

FOLSOM, ADAM.

INTERVIEW

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Pete W. Cole,
Interviewer,
October 15, 1937.

An Interview with Adam Folsom,
Cairo, Oklahoma.

Adam Folsom is a Choctaw Indian forty-six years old. He was once a student in the Morrow Indian Baptist Academy, later designated the Indian Orphans' Home. He still lives near the site of this Home, near Cairo, in Coal County.

We have learned that in 1870 the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad completed its line across the Kansas border, the first to enter Oklahoma. The Government had offered a grant of every other section of land for a distance of five miles on both sides of the right-of-way to the road that first reached the Territory. Three of the companies were in the race and the Katy won. This line ran first as far as Vinita. In 1871 it reached Muskogee, in 1872 extended to Texas. It was on this route that the town of Atoka was first organized as a town. There was nothing of importance that Atoka was known for other than to say that there were only a few stores on the banks of Boggy Creek and a few houses along the railroad. This

-2-

has been a trading post for the Choctaw Indians. At most times the Choctaws would bring to Atoka what they had to sell and they bought necessities in return. As the town advanced it moved farther away from the bank of the creek south until now there is nothing remaining of the first business buildings once built on the bank of Doggy. Along with the advancement and building up of the town of Atoka, one of the oldest churches of Atoka was built and an old Confederate soldier, Reverend J. S. Murrow, a missionary to Indian Territory, played an important part in the up-building of this Baptist Church. The first Baptist Church in Atoka was built a short time after the Missouri, Kansas and Texas Railroad was built through here. The church was located on the site on what is now the property of an individual. As the town advanced, the church advanced and after a few years it was moved to another location west about two blocks from the old site. There are several boys and girls who attended the Indian Baptist Academy in Atoka still living.

Adam Folsom, a full blood Choctaw Indian, once one of the students of this school in Atoka, was one of the many

-3-

students who attended school at Murrow Indian Baptist Academy. He was a very small lad at that time but he enjoyed his stay at school because there was not very much work that he could do. Most of the work was done by larger boys and girls.

After the school moved to its new location near Cairo, Oklahoma, a small place in Coal County, in Section 26, Township 2 North, Range 11 East, the name of Indian Baptist Academy was changed to Murrow Indian Orphans' Home, which disqualified Adam as a student at this school, both of his parents being alive at that time; although he was living only a short distance from school; as he was only a small lad and interested in attending school, the school authorities were kind enough to find work for him to do, so that he stayed and worked for about two years at the Indian Orphans' Academy although he did not attend school. Adam's chief work was to take mail to a flag station near the school on the Rock Island Railroad. He was also a messenger boy, drove the milch cows to pasture, carried water and other odd work, all of which he enjoyed very much.

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-4-

After this school was moved to its new location the name was changed to "Unchuka" and post office adopted by that name. The word Unchuka in Choctaw is "My Home". Therefore, the school was known as "My Home". A few years later it was discontinued and the school was consolidated with Bacone College, another Baptist School near Muskogee, Oklahoma. The old abandoned "Unchuka" Indian Orphan Home buildings are still standing at the old site badly in need of attention. Renters are working the land and taking care of the place. If proper attention were given it at the present time, this would be a wonderful place.