

FOLSOM, ISAAC

INTERVIEW

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Pete W. Cole,
Investigator.
December 23, 1937.

Interview with Isaac Folsom,
Full Blood Choctaw Indian, Age 57 years.
Atoka, Oklahoma.

The Indians, as history records, are natural born warriors. It is not to be misunderstood that they like to cause trouble, picking on the weaker ones or take advantage of personal life or property. They are a great loving people, always ready to come to your aid, fight for you, with you or against you, willing to show favor in return, but when once mistreated is not pardonable or to be forgiven. The hatred always remain in his heart and very often revenge is taken to satisfy the hatred that he has in his mind.

When a father has children it is the duty of the father to teach the boys and train them to be brave in war, hunting, and in ball playing. The girls are trained their required work by the mother or grandmother. In training the boys they have to go through much hardship, and practice and suffering, yet they must

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be able to stand all of these hardships to be a man so that the father may depend on him in time of need. If he shows weakness he is not considered as a favorite but classed only as a common man and no influence is to be bestowed on him. But rarely this kind of man ever shows up.

They have endurance of pain. They have stood the inflictions of severe pain even in torture and to one who can stand this kind of torture, he is credited with being the true exponent of every manly virtue. As a rule one who could endure the severest torture with the least suffering was regarded as most worthy and brave. It is considered weakness on the part of the man when one cannot stand the infliction of pain or if he groans or sighs during the test by the elder instructor who may be in charge.

Even women stood the test at the fire, at the stake, or when butchered up in pieces, without showing any manifestation of pain. If pain is severe now

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and then, one would groan with pain and was mocked and made fun at by the crowd who usually was present and witnessed all incidents of this kind. Of all animals of the forest the opossum and sheep are the only ones that no torture or infliction can force them to cry or squeal.

When the little Choctaw boys in their play they often took delight in testing the degrees of manhood of one another and, to see who would stand the most pain, often stirred up wasp nests, yellow jackets, bumble bee or hornets and stand firm in their place but having a switch in their hand, fighting, just to see which one of the boys can stand the longest. Of course, the boys would retreat when these mighty warriors charged and began to use their business end, but it was fun to them to see who can stand the pain the longest. Even when the small boys playing about around the house, in their game, they would place a

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hot coal of fire in the palm of his hand just to see how long one can stand the pain. How to be brave and endurance of pain was commonly practiced among the Choctaw tribes of Indians. When one cannot stand the infliction in this child game, he was classed as a eunuch(hobak). This was one reason that a boy dislikes to be called hobak that he wanted to be as good as the other boy or better and be classed as brave.

(Note:

Pete Cole's manuscripts are entered as written, lest the tale lose its Indian quaintness if edited.)