

PERKINS, LOUIE INTERVIEW.

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Indian-Pioneer History S-149
Grant Foreman, Director,
211 Federal Building.
Muskogee, Oklahoma.

An interview with,
Louie Perkins
Age 63 years,

Peter W. Cole
Field worker,
May 25, 1937.

HISTORY IN BRIEF OF TAMAHA OSHE INDIAN-CHURCH.

Louie Perkins, born July 5, 1874, living on his own allotment, states as follows.

I was born in 1874 and am now living two and one half miles from where I was born in this county. My father, King Perkins, and mother, Betsey Williams, were born and reared in Indian Territory, now Oklahoma. Mother died in 1876 and father in 1888. My mother was buried in an old family burial ground four miles west from where I am living. road running north and south runs thru the old family grave. This section of land, including the burial ground, is now the allotment of Nelson Jacob, a full blood Choctaw. There is no rock or tombstone to show where the graves are on this road. My father was buried at Perkins grave yard.

TAMAHA OSHE

Tamaha Oshe (Small Village- a Choctaw word)
was a name of an Indian Presbyterian Church

and not a name of town or village once located on what is now the allotment of Louie Perkins about three miles west of Caney, Oklahoma. This church was first organized by Freeman Tobly, Dave Perkins, Solomon Goforth, and about twenty other members. Governor Allen Wright, once Chief of Choctaw Nation, and father of Dr. E. N. Wright, was pastor of the church at that time. The church has been discontinued since 1879. There is nothing to show where the old church stood only a large cedar tree that was set by Freeman Tobly. The tree still stands and is about ten or twelve inches in diameter at the bottom. There were three regular campers who camped at all meetings of this church. They were Dave Perkins, Solomon Goforth and Elsie Perkins, who was my grandmother, and who died in 1899.

Since the church was abolished and the land was allotted to me by the government, there is nothing left to show of the old church as to where it stood as the land is all under cultivation.

There was no church bell in those days and the only means of notifying folks that church was

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ready for service was that a deacon would blow a horn or oyster shell, which he usually had at all times. After Allen Wright died and he was buried at Boggy Depot; his son, Frank Wright, succeeded him and later, Charles Hotchkins, who lived eight miles from Caddo, Oklahoma, Rev. J. T. Reed and others were succeeding ministers tho' all are now dead.

In my young days, I attended neighborhood school at this Tamaha Oshe Church and my teacher's name was Lizzie Perkins, wife of Nathaniel Perkins. Later I went to Armstrong Academy in 1889 and stayed three years before I returned home. I again went to Tamaha Oshe Church neighborhood school and this time my teacher was Jincy Jones, an Indian lady.

After I became of age I married Nellie Dosier, October 17, 1897, at Pleasant Hill, a Methodist minister named Charles Armby performing

the ceremony and to this union there were eleven children born to us, but only two are living. My first wife died in 1918. Later I married Jincy Gipson, May 18, 1921, Reverend Henry J. Bond, a Cumberland Presbyterian minister officiating. To this union there are five children and all are living.

The experience I had in my first married life was that we lived in a 10 X 10 log house, built by an old pioneer. This old house was on the place when I allotted the land in 1902. We had chairs, bed, and tables, but we had to cook outdoors as we had no cook stove at that time. The first time I ever owned a clock was after I was married.

I used to hunt a great deal in day times as well as at night. I hunted coons, opossum, skunks and mink as a means of supporting my wife and family with clothes and shoes. I often made six foot rails at fifty cents a hundred. There was an old store keeper who lived at Boggy Depot, whose name was Joe Morrow who bought hides, furs and rails that I made at all times.

The only entertainment we had to pass away time was that we meet on Saturday some where in the woods and had a big rifle shooting contest, including other games, consisting of horseshoe pitching and the marble game. Baseball games were unknown in those days. I belong to Haiyip-atukia clan which signifies, one who is full of spirit, lively, ready and willing to help in case of necessity. My mother belonged to Okla-falaya (A quiet person, or disposition, never has much to say; a person of few words.)

Once I was subpoenaed as a juror in Pushmataha District Court. Wilburn Hampton was the presiding Judge and Kennedy Lawrence was the Sheriff. We served as jury to try murder, and larceny of horses cases. One case that was tried and dismissed by the Judge was that of a man and his family who were going to church in a wagon. He had taken his rifle with him with the intention of killing a deer and turkey on his return toward home on the next following week. On arriving at church he was seen by some woman (not member of the family) as he was wrapping the gun in a blanket to put away. Complaint was made and charges filed against this

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man for "Entering Church Premises with a Dangerous Weapon". He was arrested and tried but came clear.

In the manslaughter case one was convicted and sentenced to be shot but the other man came clear.

Under the Indian territorial law, if one was found guilty of murder he was always sentenced to be shot.

There was no such thing as life imprisonment in a murder case. That is, in the first degree murder.

All took place in Blue County, now Bryan County.

The pay we received as jurors was a counter script worth about \$1.00. The court would be in session for a month but the most the jurors would be paid was about \$20.00 in the entire term of court.

In 1913 I joined a Methodist church and later transferred to Cumberland Presbyterian, and was ordained minister at Pigeon Roost in 1918 and have been a minister since, though I went back to Methodist. I am the pastor of one church, The Pleasant Hill.

The little town of Caney near where I live got its name from a small branch which runs thro'

and near the present town. There used to be a big patch of cane that grew on the banks of the small creek and that is where it first originated its name.

In 1898 Elsie Perkins, widow of Dave Perkins, my grand parents, was the first woman to put up a little grocery stand, in Caney and Henry Perkins, her son, was in charge of the store. There were nothing at Caney but a few section houses that were built and H. B. Hardy was the first Post Master that we ever had in this little town. He operated a store with the office and Judge J. G. Rails of Atoka, Oklahoma, came and surveyed lots for the town. This was the beginning of the building up of the town of Caney, Oklahoma.