

M-24
CHOCTAW INDIAN FAIR
PHILADELPHIA, MISSISSIPPI
DATE: AUGUST 13, 1969
BY: J. W. TYNER

The Five Civilized Tribes, along with the many others, did not have their origin in Oklahoma. The large area of southeast Oklahoma that was once the great Choctaw Nation, now have Counties by name of Choctaw, McCurtain, Pushmataha, Atoka, and LeFlore. These names came from the native home of the Choctaws in Mississippi. So like the Cherokees, Creeks, Seminoles, and Chickasaws, the Choctaws of Oklahoma have close ties with their native homeland.

Great honor must be given to those small bands of tribes who fought and defied the Whiteman Government and refused to be forcibly moved to Indian Territory. Among those small bands were the Cherokees of North Carolina, the Seminoles of Florida, and the Choctaws of Mississippi. Under great odds and hardships these peoples have risen to high social and economic positions in their home communities and are firmly established in their own right.

Proudly, the Mississippi Band of Choctaws stage their Twentieth Annual Choctaw Indian Fair, this year running for four days beginning August 13th. The Fair was complete, competitive with any County Fair anywhere. Few other locations could match the beautiful southern pine covered hills and valleys that served as a background for the Pearl River Indian School complex, the scene of the Fair. The Indians have long been aware of the need for unity, and here on a large sign by the stage on the football field all are informed this activity is assisted by the Association of the Southeast Indian Tribes. Many of the Oklahoma Choctaws were a part of the program and events, including the Rev. Bennett and Ruth James, both well known in the Indian world. Cherokees of Oklahoma and North Carolina in attendance seemed to be a home among their race, as were Indians of other tribes.