First Year on the Cherokee Strip

My father, a taciturn Mennonite, once told me this:
“The first year on the Cherokee Strip
when I hitched Flossie and Ted to the
one-bottom walking plow and cut
the thick, tough roots of the prairie sod
I held the reins and the handle in one hand
and with the other wiped tears.”

—Elmer F. Suderman

The dark tongue shudders, licks at the sweet red hump in the crazy-dry giggling wagon box, rattling away from the hunt like a load of teeth—away from the Medicine Lodge and the wind-licked, stinking carcass of the Cheyenne Bull.

Mr. Whitelaw holds the reins.

—Steven Hind

Yes, Mr. Rosan shoots first and Mr. Flick slashes the bull of the Cheyenne north of the Medicine Lodge, leaving the great skull horned through the grass into roots, the echoing wind in our red-meat, nautilus skulls. Our horses lug the wagon across the prairie of the Cheyenne. We make no progress, as it seems to me, and the air turns flesh-pale and the pink-humped west bleeds out the Blue Lodge Sky, north of the Territory.

Mr. Flick, accoutered for the fray, Hutchinson and Mr. Whitelaw, as ‘buffalo slayers’ as to the exciting scenes."

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