

# AGARITA GAZETTE



*A Chronicle of the Plum Creek Shooting Society*



Agarita Ranch

April 2016

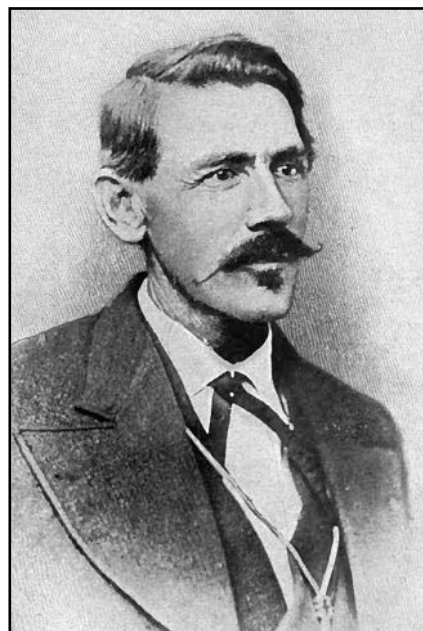
Lockhart, Texas

## John Chisum and the Lincoln County War

John Chisum was born on his grandfather's plantation in Hardeman County, Tennessee in 1824. He moved with his family to Paris, Texas in 1837. In 1854, he first went into the cattle business in Denton County, adopting the Half Circle P brand. By 1860 Chisum was running 5,000 head of cattle and was considered a major cattleman in North Texas.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Chisum was exempted from service and placed in charge of several herds in his district. Early

suffering from Indian raids and drought, Chisum and other cattlemen in the Denton area moved their cattle west. Riding a mule, as was his preference, Chisum rode ahead of



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in 1862 he took a herd across Arkansas to the Confederate forces at Vicksburg, but thereafter exhibited little interest in the Southern cause. In the fall of 1863,

the herd on their way to Coleman County. There they camped on the Concho River near its junction with the Colorado. Soon Chisum and his partners had 18,000 head grazing along the Colorado.

*Continued on page 5*

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## President's Word

By the time you are ready this, about three weeks will remain before **Battle of Plum Creek 2016**. Regular shooters please remember that BPC takes the place of our monthly match in May. We are expecting more than 100 shooters to participate. Workers have been busy getting the range ready and doing all the other things necessary to ensure a great match. All the help that has been and will be provided by all of you who have volunteered is much appreciated. We still need help. Watch the PCCSS Yahoo Group, look for emails from **Long Juan** and look for updated information on our website. [www.pccss.org](http://www.pccss.org) **Bolo Bob** has been doing a great job keeping it up to date with the latest information.

The event will kick off on Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup>. Check-in will open in the Pavilion about 10 a.m. and will be open most of the day. Earlier, RO classes will have begun in the Lucky Lady Saloon. Taught by **Texas Jack Daniels** (thanks TJD), the RO1 class will run from 9 a.m. to noon, leaving plenty of time to eat and then participate in afternoon shooting activities. RO2 class will follow the RO1 class and should end by about 3 p.m. It's not too late if you would like to attend either RO class. There's plenty of room. There will be small fee payable at the beginning of class and each participant is requested to download the *SASS Shooters Manual* and appropriate *RO Handbook* from the SASS website, print it and bring it with you to class. See details on our website. If you want to attend and have not signed up, please send **Long Juan** an email. From 11:00 to noon, anyone who wants to sight in for Long Range may do so on Stage 1 (Fort Agarita). Lunch is on your own Friday.

At 1:00 p.m. on Friday there will be a safety meeting for all participating in afternoon shooting activities in front of the Shamrock Hotel/Lucky Lady Saloon. The 4-stage Wild Bunch match will begin at 1:30, shooting Stages 3-6. The Plainsman match will begin at the same time on Stages 7-10. Yes,



Plum Creek President  
Dragon Hill Dave

*Continued on next page*

because of expressed interest from a number of shooters, we decided to reverse our decision not to offer a Plainsman side match. If you did not sign up when you registered and would like to shoot Plainsman, please send **Long Juan** an email as soon as possible. The Big-Bore Side Match will also begin at 1:30 on Friday on Stage 1. We have been taking reservations for slots to shoot Long Range on Friday. There are still openings on the schedule. If you would like to shoot Big-Bore Long Range Friday afternoon, please send **Long Juan** an email so he can let **Circuit Judge** and the *Green Mountain Regulators*, who sponsoring Stage 1 and are running the Big-Bore Long Range match, (thanks CJ and GMR), know you want to shoot. The range will go cold at 5:30 and there will be a mandatory Main Match Posse Marshal walk-through starting on Stage 1. At 6:30 there will be a pot-luck dinner in the Pavilion. That means everyone should bring something to share to eat. The *Plum Creek Shooting Society* will provide plasticware, plates and something to drink. Anything stronger than soft is BYOB. Yours truly will be cooking up some venison – most likely chili – to share.

On Saturday, 5/7, the Main Match starts. Check-in will open at 7:30 a.m. in the Pavilion. Opening ceremonies and shooter safety meeting will be at 8:30 in front of the saloon and hotel. We hope to be hammers down on the first six stages of the Main Match by 9:00 a.m. There should be food available for purchase at the range during the day. There also will be a number of

vendors plying their wares. Look for a list from **Long Juan** and on the website soon. After all posses have finished the Main Match stages on Saturday, side matches will begin in earnest. Big-Bore Long Range will continue on Stage 1. Quigley and Pistol-Caliber Long Range will be on Stage 2. Other side matches will include Fastest Rifle, Pistol, Shotgun, Pocket Pistol and Derringer on Stages 3 and 4. On Stage 5, we will have a new side match – “Call Your Time.” Shooters will estimate the time it will take them to shoot the stage. Closest to picking the correct time will be the winner. You will have a chance to practice the stage at least once before shooting for “score.” There will also be a costume content on Saturday – details soon. The range will go cold at 5:30 and there will be a banquet in the Pavilion beginning at 6:30. Side Match and Costume Contest Awards will be handed out during the banquet.

Sunday morning, 5/8, we will be hammers down on the last four stages of the Main Match by 8:30 a.m. Lunch will be served in the Pavilion at noon, followed by the awards ceremony. See ya at the Agarita!



## Long Juan Here:

I see there is much **Dragon Hill Dave** wants you to let me know. Bring it on! Do you want to shoot Plainsman? Do you want to attend an RO class? Are you planning to shoot and have not yet registered? Now is the time to do all. We are putting together the posses and ordering awards. If we do not know you will be at the match or what you are planning to shoot or with whom you want to shoot, it is getting close to being too late. Please send me an email. [jsoule@scottdoug.com](mailto:jsoule@scottdoug.com)





## FIND DELTA RAIDER:

Guess it was a little harder last month (or not many of you looked for **Delta Raider** in the March issue of the *Gazette*. He was hiding in **Phantom's** left bicep on the first page. See left, circled in yellow. Mentioned in the Dispatches for finding **Delta Raider** last month are **El Sabre**, **Preacher Man Lee**, **Sheriff Robert Love** and **Hairtrigger Hayes**. Also mentioned in the dispatches for identifying **Lucky Nickel's** hat is **Sheriff Robert Love**. I've made it easy this month. Hope more of you will look and report that you have found **Delta Raider** in this month's issue.



## Wisdom from Jake (Jones that is):



From the film, *Chisum*: "Chisum Wisdom" (John Wayne version)

**James Pepper (Chisum's foreman):** There's an old saying. There's no law west of Dodge and no God west of the Pecos. Right, Mr. Chisum?

**Chisum:** Wrong, Mr. Pepper. Because no matter where people go, sooner or later there's the law. And sooner or later they find God's already been there.



## Photo from Jake (Paladin that is):

Thanks to **Big John Mesquite** for this photo.

Judging by the saddle style, this cowboy was working in the late 1870s or early 80s. In his holster is a Colt Model 1873 single action revolver. He left arm is looped around a Winchester Model 1873 carbine in a saddle scabbard.



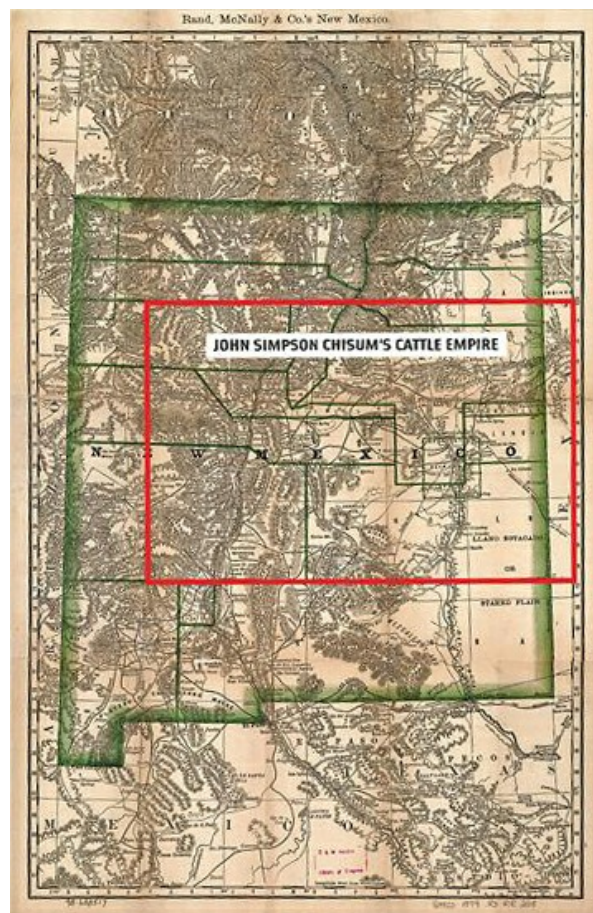


After the war, Chisum formed a partnership with cattlemen Charles Goodnight and Oliver Loving to drive herds of cattle to the Army in Fort Sumner and Santa Fe. One of the first to send his herds to New Mexico, Chisum established a series of ranches along the Pecos River for 150 miles. In 1867, Chisum's ranch was headquartered at Bosque Grande, mid-way between Roswell and Fort Sumner. When Loving succumbed to a Comanche arrow in 1868, Chisum continued his partnership with Goodnight, prospering over the next five years. During this period he adopted the Long Rail brand and his ear-lobbing technique, the jinglebob, for his herds.

In the summer of 1874 Chisum won a contract to provide beef to several Apache reservations in New Mexico. In 1875 he moved his ranching



headquarters to the South Spring River, four miles southeast of Roswell. Employing a hundred cowboys to handle 80,000 head, Chisum was the "Pecos Valley Cattle King." His empire grew, but Chisum was much hated by the smaller ranchers in New Mexico because his massive herds used all the



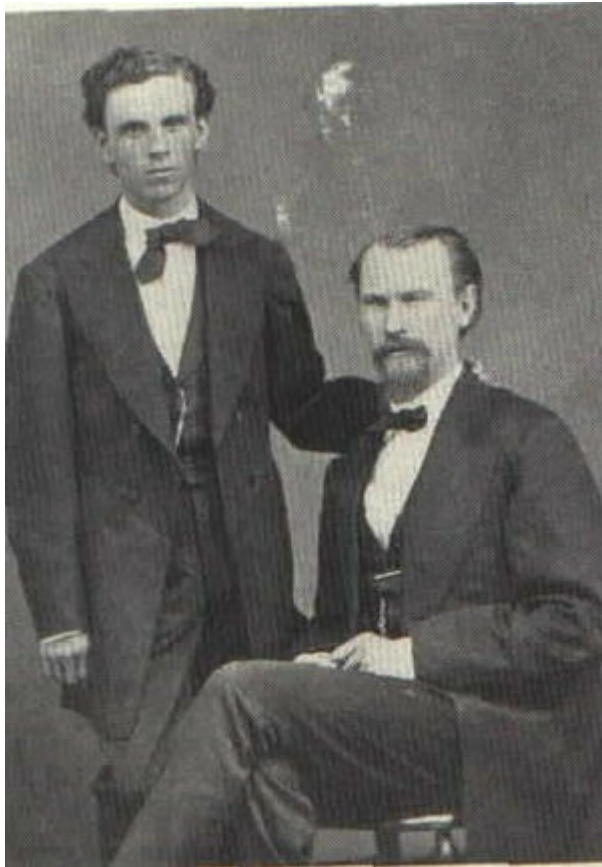
public domain land for grazing. Spread thin over a large territory, his cattle attracted rustlers and marauding Indians. His losses were significant.

Chisum joined forces with two other New Mexico cattle kings to do battle with the small cattlemen and merchants they believed were behind his losses, which led in part to the 1878 Lincoln County War.

The Lincoln County War was a conflict between rival factions in Lincoln County, New Mexico, which was still a territory at the time. The feud is famous because many of its participants were noteworthy figures of

the Old West: Billy the Kid, Sheriffs William Brady and Pat Garrett, cattle rancher John Chisum, lawyer and businessman Alexander McSween and Lawrence Murphy.

Lawrence Murphy and James Dolan owned the only store in Lincoln



James Dolan & Lawrence Murphy

County, the Murphy & Dolan Mercantile & Banking, aka "The House." The House was an incredible financial success mainly because there was no competition. Murphy and Dolan charged local farmers and ranchers high prices for their goods, making them hated among much of the local population. In 1876 rancher John Tunstall and former Murphy-

Dolan employee Alexander McSween built a huge competing store right across the street from The House. At stake was nothing less than the economic and political control of Lincoln County, at the time the largest county in the United States.

At first there were insults and accusations, then threats and provocations. Dolan tried to goad Tunstall into a gunfight, but the Englishman refused to take the



John Tunstall

bait. Tunstall did, however, hire a young hand later known as Billy the Kid. The long-simmering conflict erupted into gunfire on the evening of February 18, 1878, when a gang comprised of Dolan partisans murdered Tunstall on the road to Lincoln. His murder was the spark that ignited the Lincoln County War.

The Tunstall-McSween faction led by Billy the Kid and supported by John Chisum was called the Regulators. The Regulators exacted revenge for Tunstall's murder. They killed Sheriff Brady and several others of the Murphy-Dolan faction. The killings continued unabated for several months, climaxing in July 1878 in what became known as the Battle of



Lincoln,<sup>1</sup> a five-day gunfight and siege that resulted in the death of McSween and scattering of the Regulators.

In an effort to put a stop to the



Billy the Kid

Lincoln County violence, President Rutherford B. Hayes stepped in, ousting New Mexico's corrupt territorial governor and replacing him with Lew Wallace, a former Civil War general. Wallace's initial efforts to restore order failed. In early 1879 he ordered the arrest of those responsible for local killings. One of the outlaws was Billy the Kid.

After agreeing to pardon Billy for his previous crimes, Wallace arranged his arrest and detention in a local jail to ensure his safety. The local district attorney, however, refused to free Billy. The Kid escaped and spent the next year and a half as an outlaw. The Kid's gang rustled cattle and committed other crimes. They became a serious problem in Lincoln County. Chisum, Pecos Valley rancher Joseph Lea and James Dolan (yes, the same James Dolan) sought someone capable of hunting down the Kid and either arresting or killing him. In 1880,

they persuaded Pat Garrett, a former buffalo hunter, reformed part-time rustler, small rancher and the Kid's one-time friend, to run for the office of Lincoln County Sheriff. His specific task was to rid the county of the cattle thieves.

In December 1880, Billy was caught and jailed, but again he escaped, this time in one of the most spectacular jailbreaks ever in the Old West. On April 28, 1881, about dinnertime, the Kid managed to get hold of a pistol. After

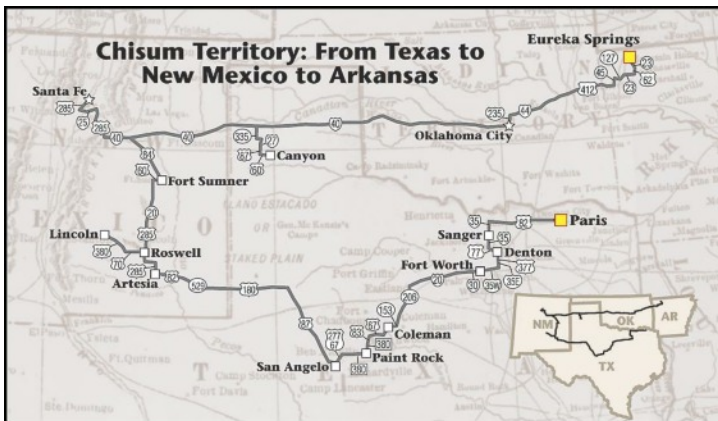


killing one of his two guards with the pistol, he grabbed a shotgun and dispatched the other guard. After killing his two guards, Billy hung around Lincoln for an hour or more chatting with various friends and well-wishers before riding out. Less than three months later, on July 14<sup>th</sup>, Lincoln County Sheriff Pat Garrett caught Billy by surprise in Fort Sumner and got off a single shot that hit the Kid just above the heart. At the age of 21, Billy the Kid was dead.

In the summer of 1884, Chisum, a lifetime heavy pipe smoker, developed a painful abscess on the right side of his neck.

<sup>1</sup> In 1885, four years after Billy the Kid was killed, Lincoln had reverted to a quiet New Mexico cattle town, but the blood of 40 men killed in its streets would always haunt the town's history.

On his way to New York for treatment, he stopped in Kansas City, Missouri, where doctors refused to let him continue. They lanced and drained the growth. The wound seemed to heal and Chisum believed he was cured. On the way back to New Mexico, the abscess returned, prompting Chisum to stop over in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, where he hoped the mineral baths would cure his illness for good. It didn't work as planned. Chisum, age 60, died of cancer in Eureka Springs on December 22, 1884. After his death, his cattle empire collapsed and was completely gone by 1891.



John Chisum was a successful cattleman for nearly thirty years, eighteen of which (1854–72) were in Texas. Locating immense herds on the open range near running water and controlling surrounding pastures by right of occupancy, he built a cattle empire in New Mexico that was second to none. His cattle grazed more than one million acres and numbered in the tens of thousands. Chisum never claimed to be a trail driver, nor did he spend much time at the ranch or on the range. Personable and shrewd, he was a cattle dealer who traveled in search of markets. His colorful and eccentric life epitomized the adventurous world of open-range cattle operations in the Old West.

## Films:

Chisum and his story have been portrayed several times on film. Some of the prominent performers to play him include John Wayne in *Chisum* (1970) and James Coburn in *Young Guns II* (1990).



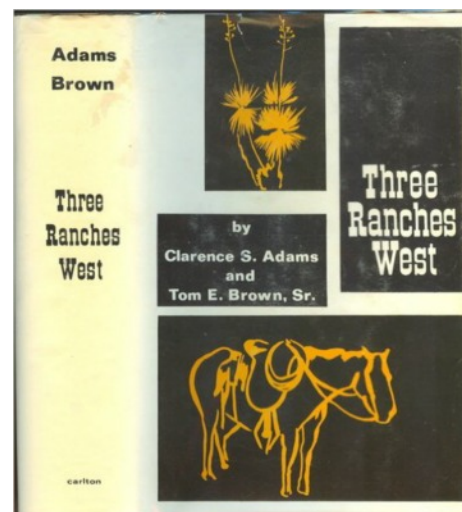
## Books:

*Three Ranches West: A true story of John S. Chisum, the cowman who opened the west for cattle trade* by Clarence S. Adams

*The Cattle Kings* by Lewis Atherton

*John Simpson Chisum: Jinglebob king of the Pecos* by Mary Whatley Clarke

*John Simpson Chisum: The Cattle King of the Pecos Revisited* by Clifford R. Caldwell





# April Match Photos

Thanks to Lefty Leo for all of our photos this month.  
More photos available for viewing at [www.pccss.org](http://www.pccss.org).



Nueces Slim (top left), Texas Reb & Delta Raider (top right), Little Bullseye (lower left) and wildflowers at the Agarita Ranch (lower right). And, NO, the photo above does not count if you are trying to find **Delta Raider** in this issue of the *Gazette*.







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The crowd gathers before the start of the match

Farr Ranger timing Six Wire



Scooter shooting; Kettleman timing;  
Texas Sawbones spotting







Stil Smokin' is smokin'!



Speedy Diamond Kate



Hopalong Herbert with the Mad Dog,  
McCoy that is, timing

Smilin' Joe Darter







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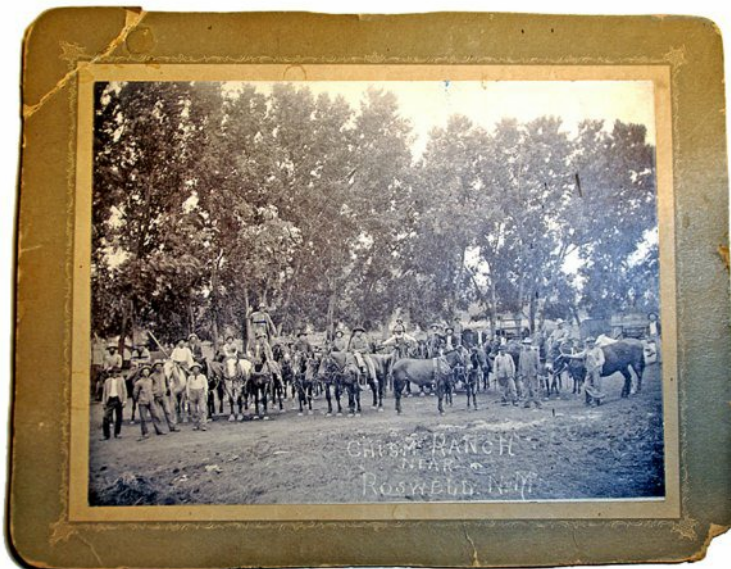
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John Chisum and his ranch



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	105	FP	33	66
	125	RNFP	35	70
	125	FP	35	70
	130	RNFP	36	72
	158	RNFP	39	77
	158	FP	39	77
	158	SWC	39	77
.380	100	RNFP	33	65
.38-55	245	RNFP	59	117
.41	215	SWC	49	98
.44	180	RNFP	41	81
	240	SWC	52	104
.44-40	200	RNFP	45	90
.45 COLT	160	RNFP	46	92
	180	RNFP	41	81
	200	RNFP	45	90
	250	RNFP	53	106
9MM	124	RN	35	70
	125	CN	35	70
40 S&W	180	FP	41	81
.45ACP	200	SWC	45	90
	200	RN	45	90
	230	RN	51	101
45-70	405	FPT	111	222

\*Price increase because of higher cost of lead. Sorry for any inconvenience.