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BUTLER, MANLEY. - INTERVIEW

6615

L. W. Wilson
Interviewer
July 13, 1937

Interview with Manley Butler,
315 South 7th St., Muskogee, Oklahoma.

Many years before the Civil War Mr. Butler's mother used to come to the Indian Territory from Butler, Missouri, to visit her sister, who was teaching school in the Creek Nation. While on one of these visits she met Edward Butler, a full blood Cherokee Indian. Their friendship grew into a courtship and finally ended in marriage. A son was born who was named Manley Butler. Manley was born in the Indian Territory in 1860 and will be seventy-seven years old this coming August (1937).

CIVIL WAR.

At the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 Mr. Butler, together with his mother, refugeeed to Texas. His father, Edward Butler, enlisted with the Southern army, under General Stan Watie. He enlisted as a private and was finally promoted to Cavalry Captain. He fought in every encounter the Southern army had in

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the territory, the major battle being that at Honey Springs, on Elk Creek, near Oktaha, Oklahoma. The capture of the ammunition and food supply train of the Yankees near the present town of Pensacola, Oklahoma, was a victory for the Southern troops who were in return defeated at the battle of Fort Davis when the Yankees, some three or four miles away to the east of them at Fort Gibson, made a surprise attack on Fort Davis and burned the fort in 1863.

In the troop of cavalry of which Edward Butler was captain was Pleas Porter, who later became the Principal Chief of the Creek Nation. The only time Pleas Porter was injured was when he whooped some two or three times and was shot by a bushwhacker. His whoopings were contrary to the will of Captain Butler.

After the Civil War.

The Butlers returned to the Indian Territory in 1866 or 1867 and settled at what was then North Fork

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Town, and at this place Manley grew into young manhood. North Fork Town was located on the old Texas Road, about one and a half miles east of the present town of Eufaula. Mr. Butler is preparing a map of North Fork Town as it once existed. It was at North Fork Town where Albert Pike spent days in recruiting and making agreements with the Creeks and Choctaws to join the Southern army. Being located on the old Military Road, or better known as the Texas Road, this village was ever growing because all emigrants and drivers on the road to and from points in Texas to Missouri, Kansas and other northern points paused there for rest, food, shelter and repairs to their equipment. A full explanation of merchants, etc., will accompany Mr. Manley Butler's map to Mr. Foreman.

As there was no rapid transportation in the days of 1867 and 1868, not even a railroad, there

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sprang up some five miles north of North Fork Town, on the Texas Road, a village known as Fishertown.

This village was no comparison to North Fork Town as far as population was concerned, or otherwise.

A man by the name of William(Bill) Fisher, erected a building of native lumber along the road and carried a line of merchandise, which he sold to passersby as well as the Indians who lived in the surrounding community. He did a very good business and soon he became postmaster of Fishertown and had the post office in one part of his store. Fisher's home was something like a hundred and fifty or two hundred feet away from the store.

William Fisher also had a brother who lived about one mile northeast of the store. He farmed and had no interest whatsoever in the store.

Many people began to stop at Fishertown, especially those southbound, instead of North Fork Town,

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and by their so stopping a man named Rogers and his wife opened up a boarding house. Mrs. Rogers was an excellent cook and her meals became advertised all along the Texas Road and she did a wonderful business. Mr. Rogers was a tinner by trade and he conceived the idea of opening a tin shop and it was surprising the business he did in those early days. He mended pots, pans, tubs, and kettles, principally for the immigrants.

Soon a blacksmith shop was started by a man, whose name Mr. Butler could not recall. This blacksmith also did well. He would shoe the horses, and repair the wagons and buggies of those going along the road.

Railroad Construction.

In 1872 and 1873 the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad built through this section of the country, that is near North Fork Town and Fishertown, and there sprang up along this railroad the towns of Checotah,

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Eufaula and Onapa. In a short time the two villages, North Fork Town and Fishertown, became ghost towns and as time passed on the buildings were demolished or torn down, for the people had moved to the towns along the railroad.

Eufaula became one of the largest towns on the M. K. & T. Railroad between Kansas and the Texas Line.