

M: What was Victorio's real name?

B: Phil Cook told the Grattens today that Victorio was kidnapped from a

hacienda in Chihuahua when he was three years old and reared among the Apaches. I took his nephew, James Goquacia(?), to Chihuahua City. He came up here and stayed a month in a little apartment that I have. He was a very good guest. I told Asa that there was Fort Cunningham. I had written to Washington and looked in the Archives. And he said that there was. I asked him how he knew and he told me that he had robbed it one time. Well, I'll tell you what he was talking about and that was Fort Cummings. A lot of old white people called it Fort Cunningham, too. I'm doing another book, about Asa and Juh. The university wants another book on Apaches.

M: You're getting so prolific anymore, that that's all you do is put out books!

B: Well, Leon, I've worked on some of them for twenty years. All the Indians vehemently deny that Victorio was Spanish. They swore he was Apache.

M: What happened to that Indian you were keeping here the last time I was up here? Weren't you afraid that he was going to cut his wife's nose off?

B: Yes, well, they got a divorce. But it was an old Apache custom that if a wife was unfaithful, the husband was obligated to kill her or cut off her nose. It was a sure cure, either way. Anyway, this boy knew his wife had been unfaithful and I didn't want him to go to the penitentiary. It's not a joke. It's a tragic thing the way white men messed up everything and everybody. People always ask me if the Apaches aren't awfully dirty. The girls who went to Carlisle were put in the homes of these thrifty Pennsylvania Dutch settlers in the summertime, on the farms to teach them housekeeping. Of course, those Dutch housewives prided

themselves on scrubbing their floors everyday of the world or more if necessary and keeping those boards clean enough to eat off of. Ramona, Asa's wife, was the most immaculate housekeeper I've ever known. Her home was simply furnished but no one had a cleaner house. When they came back here, they wouldn't live with those Mescaleros. My word, they had had twenty-seven years contact with white people. They were prisoners of war for that long. They are immaculate about their person, too. The boy who stayed here was so clean. His father got religious and decided that he was destined to be the Apache messiah and so he never did another minute's work for the rest of his life. He expected them to support him. I got an entirely different point of view of Christianity through the Apaches' eyes. One time Asa came up here and I told him I had heard that they were getting a new church up at Mescalero and I said that was wonderful. And he said, "Why?" And I said, "Why not?" He said it meant that another white family would move in that they had to support better than their own families. And that was about what it did mean, too. He was smart enough to know it. He felt so sorry for me because I was going to have to go to white man's heaven. He thought that was going to be an awfully dull place.

M: How do the Apaches rate on intellect or education around here?

B: Asa had a brilliant mind and so did Eugene. I think, proportionately, they are brighter than white people. I've begun to look at white people through different eyes. Asa and Eugene were responsible for bringing the Chiricahua here from Fort Sill. Asa told me that he thought that that was the best thing for his people. Why, they had been prisoners of

war for twenty-seven years. They wanted to take them to Arizona but, of course, the government wouldn't let them. The governor of Arizona said if they sent them there on the train, he'd meet it at the border and dynamite it. Asa said now he sees that he couldn't have done anything worse because of the Indians who elected to stay in Oklahoma. The government gave them a quarter section of land to each man head of a household. They had a lot of trouble at first but their descendants are so much better off than these out here. Asa was just sick about it, the conditions of the reservation out here. One time Asa asked me if I believed in ghosts. I told him the same answer a famous French woman said over 100 years ago, her name was George Sand. He couldn't understand why her name was a man's name. But I told him women weren't supposed to write in those days. She said she didn't believe in ghosts but that she was afraid of them. He told me that the reason he asked was that he knew he was going to Happy Place soon and he did. He died within three weeks. He wanted to know because he felt so bad about what he had done to his people and when he got to Happy Place, he'd know what was right. He was going to try to come back and tell me what to do to better the situation. I told him I wouldn't be scared if I knew that it was him. He felt sorry for me having to go to white man's heaven. I told him not to be too sure, they might not let me in. He got mad then. And he said to come over to their place. I said you wouldn't let me in either. "Geronimo would let you in," he said. "You come over and talk to the chiefs and then you don't have to read books." I told him that I didn't speak Apache well enough. He said over there everything

and everybody speak the same language. The tree people, the flower people, human people, and the animal people all speak the same language. I told him that it was pretty tempting and I wasn't too interested in the streets of gold anyway. He thought that would be terribly dull, walking around in white robes and playing harps. He told me I wouldn't have any bones or meat if I went to white man's heaven. I said, "Well, you won't either." And he told me that he sure would. It would be just like here with flowers and trees and grass, everybody happy nothing sick or hurt. I told him before I made any final decision I wanted to know one thing, did they have a library in their Happy Place? He asked me if the white eyes had a library and I said not that I know of. "If they have a library, we'll make a raid on it for you," he said. You know the university turned my book down because they said my Indians didn't talk like Indians--they don't know how Indians talk! Charlie was 93 years old and he speaks English. We went up to see him this afternoon at White Tail. He was with Geronimo on the warpath for three years when he was young and he knew George Gratten. These Grattens wanted to find Indians who knew their father, of course, they are few now because they've all died.