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W. T. Holland,
Field Worker.

Indian Doctors And How Selected,
Samuel Perry, Full Blood Shawnee,
509 So. Maybelle, Tulsa, Okla.

"My grandfather, John Perry, told many stories of the origin of Indian customs and practices, and among them was how they selected the men who later were to become their Doctors, or "Medicine Men".

A man of the Shawnees' would send his son out, usually in the woods to meet the Great Spirit. The boy was usually about twelve years of age before they were sent on this mission, and the purpose of the trip was to receive instructions from the Great Spirit and be dedicated as a future "Medicine Man" or Doctor. So the story runs this way.

The father called his son to his side and told him he was about to be sent on a great mission. "So be not afraid, as your mission is to meet a great and good spirit who will tell you many things, which you are to remember forever for if this spirit meets you and talks to you, you are acceptable to him, and when you reach the age of 22 you will be a great doctor of our tribe. I have prepared a lunch for you to take with you for you are to remain out all day, if necessary, and meet the spirit, who will see you and come to you, if you are to be selected as a Doctor."

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The boy, of course, didn't want to go, as it was a new and strange trip for him, and like most boys, feared anything so mysterious and unknown to him, but, somewhat dejected, he takes his lunch and starts on his journey to the forest to a meeting which may decide his destiny. He reached the forest and walks around looking and listening to every sound. Finally a cloud comes up, the thunder soars, and the lightning flashes, and the boy seeks shelter on the lee side of a great tree.

Here he remains until the rain ceases to fall, which is about the middle of the afternoon and he is wondering if he will meet the spirit. When some one calls to him and he sees a man approaching. The man comes up, and seeing the boy is afraid, tells him to "Fear not" as he is the Great Spirit he was sent to meet and that he would give him instructions as to what to do.

He was told that he had been selected to become a great doctor of the tribe and that he would then give him his first lesson in how to treat the sick, when he become of age, and from time to time, he would come to him and give him further lessons or instructions. The first instruction was as follows:

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"You will select poles, or have them brought to you, about 6 or 7 feet in length, green and easily bent, you will place the butt ends of these in the ground, in a circular way, about six feet in diameter, bind these over in the center, so as to lap, or meet, tie them together, and these form the frame work for a sweat house, (similar to modern turkish baths) cover these with buffalo hides, then dig some holes in ground, around the inside of the house, in which to place hot stones. When a man is to be treated, he is placed in the sweat house, on a cot, with his head on the outside, then stones are heated until very hot, these are placed in the holes within the sweat house, water is poured on them, the cover of the house kept closed, until the patient has been in here an hour or two, or longer, depending on the severity of his illness. The patient is examined from time to time to determine the cause and location in his body of the sickness. The sweating will bring out the location of the misery. You will then chew some wild tobacco, mixed with other herbs, and will blow on the effected part and the man will be restored to health. Remember this, my boy, and I will come to you again and,

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will give you more instructions as to what to do. And here, take a look of my hair as a token, and to show your father and the tribe that you, this day, have met with the Great Spirit and he has selected you to become a great Doctor. Now go, my son, and I will see you again". So, this is the way a doctor is selected, or was selected during the lifetime of my grandfather, John Perry, full blood Shawnee.

The Doctor's fee for a cure was always one pony. They could diagnose a case pretty well and when called, they would examine the patient thoroughly and if he decided he was too sick to cure, he wouldn't do anything about it, as he didn't receive any fee when the patient died, but if he thought the patient would recover, he would give him the treatments, and when well, he would collect his fee, one pony.

PERRY, SAMUEL

. INTERVIEW

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"Green Corn Dance"
of
The Shawnee Indians,
Samuel Perry, Full Blood.

The green corn dance was held at the same place as the bread dance, their general meeting place, or camp ground.

All families gathered at a time called by their Chief. This was in August, usually, when the corn was green, but mature enough to eat.

The families would gather, bringing green corn and other vegetables and meal for bread, also blankets and camping equipment, as they spent some time at this feast or dance.

The women would prepare the meal, cooking it in great iron kettles, which were kept at the camping ground permanently. When the food was ready, the drum would begin to beat. This was the signal to begin the dance.

The men would line up, the women being seated about on the ground or log seats. The men then would begin to dance around, single file, and sing. (I'm getting ahead, they would all eat before the first dance) songs peculiar to the men, war songs etc. They