

Election Day in Comanche when I was a child

Election Day was a big happening in Comanche. I remember so well that we would be in town that day, and everyone was waiting for the election returns. My Daddy and Mother always voted. Our family has poll tax receipts that my Daddy had starting in probably 1903. Back then, people paid a "poll tax" in order to vote. (I think this was the reason for the poll tax, maybe not).

We would be in town that day, and would stay after night. That was pretty unusual for us to stay after night. All of the kids went to the picture show that afternoon. Most of the time this would be a western movie. That was what was shown on Saturday afternoon. And, these were all black and white movies. We all sat on the front rows, and stared up at the screen in front of us. I had no idea how much it cost to get into the picture show, but not very much. We stayed at the movie just as long as we could, and when we stepped outside, the bright sunlight nearly blinded us.

I guess that the voting day was on Saturday, because we always went to the movie. Late in the afternoon, Daddy would buy bologna and light bread, and I remember we had some kind of orangeade drinks. We would go back to eat at the car. I am sure that café's around the square were serving hamburgers, but we ate the bologna and light bread sandwiches. Hey, that was such a treat. That bologna was so good, and we made sandwiches out of that meat and the sliced light bread. And, we had a treat of this orange drink. The voting usually stopped about 7:00 pm, and everyone was waiting for the election results.

I remember most of all about The Comanche Chief building. And what I remembered most was that the Chief was at their current location. They had a big awning over the sidewalk in front of their building, and a "big" blackboard was erected on top of the awning. On the left side of the blackboard was listed all of the different candidates for different offices. These names were printed out in white chalk on the blackboard. Over the top, with lines running down, was the different voting boxes from the county.

The County Clerk's office was busy, tabulating the votes that were coming in from the different voting boxes, and someone was bringing the results to the Chief office so they could write in the new votes coming in. This was a lot of excitement. People were waiting for special voting boxes, to see just who they had voted for. Mama's and Daddy's were watching all of this, and the kids were running and playing. Yes, we had survived the hours in the picture show, and yes, we did get our sight back after hitting the bright sunshine. And, we had had a good supper.

I think we stayed in town until about 11:00 pm. At least, until the last voting box had been counted. By that time, my Daddy knew who would be the new elected Sheriff, who would be elected the new County Judge, and who would be elected the new County Clerk. All in all, a grand time was had by all.

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