

SHAWNEE, WILLIAM

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INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM SHAWNEE
R.F.D.4, Vinita, Oklahoma

My name is William Shawnee. I live on land allotted me by the Cherokee Nation at the foot of the White Oak Hills. My postoffice address is Vinita, R. F. D. 4.

My father's name was Lewis Shawnee. He was a fullblood Delaware Indian. My mother's name was Frances Rogers a fullblood Shawnee Indian. My grandfather, Sampson Rogers, came to the Indian Territory with the Shawnee Tribe, from Wyandotte County, Kansas, in the year 1870 and located near Coody's Bluff, then known as Cooweescoowee District, Cherokee Nation.

In 1883 my father left Coody's Bluff and came to the White Oak Hills. He traded for the farm owned by Sam Bread, a Cherokee fullblood which he later allotted. The land was in the timberland of the White Oak Hills, and was the kind of land most of the Shawnees settled on. So that they would be handy to

wood, water and game. Plenty of fine prairie land could have been had a short distance from where the Indians settled, but they had never lived on the prairie and preferred the rough timberland to the good prairie land. To be right truthful, the tribe had never been real dirt farmers like we have learned to be since Statehood. A small patch of corn with which to make their bread was about all the farming they did in those days.

With me, it is different. When allotment came I picked my land at the foot of rough timberland, on the prairie, and now have some fine farm land, but the section lines came in such a way that part of my land was on the hillside and I got a hundred acres instead of eighty acres for my allotment. My father allotted a hundred and twenty acres of the rougher land, and my mother got one hundred acres. Since their death I now own two hundred acres of their allotment and a hundred of my own. The old home place is one of the oldest in this section of the country and the old log house which they erected in 1870 is a hewed post oak log house still stands in our yard and is used as a kitchen and an eating house.

SHAWNEE LIFE IN KANSAS

I am familiar with the life and customs among the Shawnee tribe in Kansas before they moved to the Indian Territory. My grandparents and other oldtimers have told me much about them, and although I was born after we moved here, I have taken much time and interest in learning of their life before they came here.

DRESS AND ADORNMENT

Back on the Indian Reservation in Kansas our tribe still clung to the Indian garb, or way of dressing. Many of the men wore buckskin clothing and moccasins, as far as they could be had, and their head-gear was decorated with feathers, especially when they were dressed for some special occasion, like the annual Stomp Dance.

The women wore dresses which they had learned to make from their white neighbors a good many years back, but they were of cloth of brilliant colors. Both men and women wore blankets for their winter wraps, and they, too, were of loud and bright colors. Tents and teepees were used for the annual Stomp Dance which lasted

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for two weeks each year. Everyone on the Reservation would attend this Stomp Dance and most of them came with their teepees and camped on the ground for the two weeks. Not many of the fullbloods spoke English back there in Kansas but most of them can talk more or less English now although they speak the Shawnee language in talking to one another.

HAD OWN TRIBAL GOVERNMENT

The Shawnee tribe had their own tribal governments in Kansas, the same as the Cherokees had here. Some of the chiefs who served the people back there, and removed to the Indian Territory with their tribes, were Johnson Blackfeather, Cyrus C. Cornatzer and Henry Rogers, the latter being the Chief when the tribe broke up their government to come here.

SENT DELEGATES TO TREAT WITH CHEROKEES

The Federal Government has sent a delegation to Kansas to treat with the Shawnee tribe asking them to remove to the Cherokee Nation as a friendly tribe of Indians, and when this treaty was completed Chief

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Henry Rogers appointed Graham Rogers and Charles Tucker to go to Washington to make a treaty with the Cherokees for the removal of the Shawnee tribe to the Cherokee Nation. They were met there by a Cherokee delegation composed of Wm. P. Adair and H. D. Reece, and the treaty was made, completed and signed by the two delegations on June 7th, 1869.

SHAWNEES DID NOT WAIT

When the Commissioners from Washington who came to Kansas to treat with the Shawnees had completed their agreement that the tribe was to remove to the Cherokee Nation, many of the Shawnees did not wait for the treaty to be made with the Cherokees at Washington, D. C.; but a large delegation immediately set out for the Cherokee Nation where they selected their places of residence, and came back and moved their families down as soon as possible. Some of these whom I remember and who settled not far from where I now live, were Sampson Rogers, Samuel Cornatzer, Henry Rogers, Johnson Blackfeather, Charles Tucker, and many others.

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Henry Rogers and Charles Tucker were among the Shawnee officials who helped make the treaty with the Cherokees. They settled on Mustang Creek, twelve miles southeast of Vinita in the Delaware District, and were still looked upon as leaders among the Shawnee tribe when the rest of them followed in 1870 and 1871.

BECAME CHEROKEE CITIZENS

The treaty made with the Cherokees by the Shawnee tribe made them full fledged citizens of the Cherokee Nation, the same as the Cherokees, and many of the half-breed Shawnees held office under the Cherokee Tribal Government, the same as a Cherokee. Some of them whom I remember as serving are:

Members of National Cherokee Council;

Thomas Bluejacket, Reverend Mr. Charles Bluejacket,

Cyrus C. Cornatzer, Benjamin C. Chouteau, John

Bullette, Wm. McCracken, John H. Secondine, Dempsey

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Fields Coker, Washington White, John M. Tucker, Fred McDaniel, John H. Shufeldt, John N. Denbo. Some of these, however, are Delawares.

SOME SHAWNEES* STAYED IN KANSAS

Some of the Shawnee Indians did not come to Indian Territory within the time limit. The treaty specified that all Shawnees should remove themselves within two years from the date when the treaty was signed. All who moved within that time were known as Loyal Shawnees, while those who remained longer than two years before coming were known as Absentee Shawnees. To become a full fledged citizen of the Cherokee Nation you had to register your name with the Cherokee officials before the two year limit was up. This caused much litigation in years to come, as some of the Absentee Shawnees, those who had come later and whose names were not on the Cherokee rolls, attempted to draw payments. The same thing happened with the Delaware tribe of Indians.

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However, some of the Absentee Shawnees who stayed behind received much more money for their land back in Kansas than did the ones who sold for whatever they could get. Some of the Chouteau family, of the Shawnee tribe, and the Ketchums, received about \$75.00/^{per}acre for their land, and one branch of the Chouteau family who lived in the Kaw Valley joining Kansas City, received an enormous price for their land and came to the Cherokee Nation immensely rich. They were near relatives of the famous Pierre and Augustus Chouteau, and were mixed with the French by marrying into the Shawnee family.

AN OLD CIVIL WAR CASE

The heirs of Sally or Mary, of whom I am one, now have pending in the District court of Craig County as "Old Civil War" case, brought up from the County Court of Craig County. I refer you to the journal entry of the County Court for a description of this case, which reads in part, as follows;

"That this court has jurisdiction of the persons, and subject matter involved in this action; that due notice

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of said hearing was given by personal service; and by service by publication, in the manner and form, provided by law, and by order of this court.

That said Sally, or Mary Rogers, Nancy Blue-jacket and Henry F. A. (Foxall) Rogers, were duly enrolled members of the Loyal Shawnee Indians, in the state of Kansas, and that each received an allotment of land in the Shawnee Reservation, in the said state, pursuant to an act of congress, and the treaty with the said Shawnee tribe of Indians, entered into and proclaimed in 1854; that said persons never received in allotment, any land in the Cherokee Nation, Indian Territory.

That Sally or Mary Rogers, and her said husband, Henry F.A. (Foxall) Rogers, together with other Loyal Shawnees, in the state of Kansas, prior to June 9, 1871, and pursuant to a treaty agreement between the said Shawnees and the Cherokees, completed June 7, 1869, and approved by the President of the United States June 9, 1869, removed from the Shawnee Reservation in Kansas to the Cherokee Nation, Indian Territory, and became

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citizens of the Cherokee Nation, with all the rights and privileges of a native Cherokee and were thereafter subject to the laws of the Cherokee Nation. The said Sally or Mary Rogers and her husband lived in the Cherokee Nation until their death.

That Nancy Bluejacket, Aunt of the said Sally or Mary Rogers died a resident of the Shawnee Reservation in the state of Kansas in 1876, intestate, without issue, seized and possessed of her said allotted land, in said reservation; that said Nancy Bluejacket was a claimant against the United States for property taken from her during the late Civil War, in the sum of \$5,220.00, as evidenced by Civil War claim No. 103, by virtue of a treaty entered into between the said Shawnee Indians, and other Indian Tribes of the United States, on February 23, 1867, ratified by Congress June 8, 1868, and a report of the Secretary of the Interior to the Congress, and that the said Sally or Mary Rogers was a claimant against the United States for property taken from her

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during the late Civil War, in the sum of \$445.00, as evidenced by Civil War claim, No. 86, by virtue of the foresaid agreement and the report of the Secretary of the Interior to the congress.

The Court further finds that the said Sally or Mary Rogers was adjudged to be the sole and only surviving heir and next to kin, of the said Nancy Bluejacket, deceased, and entitled to take the whole estate, of which she died, seized and possessed, by the District Court, at the July 1876 term, in Wyandotte County, Kansas, which said judgment on appeal to the Supreme Court of Kansas was affirmed and that prior to the rendition of said judgment, the council and chief of the Shawnee tribe in the state of Kansas, in accordance with the tribal law and custom adjudged the said Sally or Mary Rogers to be the sole surviving heir and next to kin of the said Nancy Bluejacket, her deceased Aunt, and that she was entitled to succeed to all the estate of which her Aunt died, seized and possessed.

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The Court further finds, that the said Henry F.A. (Foxall) Rogers was not survived by issue, father, mother, brother or sister, of the whole or half blood, or survived by any brother or sister, of the whole or half blood; that the grandfather of the Henry F.A. (Foxall) Rogers had two sons, Luther Rogers and William Rogers; said Luther Rogers, now deceased, had one son, an only child, the said Henry F.A. (Foxall) Rogers; that the said William Rogers had only two children, Sampson or Samuel Rogers and Thomas or Benjamin Rogers; that the said Sampson or Samuel Rogers had three children only, Mary Rogers, Charles Rogers and Francis Rogers Shawnee; that Thomas Rogers, or Benjamin Thomas Rogers had only one child, Rebecca Hilderbrand; that the said Francis Rogers Shawnee died in 1933 and is survived by only one son, William Shawnee, that all the Rogers line of kindred above named are now deceased, except the said William Shawnee, and the said Rebecca Hilderbrand, who are the only surviving, next of kin, of the said Henry F. A. (Foxall) Rogers, and

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they are each entitled to claim and be paid one fourth of said Civil War Claims.

It is therefore considered, ordered and decreed by the court, that the heirs of the said Sally or Mary Rogers, deceased, and the only heirs entitled to claim, or be paid any part, of said Civil war claims, are as follows:

Ben Carpenter, Anna Dick, nee Carpenter; Mollie H. Lee, nee Carpenter; William Daugherty, Leora Daugherty, John Daugherty, Irene Daugherty, Cornelius White, Pete White, William Shawnee and Rebecca Hilderbrand, and that said persons are entitled to claim and be paid said Civil War claim.

E. K. Landrum, County Judge.