

CHISHOLM, WILLIAM

INTERVIEW

7390
447

BIOGRAPHY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Jerome M. Emmons

Report made on (date) September 3, 1937

Name William Chisholm (for whose grandfather a cattle trail was named).

Post Office Address Route 1, Okemah, Oklahoma--One mile east and one-half mile south of Okfuskee, Oklahoma.

Residence address (or location) _____

DATE OF BIRTH: Month January Day 1 Year 1880

Place of birth Two and one-half miles south and one mile west of Shawnee.
on Sedro Canallis, a Mexican's place.

Name of Father William Chisholm Place of birth _____

Other information about father Part Creek-part Cherokee Indian; died in 1880.

Name of Mother Hester Butler Place of birth _____

Other information about mother Cherokee Indian (fullblood)--died in January, 19

Her second husband was a Mr. Cochran.

is or complete narrative by the field worker dealing with the life and story of the person interviewed. Refer to Manual for suggested subjects and questions. Use on blank sheets if necessary and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached 12.

Interview with William Ghisholm --
By Field Worker, Jerome M. Emmons
September 3, 1937

Mr. Ghisholm, a Cherokee-Creek Indian, lives one mile east and a half south of Okfuskee.

I am a Cherokee adopted into the Shawnee Tribe. My allotment is west of Shawnee and southwest of Dale, in Pottawatomie County.

SCHOOLS.

I attended the Shawnee Mission, where the Sanitarium is now located, until I was eleven years of age. I then attended the Chillocco Mission for three years. This Mission is located about six miles south of Arkansas City, Kansas. I left there in 1894. When I returned home from Kansas, I let a couple years go by before attending school farther and it was 1897 when I completed another year at the Shawnee Mission.

I then quit school and went to the Cherokee Nation with my mother. I stayed there until my mother died. We lived ten miles east of Wagoner on Fourteen

Mile Prairie.

CIVIL WAR.

My father put in a claim for \$9,000 for property, stock, etc., damaged and stolen during the Civil War. This claim was partially allowed and paid only a few years ago. This loss was damages to my father's property located at Asher, as the place is now called, in the Chickasha Nation.

ALLOTMENT.

Big Jim's Band of Upper Shawnees were against the allotment of land to the Shawnees. White Turkey's Band consisting of absentee Shawnees favored the allotment.

The Dawes Commission gave my mother the choice of taking an allotment for me and herself in either the Cherokee Nation or the Chickasha Nation. She took it in the Chickasha Nation. As there were only a few hundred Shawnees, they were given their land in Pottawatomie County which was a part of the

Chickasha Nation.

My allotment consisted of only about thirty-seven and one half acres of practically worthless land, located near a river which overflowed onto it. I sold it at the first opportunity.

FERRY.

I remember a ferry west of Wagoner on the Verdigris River run by George Marshall, a Creek Indian. He was still there until about 1900. Whether he ran this ferry later, I do not know.

STOMP GROUNDS.

There was a Stomp Ground about eight miles east of Shawnee. The Indians had ball games there also.

The ball for these games was a large ball, which I believe was covered with buckskin. The men always kicked and the women used their hands to get it between two upright posts for a score. They would bet a lot at these games. Whatever was bet was

4

put in plain view sometimes on a string and others laid their bet over the first bet or covered it, which completed the bet. These bets consisted of ribbons, buttons and other small objects. Sometimes, they, the men and women, would line up and bet with the person opposite.

The Shawnee dances are different from those of the Creek Tribe and were much more interesting to me. They had different kinds of dances, and this was inclined to hold your attention, which a routine Stomp Dance fails to do. They have a war dance which they used to put on at certain times, wearing the old dress of their ancestors.

I remember some Creek Indians coming to Shawnee about 1893 for the purpose of putting on a ball game, at the fairgrounds. It was a sort of a traveling show. However, that day we didn't see much of a ball game, for it was more of a fight among themselves.

RELATIVES.

I had five sisters, three of whom are living and I had one half brother. My half brother died in 1932 at the Old Shawnee Mission. I have an uncle in the Cherokee Nation. He is now living near Pryor. His name is George Butler.

TRAILS.

The only trail that I know much about is the trail named for my grandfather, a sort of a trail of a traveling merchant through this wild country. This trail ran from Amarillo, Texas, to Abilene, Kansas, passing near Anadarko. I understand my grandfather died at Council Hill in the Wichita Mountains near Anadarko.

INDIAN AGENCY.

The Shawnees used to get their supplies from the Sac-Fox Agency, then located near what is now Stroud. Now their agency is about two miles south of Shawnee and is used also for the Sac-Fox, Kickapoo and Pottawatomie Tribes.

6.

When I was going to school there we used to come up to the Sac-Fox agency and get supplies with a large wagon. I made the trip several times as different boys in the Shawnee Mission were appointed to make the trips as they were needed.

TRADING POSTS.

There was a place called Shawnee Town at the site of the present Agency when I was a boy. There were two or three stores there a little later on where we could buy goods. I don't remember the names of any of these merchants.

ALLOTMENTS CONTINUED.

I lived in the Cherokee Nation from 1894 to about 1919. I was in Tahlequah when some Cherokees were filing claims for allotments. W. W. Hastings was in the office at that time. Two girls came in and proved their right to land all right, but they were red-headed and freckled-faced and Hastings

couldn't help but ask them what degree of Cherokee blood they were. They said "Full-blood" and he just winked and signed them up as such.

CHURCHES.

When I was going to the Shawnee Mission, a Doctor Kirk was our minister for the Mission and neighborhood. He was a Quaker, but the church, as I remember, was Baptist.

There is a church called Montezuma here at Okfuskee, where the sermon is usually preached in Creek. A language I don't understand, so I seldom attend unless there is to be an interpreter there that day.

MUSIC.

The music for the Shawnee Dances was produced by shaking a keg covered with buckskin in which pebbles were placed.

COUNCILS.

The Shawnees just had a Council meeting and agreed what they wanted to do about their affairs and took the agreement to their agent.

If they couldn't agree on a matter they just put off deciding it until the next meeting.

OUTLAW AND LAW

At Effie Crittenden's place, two miles west of Hulbert, the Cook gang and Cherokee Bill (Bill Golsby) fought Dick and Zeke Crittenden, brothers and deputy United States Marshals. One of the officers got killed by Cherokee Bill and Jim Cook was wounded.

The bullet marks are visible on that cabin to this day.

Bill Nail and a man whose first name was Sam killed Zack Taylor, who ran the post office and a store at Melville. I think, both of these outlaws were killed by United States Marshals.

The Wickliff brothers, Charlie, the oldest, Tom and John, about sixteen, killed a United States Marshal, named Gilstrap. Charlie was killed later by one of his brothers.

Jim Cook was killed by a colored fellow, Sarl Harlen, when Jim, Newt McBroom and Ed Worford tried to take a yearling from him.

Ike Rogers captured Cherokee Bill about 1895 near Claremore. Cherokee Bill killed one of the guards after some one had slipped him a gun. He was hanged pronto.

SHAWNEE CHIEF.

White Turkey was the Chief when I was going to the Shawnee Mission. He married my aunt on my father's side.

BURIAL.

I have seen Shawnee Indians buried in the old costume of buckskin leggins and shirt and painted up

10

as if for a War Dance. Their rings, bracelets, money, ribbons, etc., were sometimes buried with them and sometimes kept out and divided among the survivors.

CHEROKEE STRIP RUN.

I was attending the Chillicothe Mission in 1893 when the Cherokee Strip was opened. The Mission was located only a half miles from the line and we played baseball and had picnics with the soldiers who were guarding the Strip from "Sooners."

School was turned out the day of the run. One old woman rode a horse for about a quarter of a mile and fell off and so filed her claim right there. Her husband caught the horse and rode on. She could have walked that far to stake land for filings.

WORLD'S FAIR.

The School Superintendent, four or five teachers and fifteen boys and girls from the Shawnee Mission

11

attended the World's Fair at Chicago, in 1893. I attended, working an hour each day in an exhibit of shoe repairing. Other exhibits for boys were harness and tailor shops and many other displays of industries. The Shawnee girls had knitting, sewing, cooking, and other exhibits for visitors to the Fair.

We were sent to the Chicago World's Fair by the Government to show examples of work done by the Indian Schools. We stayed about a month.