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## A Peek At Quanah Parker

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# A PEEK AT



## QUANAH PARKER

by Elva Sholes

Reminiscence

**W**hen Mama died in 1904, my father, a railroad man who was away much of the time helping to build new lines, was left with seven children. As a result, we had to be cared for to a great extent by relatives. I was the eldest, twelve years old. It was necessary for me to earn my way, so I went to work at a big hotel in Cache, Oklahoma.

One day I was carrying a heavy tray of dishes when I slipped and fell, breaking my arm. For some reason, perhaps a lack of sympathetic attention by my employers, my arm was still very painful and had not been attended to after two weeks.

At the time, Quanah Parker came to Cache each month to get his government check. He stayed overnight at the hotel where I worked. Noticing my plight as I was still carrying a heavy tray, Quanah found my boss and gave him a good scolding. He then took me to the doctor in Cache. Quanah held tightly to my wrist and pulled while the doctor pulled on the other part above the break to set my arm.

After the incident dealing with my arm, Quanah came to check on me every time he came to Cache. One time, he brought his wife and baby to see me. He said that he wanted to name the baby girl "Quanie," but his wife named her "Shawn."

On one visit to the hotel, Quanah and his wife took me with them to his "mansion" in the Wichita Mountains. He was amused by my excitement. When I asked why he had such a

tall fence around his home, he joked, "To keep all the men away from my wives!" There was a rumor that Quanah had twenty-one wives, protected and cared for in the mansion, inside the twelve-foot fence.

*BACKGROUND PROVIDED BY ELVA HOWARD DEEDS, Mrs. Sholes' niece, of Sentinel:*

*The preceding article was related on the telephone to me by Aunt Elva, who was celebrating her ninety-ninth birthday on December 31, 1990. Aunt Elva grew up in Mangum, Frederick, Manitou, and other towns and calls herself an "Oklahoma gal."*



*Elva Spurlock  
Sholes  
1910  
Age 19*

*Aunt Elva, now legally blind, has no children of her own, but she cared for and supported two orphaned nephews until they could support themselves. She has always participated in worthy causes. Her proudest memory is the special award she received for selling the most war bonds during World War I. As a member of the American Legion Auxiliary, she also gathered old sheets, boiled them clean, and then tore them into strips and rolled them tightly to be used for the soldiers in Europe.*

*She has also had many pastimes. She spent a great deal of time waiting for her husband in hotel rooms in Washington D.C. and other cities. He was a mining engineer for the U.S. government; so during his meetings, she passed her time crocheting and sewing pieces together for quilting. She made many lovely tablecloths, bedspreads, and hundreds of beautiful quilts, all of which she gave to relatives and friends. She remembers that "Dresden Plate" was her favorite pattern.*

**Design by Scott Voigt**

*(ELVA SPURLOCK SHOLES, age 99+, lives in a mobile home park in Glendale, a suburb of Phoenix.)* \*