

McGREGOR, GEORGE W.

INTERVIEW

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Interview with George W. McGregor
Tahlequah, Oklahoma

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MAYOR OF TAHLEQUAH.

In the year 1890, the town of Tahlequah was incorporated under the laws of the Cherokee Nation and an election was held. A mayor, clerk, tax assessor, and members of the town council were selected by the voters. As mayor of the town, George W. Hughes was elected. He was a white citizen of the Cherokee Nation, his wife being one of its citizens by blood of a prominent family.

George W. Hughes, a native of Athens, Tennessee, had served as a soldier in the war of the United States with Mexico in 1846-7, and some years later established himself in the state of Arkansas. After living for some time in the town of Cincinnati, a few miles east of the boundary line between the state and the Indian Territory, Hughes removed to Tahlequah, he and his family occupying a residence in the southwestern limits of the town.

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The Hughes blacksmith shops, for he maintained his place of occupation at several sites during his long period of residence at Tahlequah, were well patronized, as in years past there was much horse and mule shoeing to be done, and farm implements to be repaired. Men living in various and oftentimes distant portions of the Tahlequah district were among the number who availed themselves of the services of George W. Hughes and of the assistant he often kept in the shop in whichever section of the town it was situated.

Tahlequah had once before been incorporated under the Cherokee laws, that is, in 1852, and nothing further was done in the way of incorporation until nearly forty years later, or in 1890.

As mayor of the Cherokee capital George W. Hughes gave very satisfactory service, being a man of much intelligence, and in cases where he performed the services of police judge, he gave each individual offender against the statutes of the town fair and impartial hearing. Offenders were subject to fines

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upon being proved guilty, or upon pleading guilty, and in addition sentences to a brief period in the calaboose could be and were sometimes imposed. In all matters pertaining to the welfare of the town Mayor Hughes exhibited much interest.

During his active years George W. Hughes had witnessed many occurrences of varied interest, and he had a number of experiences which were they now extant would prove of interest. In giving reminiscences concerning people and episodes of the earlier years, the veteran blacksmith and the first mayor of Tahlequah, sometimes gave to his hearers details as to his army experience in the country of the Mexicans, as well as concerning other subjects.

Upon conclusion of his official duties as Mayor of Tahlequah, George W. Hughes, having become advanced in age, engaged no more in active pursuits, and after comparatively few years died at his Tahlequah home. He was buried in the Tahlequah cemetery.

George McGregor who gave the above biography of George W. Hughes is a long-time resident of Tahlequah.