

JACKSON, SABER

INTERVIEW

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ISPAHECHA DAYS & INCIDENTS

An interview of Saber Jackson, age
not known, Arbeka Town (tulwa),
Okemah, Oklahoma

Billie Byrd, Field Worker
Indian-pioneer History
8-31-37

Hith-ka Hut-ke is a Muskogee-Creek Indian word meaning White Peace. The White Peace was an article or symbol worn by some bands of the Muskogee-Creek Indian outlaws. This band called themselves the Le-kot-ha (south). The symbol was made of corn shucks tied into a knot and pinned on the left side of clothes up along the breast or sometimes worn by the men on their hats. The leader of this band was known as Ispahecha who was a native of old Alabama and of the Cussetah tribal town (tulwa).

Ispahecha was so strongly opposed to the new Muskogee-Creek laws as he was in favor of the old treaty which had been made in Alabama in 1832. He organized and mobilized followers and these were the people who used the White Peace symbol.

This uprising is known to have started as a re-

sult of the killing of the captain of the Lighthorsemen of the Wewoka district and later on some six of Jimmie Larney's lighthorsemen from the Wewoka District were killed. It was after this incident that Ispahecha began to flee with his followers to the west but he was overtaken by the government troops on the Sac and Fox reservation.

Word of the fleeing of Ispahecha spread rapidly in the Muskogee-Creek country and there was fear and excitement among the other neutral Indians, for they believed that there was to be a fight and that was why Ispahecha was fleeing with his followers. That is why some of the peaceful Indians fled south to the Tokpafka country to the south while some joined Ispahecha in his flight.

Some of the members of Ispahecha band were riding horseback and some were walking because the wagons were loaded with bedding, cooking utensils, flour, brown sugar and other necessary articles.

It was during this time that when the band had made camp and retired they awoke the next morning to find that they were covered with snow which had fallen sometime during the night.

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Before the pursuit was taken up by the government troops, four men were sent out to warn those Indians that remained at their homes to remain at their homes and not to become alarmed because they would not be harmed. These four men who gave the warnings were all brothers and of the Seminole tribe and were named, Kin-ke-hee, John Thakko, John Fa-lek-ne and Michellie.

It is told that the following words were spoken by one of Ispahecha's men when he saw that they were to be overtaken by the government troops and when these troops were within half a mile of them, he stopped Ispahecha's men and told them to dismount and said, "If you ever thought of yourself as a man, if you ever thought that you were men, prove it now." and with these words he pointed in the direction from where they had come.

It was then that the rest of the band looked to see that the government troops were just organizing to make a final rush, and then the above mentioned man said, "My skull shall ever remain where I stand." He ordered that all dismount and while he went around

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the band with the rites of working the medicine man's charms.

When the government troops were prepared, the bugle was sounded and the rush was made by the troops. The man who had boasted that his skull would remain where he stood was the first man to mount his horse and flee. Some of the Indians just stood where they were while some of the fleeing ones were overtaken and captured.

It is said that from all the fights that ever resulted between the officials and Ispahecha's men there was only one of his men who was even a little hurt and that one had only a thumb ~~was~~ shot off. Nokos Holata Bear was the name of the man whose thumb was shot off. He was known among the Indians by that name which was later changed to Isamale Bear. He was a Civil War veteran, having served in Co. E., 1st Kansas, Indian H. Q.

It was during the time of the uprising that Tot-kus Haco, an old grey-haired man, who loved his chew awful well and thought it fun to spit and chew, loaded up his wagon with his few possessions and pro-

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visions. It is said that he had one barrel of sugar too. He started off to join Ispahecha's band from the Crowwell vicinity now. He traveled in a north-westerly direction from his home and crossed the North Canadian river at one point then came to another small branch with rather steep embankments. His team made the down grade and crossed the stream but the team became balky when they had almost climbed the other side of the embankment. It was then that the wagon tongue broke and the wagon with the contents rolled back down into the stream where it was turned upside with the wheels on top.

Seeing that the brown sugar had mixed with the stream sand, the Indian became so angry that he made a lot of noise. This was a comical sight as well as one of the many hardships of the early days.

My sister and I were right behind this man but we stopped off at one of the homes where we were persuaded that no harm would befall us and we stayed until the trouble was quieted.

No one seemed to have stolen any of the fleeing Indian's property but they were destroyed.