

Santa Monica, California,
June 24, 1944.

Mrs. George Scott,
Stigler, Oklahoma.

Dear Mrs. Scott:

I am collecting data and folklore about walking canes for a prospective book, to be called THE ROMANCE BEHIND WALKING CANES.

I enclose copy of a little story to appear in Chapter Six, titled CANES ASSOCIATED WITH INDIANS. Mrs. Annie R. Cubage, curator of the museum of the Oklahoma Historical Society gave me your name and address, suggesting that you might be able to give me additional information about Chief Green McCurtain. I would appreciate a letter from you, telling me anything that occurs to you, as you might write to a friend. Thus I would be able to improve the story and increase its reader interest.

Reply postage enclosed.

Sincerely yours,

W. J. Burtscher

W. J. Burtscher,
3102 Santa Monica Blvd.

Author of Romance in a Junk Shop
I Wrote a Journal
Man Afoot
The Romance of the Grapevine (in preparation)
The Romance behind Walking Canes (in preparation)

COPY

17th April, 1944

Mrs. Myrtle Creason,
9 NW. 30th street,
Oklahoma City, Okla.

Dear Mrs. Creason:

I received your letter of March 31st before leaving home, due to lack of time I had no opportunity whatsoever to answer it. I trust you will forgive the delay.

I do not think it would be proper for me to say whether or not I consider it necessary that the tribe have an attorney. I can give you, however, some of the things we stukk have pending and which I consider very important.

In the United States Court of Claims we have what is known as the "Eastern Boundary" case. It will eventually find its way to the Supreme Court of the United States. This far I have been able to prevent the tribe from getting hurt in this matter, but the case should be watched. This is the only case we have pending here.

In addition, however, we have quite a few condemnation cases panding in the U. S. District Court for the Eastern District of Oklahoma, and no doubt there will be more filed. There is a case pending before Judge Williams which involves certain town lots in the City of McAlester, and which, if we lose, should be appealed to the U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals. I never had any difficulty in finding work to do.

If any one is given a contract I think he should come to Washington and help with the coal sale bill. As you know, Senator Thomas was successful in getting this bill passed by the Senate. Congressman Stewart's bill is now before the House Indian Affairs Committee. As soon as he returns from Oklahoma I expect to see him and assist his in every way possible in expiditing action on this measure. We have already had hearings before the Committee on the Stewart bill, but if we are successful in getting the Committee to report the bill favorably I anticipate opposition from the House membership and much work will have to be done with them.

Trusting that this is the information you desire, I beg to remain

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) W. G. Stigler.

COPY

Oklahoma City, Okla.
May 2nd, 1944.

Honorable John Collier,
Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

Dear Mr. Collier:

We wish to call your attention to the attached instrument, a copy of which was mailed to you the 14th day of April 1944.

We have written information from Honorable W. A. Durant, principal chief of the Choctaws, in reply to the Resolution, that he had on the 11th, day of April 1944 recommended to the Commissioner that Mr. Ben Dwight be appointed.

Since it appears that Mr. Durant made his recommendation before the Resolution was received, it now rests with the Secretary of the Interior and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to determine ~~##~~ its feasibility to the extent of receiving their approval.

Your reply will greatly help in the furtherance of our plans, which in all things will be to the best interest of the Choctaw and Chickasaw Indians.

Sincerely yours.

The State Executive Committee,
Choctaw-Chickasaw Confederation.

W. W. Short, President

C. C. Chastain, 1st V. Pres.

Mrs. W. D. Austin, 2nd V. Pres.

Mrs. Myrtle Creason, Secretary

Geo. W. Burris, Treasurer.

*This sent to Sebes
also signed personally.*

COPY

Oklahoma City, Okla.
May 5th, 1944.

Honorable W. A. Durant,
Tuskahoma, Oklahoma.

Dear Mr. Durant:

Immediately after the election of W. G. Stigler to Congress from the 2nd District of Oklahoma the question of Choctaw Tribal Attorney was brought to the attention of the Executive Committee of the Choctaw-Chickasaw Confederation by individual Choctaws and the local unites of the Confederation from scattered points in the original Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations.

Opinions expressed by those interested were of various nature, which prompted the Executive Committee to the conclusion that a fair and equitable way to dispose of the matter should be sought. Thus the Resolution in the form of a petition was mailed to you for your consideration. Your reply indicates that you had already made your recommendation to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs before the Resolution reached its destination.

We are receiving complaints from many places in the Choctaw Nation relative to this, therefore, we believe it will be to the best interest of all concerned that you recall the recommendation; that the Choctaws be advised of the fact, and that they be given the opportunity to have some voice in the matter. For the maintenance of harmony and continuity of that cooperative spirit among our people and officials we kindly ask to be heard in this particular case.

May we hear at your earliest convenience.

Very truly yours,

Executive Committee, Mrs. Myrtle Creason, State Secy.
Choctaw-Chickasaw Confederation Choctaw-Chickasaw Confederation.

COPY

Tuskahoma, Oklahoma
April 14th, 1944.

Hon. W. Short, President,
Choctaw-Chickasaw Confederation,
1126 N. Robinson,
Oklahoma City, Okla.

Dear Mr. Short:

On April 11th 1944, I recommended Hon. Ben Dwight of Oklahoma City, to John Collier, Commissioner of Indian Affairs and requested him to appoint Hon. Ben Dwight as Choctaw Attorney to succeed Hon. W. G. Stigler who resigned April 10th, 1944.

Very respectfully

W. A. Durant,
Principal Chief of the
Choctaw Nation.

cc
C. C. Chastain
Mrs. W. D. Austin
Geo. W. Burris
Mrs. Myrtle Creason.

COPY

The Executive Committee of the Choctaw-Chickasaw Confederation duly elected and acting under provisions of the Constitution and By-Laws of said Confederation with the vested right to exercise certain prerogatives of the Confederation and in behalf of an aggregate membership of 11,000 dies hereby make the following recommendations:

~~WHEREAS~~, the recent election of Hon. W. G. Stigler to Congress from the 2nd District of Oklahoma did cause the office of Choctaw National Attorney to become vacant and,

~~WHEREAS~~, it is deemed right and proper that all members of the Confederation and others interested be fully informed and advised in the premises thus decide what should be done or declared with reference to the vacancy.

~~THEREFORE~~, the Hon. W. A. Durant, principal chief of the Choctaws be and he is hereby petitioned to withhold appointment of a Tribal Attorney to succeed Stigler, until at such time the Confederation and those interested will have had ample time in which to make the necessary investigation.

Passed and approved this 5th day of April, 1944.

Committee:

W. W. Short, President.
C. C. Chastain, 1st V. Pres.
Mrs. W. D. Austin, 2nd V. Pres.
Mrs. Myrtle Creason, Secretary
Geo. W. Bussis, Treasurer.

The original sent:

Hon. W. A. Durant, Tuakahoma, Okla.

Copies sent to:

Hon. Harold. L. Ickes,
Secy. of the Interior,
Washington, D. C.

Hon. John Collier,
Indian Affairs,
Washington, D. C.

Senator Elmer Thomas,
Senator E. L. Moore
Hon Paul Stewart
Hon. W. G. Stigler.

COPY

April 25th, 1944.

Honorable John Collier,
10th floor Merchandise Mart,
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Sir:

I am just in receipt of a Resolution adopted April 5, 1944 by the Choctaw-Chickasaw Confederation that you hold in abeyance the appointment of a Choctaw National Attorney until such time as they may have an opportunity to give some thought to the matter and make recommendations for the successor of Honorable W. G. Stigler who is now a member of Congress. ^{asking}

I represent 80% of the Choctaw Indians and am in hearty accord with their views as set forth in the above mentioned resolution which was sent to the Principal Chief, Honorable W. A. Durant, Honorable Hatold L. Ickes, to you, and to the Congressional delegates from Oklahoma who have Choctaws in their districts.

I surely will appreciate your consideration in this respect.

Yours Truly,

(Signed) Paul Stewart.

COPY

Oklahoma City, Okla.
April 20, 1944.

Honorable Paul Stewart,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Stewart:

Now that the Easter recess is over, we hope our coal sale bill will soon come up for consideration, however we are sure you are doing all possible for it. We can't help wondering just what the Indian Bureau has to recommend and if their recommendation is necessary why it isn't forthcoming.

In view of the fact that the Choctaw National Attorney's office became vacant with the election of W. G. Stigler to Congress the question came up as to whether we (Choctaws) need an attorney full time; need one part time, or need one at all. Because of the many issues involved the Executive Committee of the Choctaw-Chickasaw Confederation adopted a resolution petitioning the principal chief, W. A. Durant, and others, to withhold the appointment of any one to this office until such time as all necessary investigations can be made. You, among others, received a copy of this.

Immediately after receiving the original resolution, chief Durant addressed a letter to each member of the committee with the information that on April 10th he received the resignation of Stigler and on the 11th of April he recommended Hon. Ben Dwight for appointment and asked Commissioner Collier to so appoint him.

We hope you will bear with us, for it is necessary to go back to the organization of the Choctaw-Chickasaw Confederation that you may understand our position. Because of his knowledge of our affairs, we, in Oklahoma City (where the CCC originated) called Ben Dwight into consultation. At our first meeting with him he stated: "I am in sympathy with your movement and will help all I can, but I must tell you that I have political scars among our people (Choctaws) and you must not put me forward or you will defeat your objective." We have kept this in mind all along. When we first went down in the Nation (your District) to contact the people their first statement was: "If Ben Dwight is at the head of this we will have nothing to do with it." All the time we have felt kindly toward him and have consulted him in most of our plans and he has very generously given of his knowledge.

On Wednesday morning, after the Tuesday election, he was the first person called. His views were asked. He replied: "I believe we should first secure the views of Mr. Durant on the subject and I will be glad to write him immediately." He was told that this matter would be discussed at the regular meeting of the Confederation the following Tuesday evening and that we hoped to have a report from him at that time. He also suggested that the matter not be brought before the general meeting, but before the Choctaws only. To this date we have not had

a report from him.

From all past experiences we are convinced that if he is appointed to this position it will meet with strenuous displeasure among your constituents. Please understand, we, the Choctaw-Chickasaw Confederation, are not endorsing any one - we are merely asking for time. The unit members in Oklahoma City have liked Mr. Dwight, but this thing he has done has shattered our confidence and added to his political scars. We have been told repeatedly: "Yes, Ben Dwight is a smart man, but you had better watch him. He is tricky." Now we believe this.

Of course, Mr. Stewart, we understand you may not have any direct influence in this matter, but we believe you should understand the situation. We have had several conversations with Senator Thomas since Mr. Stigler's election and he is familiar with conditions. We believe he will be glad to talk things over with you, if you so desire.

We have not tried to contact Mr. Dwight since the day after the election and we have no intention of doing so. The next move is his. I'm sure you know how hard we have worked to secure the confidence and cooperation of all members of both tribes in this movement and we believe we have this. We hate to see something happen to disrupt this cooperation.

We shall be glad to hear from you at any time.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. Myrtle Greason, State Secy.
Choctaw-Chickasaw Confederation.



ELMER THOMAS FOR SENATOR CLUB

Headquarters - 312 COTTON EXCHANGE BUILDING

OKLAHOMA CITY 2 OKLAHOMA

July 9th. 1944

805 N.E. 20th St.

Mrs. Alice Scott
Spiro, Oklahoma

RE-ELECT
ELMER THOMAS
FOR
SENATOR

Dear Alice :

As you were on the Resolutions Committee at Talihina I would like for you to give me your opinion as to what was the consensus of opinion in regard to electing of delegates to attend the conference on the Coal Sale Bill.

Was it that the different counties in the old Choctaw and Chickasaw Nations must elect Choctaws and Chickasaws and have their alternates, or was it their prerogative to elect who they thought could best serve them either of the two, or say it might be three of one and one of the other as the case might be.

It seemed quite natural to think that each county would elect only one delegate and alternate, for if carried out by two's would make a very unwieldy committee. Besides should we be entirely restricted to elect two from each tribe when a more efficient person might be elected to fill a place.

At our last meeting June 30th. we had a picnic at a park and a supper, some wanted to elect our quota, Mr. Short thought we might wait a little longer, and the resolutions we were to be governed by no one had to read, but one who had been quite inactive in our meetings jumped up and said he nominated Josh Anderson a Choctaw, this brought about a discussion, I thought Josh would relinquish his place to Mr. Short to whom we owe the success of our organization to more than anyone else, but he did not and moved we have a Chickasaw delegate and alternate, which carried then Mr. Short was elected after Anderson was. Mrs. Creason was elected Mr. Anderson's alternate, I was nominated as an alternate to Mr. Short & at once some one said she is on the Choctaw roll, true I am but I am as much Chickasaw as Choctaw. So a woman who is not as well known and never has been active in this organization and others as I was elected.

I am not sore as they say about that but that may come about in other localities. From a copy of the resolutions I have it is not very clear to me, and I would like to have your interpretation on the subject.

(over)

I am wondering if your county has had a meeting and elected a delegate and alternate or how you did you work. Of course I am hoping you were elected on or the other persons to attend, and no doubt if you were elected an alternate you would sit in on the meetings and be ready to fill the place of the delegate if it became necessary, and you might be extended the courtesy some time during the time the members are discussing the different phases of the bill the way we wish to have our money paid to us.

I hope Mr. Scott is feeling better these days, and I will hear from you at your earliest convenience.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely

Erma C. Conlan

N. B.

We have been doing all we could of course for Ben. Thomas campaign I feel you and the rest of our appreciative Indians are doing the same. Last week I sent out a mimeographed letter over my signature to about 400, it did take a little time to even sign my name. but I was glad to do it.