

SPANIARD, JAMES

INTERVIEW

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Nettie Cain,
Investigator,
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An Interview With James Spaniard

James Spaniard is the English name and Testustina Harjo the Indian name of this Creek Indian, who lives in Wetumka and who was born in the Creek Nation at Tullamushee near where Lamar is now, in 1856.

His father, Sparnie Harjo, was a Creek Indian but the place of his birth is unknown; his mother, Millie, came from Alabama when she was a very small girl.

James was a very small boy when the Civil War began. His mother took him and went South and stayed for three years. They never saw or heard from his father until they returned home to the Indian Territory and the father returned also.

While Mrs. Spaniard and James were in the South, they were in a large camp with many other Indians. And during this time an epidemic of smallpox broke out killing many of the Indians. James was vaccinated at that time and he never had the smallpox.

There was an epidemic of measles in the camp that caused many deaths.

THE ISPARHECHAR OR GREEN PEACH WAR.

The cause of the Isparhechar War was that Isparhechar, an Indian leader, wanted to continue under the Indian laws and not under the New Constitution.

General Pleasant Porter and Captain McIntosh were under the Government orders and they sent Henna Chupcho as a leader, with other committeemen or Lighthorsemen, from Okmulgee to a meeting which they were having at the Brick House to talk to Isparhechar about the New Constitution.

Isparhechar refused to obey orders and went to the Sac-Fox country. The United States Government sent after him and he was brought back and put in jail and was told that he would be punished if he did not agree to abide by the New Constitution, which he agreed to do.

Sometime after that Isparhechar got his friends together and was elected chief of the Creek Nation over two other men, serving over two years. He did not make a very good chief.

James Spaniard served as a Lighthorseman under George Long.

Chutke, a Seminole Indian, was sentenced to be whipped with a hundred lashes for stealing and James Spaniard helped

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to give the punishment. One prisoner, a negro boy, had been sentenced to death for stealing and James was ordered to take charge of him until the day of execution. The captain or judge set the day and this boy was kept at the Spaniard home chained to a block. This boy sometimes would help with the home chores. He was returned but the judge set him free.

When a prisoner was sentenced to be whipped, the captain of the Lighthorsemen would serve as judge and would appoint a Lighthorseman to give twenty-five lashes and then another Lighthorseman to give an additional twenty-five lashes and the captain would count the lashes.

James was with the other Lighthorsemen when two men were killed near the old Wetumka Mission. A negro man named California refused to let them arrest him.

He had been stealing from the Indians. The other was a Seminole Indian man.

James served one year as a member of the house of Warriors and his duty was to see that the New Constitution was obeyed.

There were forty-four Indians towns and six districts in the Creek Nation.

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James Spaniard also served one year as a member of the House of Kings; his duty was to see that the widows and orphans of the Creek Tribe were provided for.