

John Ross, Mss. and Papers
Phillips Collection, Norman #2755-72
Oct. 15, 1910

LETTER BY MOTY TIGER

Muscogee, Okla., Oct. 15, 1910.

TO WHOM IT MAY INTEREST:

Soon after my return from Washington, D. C., last May I published a circular letter in the Creek language, giving such information therein concerning national affairs as I thought would be of interest to our non-English reading citizens. It was written in Indian alone, in the belief that our English readers must be so well aware of the posture of our national affairs from reading the daily papers, as not to care to read what was in substance a mere repetition of that which was already well known to them.

It has been suggested and urged, however, that in any such future letters, an English text be included, and this is written in response to that demand.

The accompanying Indian letter undertakes to inform the reader that the specific provision of the act of Congress extending

the period of restrictions on the alienation of certain Indian lands to twenty-five years, commonly known as the McCumber amendment, which adventurous real estate speculators vigorously attacked as being unconstitutional, had been affirmed and fully sustained by the U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals, Eight Circuit.

That tribunal has held that:

"It is within the power of Congress to enlarge the period within which an Indian allottee is prohibited from alienating his land beyond that imposed when the allotment was made, so long as the land is held by the allottee, although in the meantime he may have been made a citizen."

This obviates the plea of unconstitutionality so far as this Court is concerned, and has operated to check in some measure the unscrupulous practices of some over zealous purchasers of Indian lands, and to turn them to methods more in keeping with the principles of legitimate business and fair dealing in their transactions with our people. The question, however, has been appealed to the Supreme Court at Washington.

SCHOOLS, ETC.

The Interior Department of the Government by an act of Congress was given complete control and management of all our educational interests which formerly were operated by the action of our national council, and the Secretary in the exercise of the power so conferred abolished all of our schools save three, namely, that

at Eufaula, the one at Nu Yaka, and the one at Sapulpa. These school buildings have been repaired at an aggregate cost approximating some \$18,000.00, no part of which as I am informed is taken from the national funds of the Creek Nation. The school at Eufaula is devoted to the education of Creek Indian girls exclusively, while those of Nu Yaka and Sapulpa accommodate boys and girls alike. In these two latter institutions, Creek orphans are accorded the preference. If there was but one vacancy to be filled, and two or more applicants desired the place, it would be given to the one who happened to be an orphan.

This preference may have been allowed in response to my persistent insistence on the department that some special provision be made for the care of our orphans in lieu of our orphan home at Okmulgee now discontinued. Under the present arrangement quite as great a number of orphans, it is believed, may be accommodated in the two schools as were interned in the Okmulgee Orphan Home when it was conducted as such home.

The Interior Department has succeeded in effecting an arrangement with the government Indian schools, the Haskell Institute at Lawrence, Kansas, and Chilocco, whereby Indian pupils from the Five Civilized Tribes may enter and enjoy educational privileges for the period of three (3) years without any cost to their respective nations. In these schools the Creeks and Seminoles together have about 178 pupils.

Our old school properties including 40 acres of land each, may be reported as follows:

Eufaula--Now conducted by the government as female school.

Nu Yaka--Now conducted by the government as mixed school.

Sapulpa--Now conducted by the government as mixed school.

Coweta--Sold by the government.

Wealaka--Sold by the government.

Orphan Home (negro)--Sold by the government.

Wetumpka--Yet to be disposed of.

Creek Orphan Home--Yet to be disposed of.

Pecan Creek (negro)--Yet to be disposed of.

Tallahassee (negro)--Yet to be disposed of.

CAPITOL BUILDING.

In addition to this, the Nation has its council house at Okmulgee which has been materially enhanced in value and appearance by the laying of spacious cement sidewalks on each of its sides, rendering it as it now stands, a desirable piece of property.

Under our agreement with the government this, too, may be sold and the proceeds passed to the credit of the nation, but which has not yet been done. Many patriotic and intelligent citizens strongly favor some arrangement by the government whereby it may be retained intact as a memorial to the Muscogee Nation indefinitely, and where may be preserved and kept on exhibition all such characteristic objects as shall serve to commemorate the fact that such a

people once existed, after all shall have passed away. No Creek citizen seems to desire to see the old capitol pile, about which cluster so many curious and intensely interesting associations as well as memories of the most momentous periods of Creek history, go for a paltry money consideration into hands that will raze it and put the grounds to mean uses. I confess that I am not free from this common sentiment, but as we know, the disposition of it is wholly with the Interior Department, and I can but wait and see.

UNALLOTTED LANDS.

Expressed approximately the Nation has about 68,000 acres of unallotted lands which is to be sold as I am informed, as follows:

1st. These surplus lands will be advertised for at least 30 days. After which

2nd. They will be sold at the court house of the county in which they are located.

3rd. The lands must be sold for a price not less than double the present government appraisement.

4th. They will be sold at public auction to the highest bidder.

5th. One-fourth of the purchase price must be paid in cash at the time of purchase; one-fourth in six (6) months, and the balance in eighteen (18) months. All deferred payments shall bear 6 per cent interest.

6th. Deeds to the lands shall not issue until all pay-

ments have been completed.

I am informed that it is the hope of the department to begin sale some time between the 1st and the 10th of December next. I, as well as all our citizens, am very anxious that the government proceed to equalize the value of the allotments of land of our people as we understand our agreements with the government to stipulate, and in the hope of contributing toward such action, I expect to visit Washington on the assembling of Congress in December next.

Your humble servant,

MOTY TIGER,

Chief of Creek Nation.