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INTERVIEW WITH SAM HENDRICKS

FIELD WORKER GUS HUMMINGBIRD.

April 26, 1937

Sam Hendricks was born in Goingsnake District in the Cherokee Nation, June 10, 1859. Mr. Hendricks was raised in poverty and like many other Indians boys of his time, he did not attend school.

Mr. Hendrick's mother, Mary Fourkiller, a Full-Blood Cherokee Indian, married a white man by the name of Wash Hendricks, who came to the Indian country about 1856 as a trader. To this union were born Sam and Willie. Sam still lives about three miles from his birth place. Willie lives some where in Arkansas.

Wash Hendricks, the father of Sam, was a Full-blood German whom the Cherokees called "Dutchman" at that time. Came to this county in 1838 from Germany.

The parents of Mary Fourkiller, the mother of Sam, disliked Wash Hendricks, because they did not want the Cherokees intermarrying with the Whites, This attitude of dislike on the part of Mary's parents, caused Hendricks to leave his wife when Sam was about ten months old. Mary died a few months afterwards. At Mary's death Larkin Fourkiller, his grandfather took him.

Mr. Fourkiller operated a small farm on Evansville Creek, raised wheat, corn, and stock. Sam attended a small country

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school at Piney. He did not learn any thing, not until he was eighteen, he learned to write his name.

The nearest trading point at that time was Dutch Mills, Arkansas which was seven miles away. Rough roads in winter made it impossible to get there, and in that case they went to Tom Blues store near Evansville, Arkansas, about two miles north of the present village. Here Mr. Fourkiller cashed all his pension checks he was a Federal soldier during Civil War.

Mr. Hendricks recalls when he first voted in 1877. He was eighteen years old. The Cherokees were living better at that time, that was about twelve years after the Civil War. He recalls his grandfather owning several herds of cattle in different localities, everybody was trying to raise stock as there was plenty of free range and water. People had begun to get interested in farming.

Sickness caused by communicable diseases was seldom known among the Cherokees. Only chills were common, and they treated these with herbs, namely, Mullen root, tea, was used to cure chills.

Consumption or tuberculosis was the dreaded disease among the Cherokees, which they thought was inherited in the family. Mr. Hendricks recalls families being wiped out by this disease.

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Indians had different opinions as to where T. B. attacked the victim, therefore they had no remedy for that.

Among the noted Medicine men at that time were Jim Swimmer and Thompson Charles, Full-Bloods.

As stated before, Mr. Hendricks recalls the first election. He was not interested in voting but at that time Indians had secret organizations, and representatives of a certain organization of which he believes his grandfather was a member came to him by night, and explained to him the issues of the campaign. After thoroughly understanding the importance of election, he never has missed an election.

The voting place was Peavine School at present about seven miles north of Stilwell, near the Whitmire Plantation as it was called then. The Whitmires were wealthy Cherokees and owned slaves.

Mr. Hendricks spoke the English language but could not read. He did not use any intoxicating liquors, and he was appointed Criminal Deputy under Eli Terrapin, Sheriff. While serving in this office he arrested a noted Cherokee Nation bootlegger named Charley Twist, just over the line in Indian Territory, near Greersburg, Arkansas. Twist was convicted for transporting, and sentenced two years in Federal jail at Ft.

Smith.

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He also served as Deputy under Ben Knight. Serving under Knight he arrested Jim Ballew, a Cherokee gunman at a Cherokee gathering. After serving in this capacity for four years he resigned.

He witnessed the trial and hanging of Terrapin Leach, near Goingsnake Court House, for murdering a girl by the name of Hitcher. At Leach's trial Jesse Redbird was Prosecutor, Dull Crittenden, Judge and a man by name of Proctor was Sheriff. Many people witnessed this hanging. Leach made a few remarks on the scaffold, warned the younger generation to be obedient to law.

Mr. Hendricks attended the Peace Committee from the factioned Cherokees by Civil War in 1866, in the Illinois district, somewhere near the present site of Gore, Oklahoma. The purpose of this meeting was to make peace among themselves. The Cherokees who favored the North and those who went with the South. He remembers one speaker, Aaron Goings-wolfe, a prominent Cherokee of his time. Hundreds of Cherokees were present.