

PERRY, SAMUEL

~~INTERVIEW~~

5450/

113

W. T. Holland.
Field Worker.

Indian Ball Game

As told by Samuel Perry,
Full Blood Shawnee,
409So. Maybelle, Tulsa, Okla.

This game was usually played at their gathering grounds, where they met for their various dances, or sports.

They would put two poles at each end of the playing field which was about 75 yards long. These would serve as goal posts. They then would divide the crowd, the men playing on one side, and the women on the other. Before the starting of the game, the Chief would make a talk, explaining the game, or rules, and would tell them it was all in fun, and that there was not to be any hard feelings, regardless of how the game ended. He then would appoint an umpire, who would sit on the side line to mark or keep the score. This was done with sticks. He would have eight sticks, for each side, and as each side made a point, or score, he would stick up one of the sticks indicating the score, and the side getting eight scores first was declared the winner. The ball used was a home made ball, made of rags and covered with buck skin, and about the size of our present day indoor ball.

When all was ready, the Chief would take the ball

2

to the center of the field and toss it up, and then the game was on. The men were required to kick the ball through to the goal line, but the women threw or tossed the ball from one to the other and passed it through the goal line in that manner; and the side kicking or passing the ball through the goal posts eight times first, won the game. All present who wanted to play, or could be accommodated on the field, were welcome to play.

PERRY, SAMUEL

INTERVIEW

116

5619

W. T. Holland,
Field Worker.

5/19
117

THE BUFFALO DANCE

by

Samuel Perry, Full Blood Shawnee.

"As told to me by my grandfather John Perry."

The Buffalo Dance, as celebrated in the early days, followed within a few days after the Green Corn Dance. This Green Corn Dance was usually held the latter part of August, and a short time later, a few days only, came the Buffalo Dance. In fact, the people who had gathered for and attended the Green Corn Dance, stayed on to celebrate the Buffalo Dance.

A few of the best marksmen were chosen to hunt the buffalo and bring in the kill. They would locate the herd, which in the early days was not hard to find, and would ride into the herd, which usually stampeded on sight of the hunters, and the chase would begin. The hunter had to be an expert rider as well as an expert shot, as they rode without saddles, and of course had to use both hands when shooting the bow and arrow, which was used to kill the buffalo.

Each hunter would pick out his animal, and ride up to his side, and shoot his arrow, or arrows, if more than one was necessary, into the side of the buffalo, back of its shoulder. These usually penetrated, and while the beast didn't fall immediately, he rarely ever went more than a 100 or 200 yards until he did. The hunter kept watch and when the

-2-

the herd had passed, would go up and finish his work, if need be. The meat was then carried into camp, prepared for eating by the women of the tribe, and when blessed by the Chief, was placed in the center of the camp and partaken of. Then to the music of the drums, and singing of their songs, suitable for the occasion the dancing would begin. This was usually late in the afternoon, so dancing and eating would continue all night, stopping at intervals to eat and rest.

Later, after the buffalo had disappeared, cattle were killed and barbecued. In fact, that is the meat used now in celebrating the Buffalo Dance.

The buffaloes were fat along about the first of September or last of August, when this dance was held. Cattle too, running on the range, are also fat at this time of the year.