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Nannie Lee Burns,
Investigator,
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An Interview With Mrs. Cora Haymen
Miami, Oklahoma

MODOC BRIEFS.

My parents were brought with the Modocs from Oregon in 1873 when I was three years old. I do not remember either of them as both were of those Modocs who died soon after their arrival and they are buried in two of the row of unmarked graves in the Modoc cemetery. I do not even know which ones are their graves.

Bereft of parents, I was cared for by friends of the tribe and I took the name Cora Pickering and as soon I was old enough was placed in the Quapaw Mission Boarding School. Asa and Emeline Tuttle were in charge of the Mission then. Emeline Tuttle visited me when she was last in this country on a visit in June, 1907.

Among the memories of those days are the following: Miss Kimble, who was the daughter of one of the soldiers stationed south of Baxter Springs, Kansas, in the Quapaw Nation came to the mission and taught us the song,

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"The Great Physician". On Sundays and holidays, the ladies would take us for long walks and the memories of the beautiful prairies with their many colored flowers remain with me. Spring was looked forward to for the finding of the first flowers. We looked forward to summer because then there were more flowers, and we loved finding the beautiful 'horse plumes! Then, too, that was the season for wading, swimming and other sports. There was a large spring near the Mission and we used to mire in the earth around it and we named the pool of water running from the stream, "Pike Ocean". One day the ladies had taken us to Rock Creek some distance south of the Mission and were all in swimming when some men rode up and said that a large herd of cattle were near and headed that way and these men told us to get away quick. We quickly collected our clothes from the bank and ran a long ways downstream before we even stopped.

In those days cattle were everywhere. The country for some miles around the Mission was one great prairie and it was only a short distance from the Military Road between Baxter Springs on the North and Fort Gibson on the

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south. The cattle crossed at Rock Springs which is just south and east of Lincolnville. Besides the herds that were pastured during the grass season on the Quapaw lands, men who were driving cattle from the south and east to Baxter Springs, Kansas, then the end of the railroad, to ship their cattle would graze them along on either side of the trail as they moved northward with them. Seldom did one see any vehicles going north except the stage coach as then all the travel was southward and seldom did you see anyone traveling alone. Often you would see a long string of covered wagons one after another filled with families and driving their stock which was likely

being watched by other members of the family on horse-back moving along the trail. Blue Mound, just over the Kansas state line north of us, was another beautiful sight and was named from the blue haze that often hung over the mound.

When I was in my early teens, I was sent to the White's Institute in Indiana by the Friends where I remained till I was grown and after leaving school I remained for some time working before I returned to the

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Modoc Reserve here. I entered the service and was then connected with the Wyandotte Mission School first in 1891.

I was married to Francis M. Hayman who was born August 15, 1866, and we returned to the Modoc Reserve to my land where my first children were born. From there we went to Seneca, Missouri. My husband died April 25, 1909, leaving me with four small children. I re-entered the service and was again sent to the Wyandotte School where I worked and placed my children in school. The year that I first went to Wyandotte in 1891 was the year that the buildings were moved from the foot of the hill to their present location on the hill. Miss Clara Allen, who taught some forty years there and who was buried at Seneca, Missouri, last week, was teaching at the Wyandotte School when I first went there. She was a primary teacher.

Two years ago after the required years of service, I was retired and until the first of this month I made my home in Sapulpa. I am now making my home in Miami.

I am the only one of the original hundred and fifty-two Modocs who came to this country in 1873 still living in Oklahoma; however, some few of the older

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Modocs who returned to their home in Oregon are still there. Last Summer I visited Oregon in company with a granddaughter and I talked to the Modocs and also visited the lava beds which were the scene of the battle between the Modocs and the men seeking to remove my people from their former home.

The church of the Modocs is still standing and is still in use; originally it was located some distance south of the place where it now stands. Some years after it was built realizing that it would be more convenient for the church and cemetery to be close, the church was moved onto the four acres adjoining the cemetery on the south which is its present location. The building is a one story frame structure about twenty-eight feet wide and sixty feet long. The north part of the building about thirty-three or five feet is used as the church, furnished with comfortable homemade benches, and an organ, pulpit, a large wood heating stove, a bell and hung conspicuously on the wall to the right of the pulpit is a large framed portrait of Steamboat Frank, a full blood Modoc and pastor of this church when first erected.

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The balance of the building separated from the part used as a church by a solid wall is used as living quarters for the pastor and at present is occupied by Mr. Huston, his wife and three small children. Mr. Huston is a Friends' Missionary who conducts services there on Sunday and prayer meetings on Wednesday night.

To the average passer-by, the living quarters are not discernible as the door to these quarters is on the east side and cannot be seen from the public road which passes the church on the west side. The rock walls of a small building are still standing near the southeast corner of the church and there is another small building of native lumber east of the house. Three very old trees and one large dead tree still stand in front of the church. Two of the trees are maples and have been planted there.

The Modoc cemetery which comprises four acres lies just north of the church and is substantially fenced with a good post and wire fence and is entered from the highway on the west through a large frame gate of iron and woven wire. The ground is free today from any foreign growth and excepting where the graves are has been mowed

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this fall. The graves are in three groups which are on three knolls. Flowers and rosebushes and other shrubs have been placed at some of the later graves and are marked by monuments, but the greater number of the graves were made there in the first few years after the Modocs came when so many of the tribe sickened and died and are buried in a row or rather two rows marked by native rocks but no one today knows one grave from another.

Only one grave and that at the north fence is that of one not a member of the tribe. It is still held as tribal property and very noticeable / ^{is} a large old cedar tree planted near the north group of graves.

Originally the Modocs who were brought to the Indian Territory in 1873 were in the Pit River Valley in Northern California when their fertile lands were coveted by the white settlers. They at that time made their living by tilling the soil. They were moved by force to Oregon to the rocky slopes of the mountains. Becoming dissatisfied because they could not make a living in this arid country, a part of the Modocs under the leadership of Captain Jack returned to their old home. The whites complained and

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soldiers were sent to take them back. The Indians were unwilling to return and retreated to the Lava Beds where they successfully held off the forces sent against them for seven months. A commission of men under General Canby arranged for a conference with them. The Modocs remembering how twenty-one years before their leaders had been killed while attending a council resorted to the same tactics and having no confidence in the white leaders, killed General Canby and Dr. Thomas and wounded Commissioner Meacham.

With the aid of the Warm Springs Indians, the band of Modocs were finally captured. Captain Jack, the leader and his three principal assistants were court-martialed and shot and the remaining hundred and fifty-two members of the band were transferred by the soldiers to the Indian Territory by way of Baxter Springs, Kansas. A large number of this band were women and children as most of the men had been killed. They were brought by train to Baxter Springs and then removed just over the line south of the city to the site of building that had been built there when the government expected to remove the Kiowas,

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Comanches, Cheyennes and Arapahoes. The building was a frame one, thirty by hundred feet, and was not large enough to accommodate the officers and soldiers and Indians. They were forced through the winter to live as best they could until the Government purchased four thousand acres of land from the Shawnees on the Missouri State Line just south of the Peorias. This exposed living in a strange climate caused the death of a large number of the Modocs during the first years after they came. In Government statistics in 1875, we find the following words, "the Modocs have won not only the admiration and praise but also the sympathy and friendship of those living around them."

In 1875, statistics show that the Modocs made and put in fences of seventeen thousand two hundred rails built twelve log houses and planted fifty acres of corn and the average number of men who were able to work was twenty. Also another item of interest in the same article is that Bogus Charlie, the principal chief, saved enough money to purchase a cow and a calf. The number of Modocs now is a hundred and seventeen including the newborns.

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In 1876, the Modocs had forty acres of wheat and about a hundred and forty acres of corn, potatoes and vegetables on the community farm and besides breaking seven hundred and eight acres of new land for themselves, the Modocs built six thousand three hundred and eighty rods of fence, nineteen houses and three shops. This year the Modocs had thirty-two children in school.

In 1879 the total number of Modocs dropped to ninety-nine including the women and children. This year the Modocs had built their commodious school and church building of which they were very proud. In the year when they organized a Sabbath School and completed a church organization forty-eight put their names down as members and one of their own members, Steamboat Frank, was installed as pastor.

After a few years as pastor Steamboat Frank requested through the Friends Yearly Meeting, the privilege to obtain more education and through the Friends it was arranged for him and his young son to go to an institution in Maine to study. The son returned to this country but the father was stricken by consumption and died and is

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buried among his new friends in the far eastern state. Before Steamboat Frank went east to study, he requested and obtained permission from the Friends to travel and lecture on the evils of strong drink and at one time occupied the speaker's platform at Ottumwa, Iowa with Frances Willard and delivered from the platform an earnest appeal for his white brethren to see the evils resulting from the use of "firewater".
