

Old Settlers Picnic Set For Saturday, Sept. 7 In Alex



Harold Chaney To Be Honored At Old Settler's Picnic

The annual Old Settler's Picnic will be held in Alexander on Saturday, September 7th. Harold Chaney, pioneer stockman of the area, will be the guest of honor.

A big parade will start the festivities at 11 a.m. and will include all types of entries, old machinery, floats, commercial entries and horse drawn vehicles and riders.

The public will be treated to a big barbecue dinner at 12 noon with the beef being furnished by Mr. Chaney.

At 1:30 p.m. a program will be held especially honoring Mr. Chaney and other pioneers. There will be guest speakers, a horse show and races. A ball game at 3 p.m. will finish up the afternoon, leaving plenty of time for visiting and renewing acquaintances.

Harold Chaney, this year's honoree, is now past 80, but still enjoys an occasional horseback ride and other strenuous activities not usually undertaken by one of his age. His memory, too, is sharp and he has no difficulty recalling the events and dates of the many experiences he has lived during his long and varied life.

He was born in Whitley county in northern Indiana in 1883 and when he was seven moved further north with his parents to Kosciusko county where his father "farmed and did" until he died at the age of 93.

"My mother was three years younger and she died three years after", Chaney said.

He began working in his teens and at the age of 17 a company at Goshen, Ind., which he had worked for during the winter, sent him to Rawlins, Wyo. to set up two power shearing plants for the V. P. Sheep outfit.

"The plants were run by gas engines and people were more afraid of them than dynamite", he recalls.

The machines were also guaranteed for scab, so he stayed on and helped build the vats and put in the pipes and boilers. "The dip had to be kept at blood heat", Chaney noted.

After finishing there, he went east to Laramie, Wyo. and got a job in the haying crew of the Riverside Cattle Company.

"When I arrived, the haying crew was not all there yet," Chaney said, "so the boss put me to helping the horse wrangler. We hitched the horses that had been used the year before and when that was done we started new, 'green' ones. Then when they brought out the full haying crew, there were green hands, some men from Chicago, who had never driven horses before and we had quite a bit of excitement. They would leave their horses to get a drink of water and probably have a run away which would start two or three more", Chaney recalled.

He remained in Laramie until late in the fall then went to Kent, Neb., north of Columbus on the North Platte River and "herded steers on corn stalks 'til Christmas", then returned to Indiana. In the spring he began working for the Riverside Company there, and early in May they wanted someone to go to Canada to inspect the range and talk to ranchers in that part of the country.

"My loss", he said, "was in value. There was no sale for them. The farmers brought in horses that didn't get brain fever, but sometimes these animals gave them a headache anyway".

After going out of the horse business, Chaney still had a ranch but couldn't get credit to stock it. "They said I was to old and that I should quit, so I sold the ranch" he said.

The Chaney ranch which became known throughout this territory for its fine horses, was located about 15 miles southeast of Alexander.

In finishing his story, Chaney noted sadly, "there isn't much left of me, only a little bit of know-how and not much power to back that up. It still don't bother me to ride and sometimes a job comes up that I can do to break the montany".

"The old hands didn't want to go," Chaney recalls. "Then one day I was with the foreman and I said it was funny they didn't want to go, and he asked if I would like to go. I said I would but I didn't suppose they wanted to send a kid".

"He told the owners that night and the next morning they came to me and wanted to know when I could be ready to start, and I told them as soon as I could get my horses and outfit together", Chaney said.

"I had three well-broke horses, of my own, a pack saddle, saddle and bedroll and on the 12th of May I started out", Chaney stated. I didn't make too many miles a day as I was grazing my horses. When I got into the country I was to report on I found it was low swamp country, all slough grass, waist high and course, lots of brush and enough black flies and mosquitoes to drive horses and man crazy. I soon had enough of that, Chaney said.

"On my way back I swung east to see more country, and early in October, landed in Wibaux, Mont., he recalls. I decided to stay, the country looked good to me. I met R. J. McArthur and hired out to him. On the 8th of October we got to his sheep camp on Redwing Creek and I worked for him until the fall of 1903, then, when he shipped lambs to Chicago I went with them and on home", Chaney said.

Chaney remained in Indiana until the fall of 1906 when he returned to North Dakota and threshed in Rolette county. After

the harvest he was again employed by McArthur.

Chaney continued, "In the time I was home I married Georgia May Scott, a girl I had known in school, and she and the children came up here the spring of 1909. She died the fall of 1910 and I took her back east. She is buried there. The boy stayed with my people and the girl with my wife's people".

"In July of 1910 I quit McArthur and went on my own," Chaney said. I had a small bunch of mares and a small bunch of cattle, but in the fall of 1925 I sold the cattle and just ran horses and put what I made into improving the bunch, until the brain fever came and put me out of business, although I only lost three head of draft horses and one saddle horse, he recalled.