

INDEX CARDS

Schools--Quallah Reservation
Language--Cherokee
Marriage--Cherokee
Intoxicants--Cherokee Nation East
Immigration--Cherokee Nation
Districts--Cherokee
Courts--Cherokee
Law Enforcement--Cherokee
Law Enforcement--Federal
Outlaws--Dalton Brothers
Trails
Finance--Cherokee Nation
Newspapers--Cherokee Advocate
Land Cessions--Osage Reservation
Collections
Townsites--Indian Territory
Weather
Outlaws--Starr, Henry
Names--Cherokee
Sign Language--Osage
Walton, John C.
Burial Customs--Cherokee
Outlaws
Goldsby, Crawford

INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM TAYLOR
BARTLESVILLE, OKLA

FIELD WORKER ALENE D. MCDO BELL
April 12, 1937

EXPERIENCES OF A DEPUTY MARSHAL IN THE INDIAN
TERRITORY.

William Taylor (name in Cherokee Indian language is Well Cataulkah). was born November 4, 1863, in a log house with dirt floors, on the Qualley Reservation in Jackson County, North Carolina. This reservation is still in existence and has about 3,000 Indians settled there.

Father--James Taylor, a quarter blood Cherokee Indian.

Mother--Addie Manchester, a white woman.

My father was a Civil War veteran. He was an attorney for the Indians in North Carolina for forty years before he came to the Indian Territory. His death occurred in Claremore, Oklahoma, when he was 85 years old. My mother died and is buried in Murphy, North Carolina.

I received my early education in North Carolina at the Indian school, Chee-o-yah, near Robinsville, Graham County. This school had puncheon seats (made of upright framing timber). I attended this school for five years, then the Government sent about twenty of us (all boys) to a boarding school for two years. This school was located at Weaverville, North Carolina. The

girls at the school on the reservation wore dresses made of flour sacks, of flour. The dresses had no shape but were loose like a sack and had the XX across the shoulders of the back.

There are two dialects in the Cherokee language, the overhill and the underhill dialect. I speak the Indian language as well as the English, as I was reared with the Indians on the reservation.

When the Indians traveled, the men rode the ponies and the women walked behind. If they had several wives, which they frequently did, they would follow in a string, the oldest first and the rest of them in ages respectively.

While in school in North Carolina, I saw a man, Ches-qui-ah (meaning bird) who was 135 years old. His legs were paralyzed and the flesh was dried to the bones. He had a wonderful physique except his legs.

We attended church in an ox cart, where the church had puncheon floors and seats. The ox cart was also used in lumber camps to transport lumber.

My father made numerous trips to Washington D. C., a distance of 500 miles on muleback. There was a breast strap fastened to the front of the saddle and a tail crop on the

back to keep the saddle from sliding off the mules back while going over the mountains.

The Cherokee Indian was the first tribe found on the American soil by Columbus in 1492. The first treaty between the white man and the Indian was in 1783 and the last one was in 1866.

The Indian man would take his various wives and travel several miles to trade a bushel of corn for a gallon of fire-water(whiskey). Three gallons of whiskey were made from one bushel of corn. The women seldom drank, but sometimes the men would get too drunk to ride and they would have to camp until he was sober enough to travel, and often this would be a week.

I came to the Indian Territory in 1880, when I was 16 years of age, and have made this my home continuously since. I came here on the Invitation Act and we were called emigrants.

The Territory was divided into districts and I settled in the Coe-wees-coe-wee District. This district was named for John Ross, Chief of the Cherokee Nation. The center of this district was located six miles north of Claremore, now Rogers County. After statehood this district was divided into six

counties, Mayes, Craig, Nowata, Washington, Rogers and part of Tulsa.

Their justice court was held six miles west of Claremore, in a log house. The hickory tree still stands where the criminals were tied when they were whipped. If they swore a lie or stole a horse, they were given one hundred licks on the bare back. Their criminal court was tried at the Kansas line. The United States court was held at Fort Smith, Arkansas.

Grat and Bob Dalton were United States Marshals and they would gather their prisoners up in a wagon, chaining negroes and white men together to take them to court. They received pay for the mileage of these prisoners and made as many miles for each prisoner as possible.

I knew the Dalton boys well and remember while they were United States Marshals, they stole horses in Osage County and hired men to drive them to the Boston Mountains. They would meet a family traveling through the territory and would slip a gallon of whiskey in their wagon in order to arrest him and collect mileage for his trip to Fort Smith.

There were no roads in the territory, and people traveled by cow trails.

If they wanted to go somewhere, they decided the direction of their destination and started off across the country, blazing their own trail. They usually traveled by horseback or in wagons.

Script was used for money and if a white man worked for an Indian, he received 50 cents per month and was paid in script. This money was worth face value in United States money. Their supplies were bought in Claremore and the nearest bank was at Coffeyville, Kansas. Their supplies were paid for in script.

The Cherokee newspaper was the "Cherokee Advocate." This paper was first published in 1844 at Park Hill, three miles south of Tahlequah, William P. Ross was the founder and first editor. It was half in Cherokee and half English language. It was a weekly paper and sold for 50 cents per year.

In 1888 the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad was built west to what is now Verdigris, in Rogers County. In 1887-1889 the Iron Mountain, now known as the Missouri Pacific railroad, built a line up the Arkansas valley from Fort Smith, Arkansas, to Fort Gibson, Indian Territory, then on the Coffeyville, Kansas.

In about 1867 the Delaware Indians came from Kansas to the Indian Territory. About the same time the Shawnee and Osage Indians settled here. The Osages bought their land in Osage County from the Cherokee Indians for \$1.40 an acre. They paid them 40 cents and still owe them the dollar. This has caused an unfriendly feeling between the two tribes.

My family in North Carolina and myself have been personally acquainted with each of the Cherokee Indian Chiefs. Sequoyah (whose English name is George Guess), John Rogers, Lewis Downing, William Ross, Charles Thompson, Dennis Bushyhead, Joel Mayes, C. J. Harris, S. H. Mayes, W. C. Rogers and Thomas M Buffington, the latter living in Vinita. Chief Sequoyah invented the Cherokee alphabet. I have a picture of these chiefs.

My allotment consisted of 80 acres northeast of Claremore and 120 acres in what is now Sequoyah County, near Marble City. There are six different kinds of marble in the mountains surrounding this city. I filed a claim on 300 acres joining Claremore and paid 50 cents an acre, later I formed a townsite on this land and got the Dawes Commission to remove the restrictions and sold the lots for \$25.00 each. I signed 4,000 town lot deeds in two days.

7

I bought 13 acres for \$100.00, joining Claremore and built a house at a cost of \$1100.00 I cut this acreage into town lots, adding this to Claremore as the Taylor Addition. This land and home sold for \$9,000.00. I then moved to my allotment northeast of Claremore and engaged in the mercantile and cattle business. This store was located where the flag station of Sequoyah is now. I had built a new building and was just getting settled in it when a cyclone blew it away. My cyclone insurance had not been transferred to the new building and I lost \$7,000.00.

When I first settled in Rogers County, there were no houses between Claremore and the Clem Rogers home (birthplace of the famous Will Rogers) a distance of 15 miles. The next house was located at Talala and the next one at Nowata.

I managed a ranch for a man named McClellan, near Claremore for seven years. While working here I also improved a home where I moved later.

In 1892 I was married to Jennie B. Rivens, a white woman. Judge Watt Starr read the marriage vows at his home three miles north of Claremore. We were the parents of eight children.

I was superstitious about buying furniture before I was ready to use it so after we were married we went to Coffeyville.

Kansas, to buy our furniture.

On our return trip from Coffeyville, Henry Starr, the notorious outlaw, who was then about eighteen years old, met us at the depot and wanted to pawn his belt full of cartridges for money, to pay his fare to Nowata. This was agreed upon and about a week later Henry redeemed his belt. I had known Henry for a number of years.

I remember his first crime. He had been selling whiskey and Claude Marshall, United States Marshal, was sent from Fort Smith to arrest him. They met on the prairie near Claremore and the marshal was "too slow on the draw" and Henry killed him. From that time Henry became^a desperate outlaw. He robbed a bank at Stroud and two banks at Chandler, the same day. A sixteen year old boy shot him in the hip at Chandler and Henry was captured and sentenced to 25 years but was later pardoned.

He and two other Claremore boys, Charley Brackett and Rufus Roland, robbed a bank at Harrison, Arkansas, where Henry was fatally wounded. This robbery amounted to \$63,000. Henry was captured several times but only served short sentences when would receive a pardon.

I know an Indian family named Galcatcher who had a boy six

years old that was not weaned. They adopted a white child whose parents had died. This child had blue eyes and light hair and very fair complexion. He could speak Indian better than most Indians, and he did not speak English. It sounded odd to hear him speak Indian. His name was Williams.

There was an Indian child in this community who had no name and a friend of mine, Jake Lips, Clerk of the Cherokee Council, offered the child's parents a plug of Star tobacco if he could name the child. They agreed so he named the child "Sardine", in Cherokee it is Oo-scoo-hah.

I have a picture of myself, and my brother-in-law taken with an Indian man whose English name was Rain-in-the-face, This old Indian, To-She-Wa-Ste, Old Bear Legs, 118 years old, killed more bears in his time than any other Osage in the tribe. He once killed a Cinnamon bear with his knife, but the bear bit a large piece out of his leg, and that is how he came by the name Bear Legs. In this picture Old Bear Legs is dressed in full Indian costume of buckskin with a feather in his headband. I paid him \$1.00 and gave him one of the pictures to get him to pose for this picture. He was very suspicious and refused for some time.

Different tribes of Indians have different languages and one tribe cannot communicate with another. The Osage Indians are the most difficult to understand, for their language is a "grunt and point language".

I knew three full-blood Indians, who were councilmen; their names were Ro-che-ong, Sa-gee-San-der and Har-den-trot, the latter of Vinita. They each weighed about four-hundred pounds and they would walk down the street with their arms locked, this took up the street. This was a very comical sight. The little station of Sageeyah was named for Sa-gee-San-der.

I organized a double quartette of Indians to sing at the inauguration of Governor Walton. I do not remember all of their names but among them was a Baptist preacher named Cochran and he carried a badly faded and frayed out flag he had carried during the Civil War. This looked funny but he enjoyed it very much. An Indian woman named Dreadful Water, who was 65 years old, sang high tenor. There were two others whose names I remember, one was Rattling Courd and the other was Bluebird. These Indians were all from Tahlequah. They did not sing the words but sang the notes. I had to gather

them up and return them to their homes for they are very unreliable.

Cochran, the preacher, was near 100 years old and had preached for 60 years. He told of getting drunk and falling out of a wagon with twelve people in it. The wagon ran over his neck, and he wasn't hurt. I attended a funeral once that he conducted and when we arrived at the grave, the gravediggers had a blanket stretched over four poles and had their feet hanging down in the grave and were playing "seven up" on the blanket.

At this Inauguration there was a fiddlers' contest held, and an old Indian woman 104 years old played the "fiddle" and won first money. She had to be helped to the platform, but when she played, she could hardly keep her feet still.

THE NEGROES.

There were two classes of negroes in the Indian Territory, the State negroes and the Freedman. The State negroes were those who voluntarily emigrated into the territory from other states and the Freedman were those who were formerly slaves of the Indians. When slavery was abolished, the government compelled the Indians to divide their lands with the Freedmen.

In the Cherokee Nation each Freedman was given 40 acres, this was varied in other tribes.

NEGRO OUTLAW.

There was a mulatto outlaw, Bill Goldsby, better known as Cherokee Bill, who robbed the Nowata depot several times. He always warned the agent he would return later and he always played a lone hand. He was a very dangerous man and hard one to capture. He killed several men, one of these was his brother-in-law at whose house he usually stayed. He was afraid this man would at sometime "turn him in," or would tell something on him. When he shot him, after he was dead he shot him seven times and said every time he shot him, his mouth flew open. He remarked that was the only murder that haunted him. He robbed the bank at Lenapah, Oklahoma, and killed one man.

He was later captured by United States Marshal, Ike Rogers, who was tipped off by a negro friend of Bill's. The capture took place at this negro's house. Bill was removing his shoe, the negro hit him across the neck with a poker and, while he was in a dazed condition, the negro and Rogers tied him. Even though he was in a dazed condition, they could hardly handle him.

He was taken to Fort Smith, Arkansas, to await his trial and while he was there, his sister brought him a birthday cake. Inside, the cake was hollowed out large enough to place a 45 six shooter and bullets. The guard did not take the cake but let her give it to him. He killed three guards before the cell was opened. Henry Starr was in the same jail and he told them if they would let him out, he could take the gun away from him. They opened his cell and he "just demanded the gun" and Cherokee Bill handed it to him. Bill was a very game man and the general opinion was, he did not want to kill Henry for they had always been friends. He was put in chains until the time of his execution. He was hung and his mother received his body and buried him in the Soldier's Cemetery at Fort Gibson, Indian Territory. Henry Starr was pardoned for this brave act.

Ike Rogers was a bully and when he met Clarence, a brother of Cherokee Bill's, he was very abusive to him, Clarence told him if he would come to Fort Gibson, he would settle with him. Rogers went to Fort Gibson by appointment and Clarence shot him on the depot platform and searched him for the guns belonging to his brother, taking his Winchester. He threw the Winchester under the train and crawled under the car and very calmly made his escape on a gray horse which was tied near the railroad.

He was never arrested for this murder for the public was in sympathy with him. I witnessed this murder and like the rest of the public was glad Ike Rogers was killed. He came to Fort Gibson that morning and his body was returned on the same train that afternoon.

While I was Deputy Sheriff, there was a squaw-man charged with burning a barn. He was taken to a little stone building, used as a jail, and another deputy named Sunday and myself guarded him for three months before his trial. He was a braggart and laughed at the idea of his punishment, said he would never be punished because he was a squaw-man and the law would be lenient with him. (The punishment for this type of crime was to make the prisoners cut wood for the Male and Female Indian schools, the Insane Asylum and the Orphan's Asylum. They used a six pound ax.) One night there was a dance some distance from where we were located. Mr. Sunday was a "fiddler", so we decided to go to the dance and take our prisoner with us. The prisoner was riding a race horse and on the trip that evening he tried to escape, Mr. Sunday started after him and Sunday's horse jumped a little ravine and broke a blood vessel. When the horse fell, the prisoner stopped and rode back to the scene of the accident.

15

The horse died and Sunday and I had to continue the trip on one horse. The next morning on the return trip, he tried again to escape. I shot at him and came so close to hitting him, he was too frightened to move and stopped his horse and waited for us. We started to court with our prisoner and were snow bound for a week. One night it was so cold, I took him down stairs where we had a fire, and as there was only one bed, I chained him to my leg and we both slept in one bed. In a few days I had a bad case of Gray-backs. We finally arrived with our man and he was sentenced to cut wood.

COMMENTS.

Mr. Taylor is a very interesting character and enjoys telling his experiences of the early days. His history goes back about 65 years and his life has been a very active one. He improved twenty different homes in Rogers County. Clem Rogers (father of Will Rogers, the humorous cowboy movie star) and Mr. Taylor were very close friends for a number of years. He knew Will Rogers from the time he was $1\frac{1}{2}$ years old. Will's birthday and his were the same day of the month.

Mr. Taylor makes his home with his daughter, Miss Beulah Taylor, at the Keystone Hotel, Bartlesville, Oklahoma.