

This 107 Year Old Palo Duro Canyon Film Is A Texas Time Capsule

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The history of the Texas Panhandle in the early 1900s is a pretty interesting one, but it can be difficult for us to visualize and imagine life in that era. Books and pictures can only do so much to help us fully understand and personify important events and people from our history.

But recently I came across a one-hundred-and-seven-year-old piece of history in the form of a silent film that offers a very interesting insight into Texas history. What's even more fascinating about the film is the fact that it was produced by one of the Texas Panhandle's most prominent ranching figures, Charles Goodnight.

"Old Texas" Silent Film (1916)

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Back in 1916, at the age of eighty, Colonel Charles Goodnight produced, directed, and starred in the film "Old Texas," a narrative that takes place in the late 1800s about Charles Goodnight, the Kiowa tribe, the history of Palo Duro Canyon, and the JA Ranch.

Old Texas

The film starts with a shot of Palo Duro Canyon, where Goodnight makes a "discovery." He stumbles upon the Palo Duro Canyon and the Kiowa tribe who are living there. It then goes on to show his interaction with the Kiowa, as he observes their customs and lifestyle.

The film features some pretty captivating scenes, such as a staged buffalo hunt where Kiowa hunters chase and hunt buffalo through Palo Duro

Canyon.

Fact or Fiction?

Although the movie is an interesting depiction of life in the Panhandle in the late 1800s, the line between fact and fiction is not made entirely clear in this film. The style and interjection of real historical places, cultures, and figures make the film appear to be something akin to a documentary. But whether the events that are portrayed in this film are accurate remains ambiguous.

Regardless of whether the film leans more into fact or fiction, it still gives us a picture of our past that cannot be done on the same level as pictures or words. The film can be found on the Texas Archive Of The Moving Image's website, where you can stream it online.

Dust Storms in the Texas Panhandle Then and Now

The Texas Panhandle has seen its share of dust storms. Here are pictures of when it was at its worst in the 30s and our dust storm on April 4, 2023.

Gallery Credit: Lori Crofford/TSM Amarillo

Look at How Amarillo's Old Route 66 Motels Looked Then & Now

The heyday of the Mother Road may be long gone, but would you believe that there's still plenty of the old motels where many a weary American family rested their heads during their interstate travels?

You won't believe some of these are still standing, much less still alive and (wait for it..) kickin'!

Gallery Credit: [Sarah Clark](#)

Check Out These 27 'Then & Now' Photos Of A

Toxic Ghost Town

Picher, OK is regarded as one of the most toxic places in the U.S. These photos show what Picher once looked like, and what it looks like now.

Gallery Credit: Charlie Hardin