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## Muskogee-Creek Removal

Thomas Barnett, age 55, Tuckibutchee  
Town (tulwa), Wetumka, Oklahoma

Billie Byrd, Field Worker  
Indian-Pioneer History, S-149  
6-24-37

The Barnett name was Bernard before taking on  
the present way of pronunciation.

Dave Barnett and Timbochee Barnett witnessed the  
mishap of the shipload of Muskogee-Creek Indians that  
were being brought to the new country from their old  
homes in Alabama and this is what Dave Barnett has told:

"When we boarded the ship, it was at night time  
and it was raining, cloudy and dark. There were dan-  
gerous waves of water. The people aboard the ship did  
not want the ship to start on the journey at night but  
to wait until the next day. The men in command of the  
ship disregarded all suggestions and said, "The ship  
is going tonight."

The ship was the kind that had an upper and lower  
deck. There were great stacks of boxes which contained  
whiskey in bottles. The officers in charge of the  
ship became intoxicated and even induced some of the  
Indians to drink. This created an uproar and turmoil.

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Timbochee Barnett, who was my father, and I begged the officers to stop the ship until morning as the men in charge of the steering of the ship could not control the ship and keep it in its course but was causing it to go around and agound.

We saw a night ship coming down the stream. We could distinguish these ships as they had lights. Many of those on board our ship tried to tell the officers to give the command to stay to one side so that the night ship could pass on by. It was then that it seemed that the ship was just turned loose because it was taking a zig-zag course in the water until it ramed right into the center of the night boat.

Then there was the screaming of the children, men, women, mothers and fathers when the ship began to sink. Everyone on the lower deck that could was urged to go up on the upper deck until some of the smaller boats could come to the rescue. The smaller boats were called by signals and they came soon enough but the lower deck had been hit so hard it was

broken in two and was rapidly sinking and a great many of the Indians were drowned.

Some of the rescued Indians were taken to the shore on boats, some were successful in swimming to shore and some were drowned. The next day the survivors went along the shore of the Mississippi River and tried to identify the dead bodies that had been washed ashore. The dead was gathered and buried and some were lost forever in the waters.

Timbochee Barnett, my father, at the time of the accident had a bag of money which he had brought with him from the old country. He reported that he had dropped it into the water. He afterwards gave this report to the officials on the following day of the accident. The officials recovered the bag which contained a great amount of gold and paper money. He kept the gold but he turned the paper money over to the officials who promised to dry them for him and return to him. This they did.

Dave Barnett was buried in old Tuckibutchee town (tulwa) seven miles east of the present Hanna, Oklahoma.

## TIMMIE BARNETT

Timothy (Tim or Timmie) Barnett was born of Tuckibutchee town (tulwa) and his father was Dave Barnett while his grandfather was Timbochee Barnett, also, of Tuckibutchee town. (tulwa).

Tim Barnett was an educated man who lived in love for his tribal nation but was hated by some of the members of the tribe and nation that he loved, which was the Creek nation. He was a willing had to those who desired aid, and he was called frequently by different towns (tulwas) to assist them to settle any matters or questions arising pertaining to the Indians. He took it in his hands to make many trips to Washington for the benefit of his tribe, often paying for the expenses of such trips out of his own money as he was a man of wealth. He loved to converse as well as to ride horses, but above all things he loved to receive visitors and talk with them.

He lived with his wife, Hoketa Barnett, but he had another woman whom he claimed as his wife in the vicinity of the Greenleaf settlement southwest of the present Okemah, Oklahoma. A certain Seminole man, began

to take interest in and frequently visited and saw the woman at the Greenleaf settlement. This Seminole began to boast, "I talk to his wife and he doesn't even know it." (This was in reference to the woman of the Greenleaf settlement, and to Tim Barnett)

It was not long afterwards that Tim Barnett learned of this as he went to the Greenleaf settlement and finding the Seminole man there, he killed him.

The Seminole Indians did not like the way in which one of their tribesman had been murdered, so they began to mobilize and were in readiness for a revenge. When the Seminoles reached the home of Tim Barnett, the Barnett clan of which there was a great number, were waiting for the Seminoles. It was then that a spokesman from the Barnett side defended the right that Barnett had in killing the Seminole man--stating that the Seminole man was trying to seduce the woman of the Greenleaf settlement. This seemed to satisfy the Seminoles who very readily became on peaceful terms with the Barnetts.

Tim Barnett, to show his gratitude, invited the

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Seminoles to spend the night with him before they returned to their homes and the Seminoles accepted. Tim Barnett ordered that a yearling be killed and prepared---this was done and everyone enjoyed the feast that was prepared.

Although the Seminole Indians seemed satisfied with the way things had turned out, but the Indian law was not satisfied so the lighthorsemen decided to have a regular trial. Tim Barnett was arrested and was being taken to Okmulgee. Some of the members of the lighthorsemen had such hostile feelings against Barnett that he was shot in the back and instantly killed. This act was against the orders of the Captain.

At one time, Tim Barnett served with the Texas and McIntosh faction during the Civil war.

Tim Barnett was at the age of 65 when he died in 1872. He lived about two miles southeast of Wetumka, Oklahoma, and the only marked places of his old home are some plum bushes and the graves of two of his children.

The grave of Tim Barnett and that of his wife and another person (unknown) are marked by one large frame house, probably eight feet by twelve feet, Section 34, Township 9, Range 10.