

HARRISON, NATHAN E.

INTERVIEW

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Journalist.
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An Interview With Nathan E.
Harrison, Vinita, Oklahoma.

My name is Nathan E. Harrison. I am a Cherokee by blood, of the Cherokee Nation and was born in Delaware District, Cherokee Nation, Indian Territory, on March 28, 1879.

My father's name was David Wilson Harrison, a white man.

My mother's name was Mary Ann (McDonald) Harrison, a Cherokee.

My grandfather's name, on my mother's side, was Collins McDonald, white.

My grandmother's name, on my mother's side, was Narcena Adair, a Cherokee.

David Wilson Harrison and Mary McDonald were the parents of Julius Harrison, Robert Harrison, Nevada Harrison, Eugene Harrison and Nathan E. Harrison.

My grandfather, Collins McDonald, who married a Cherokee wife, lived near Atlanta, Georgia, in the old Cherokee Nation and a band of Cherokees in 1867 selected him to come to the Indian Territory and look the new Cherokee Nation over with a view of locating here.

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He learned that a band of Cherokees, headed by George Washington Parks, was coming to the Indian Territory from Tennessee, and he came with them to the Cherokee Nation. The Indians he came with located on Cabin Creek a few miles south of Vinita and stayed.

After my grandfather had inspected the country he started back to Atlanta on foot and ^{was} ninety days making the trip walking every step of the way. He said there was no hitch-hiking in those days.

When he reported the condition of the country in the New Cherokee Nation thirty-five wagons were loaded and thirty-five families of Cherokees headed for the new country. There were only two mule teams and there were thirty-three ox teams. The mule teams gave out on the road and were two weeks behind the ox teams in reaching the Cherokee Nation. The ox teams made the trip in forty-five days, without a stop to rest, while the mule teams rested two weeks, on the way.

LANDED NEAR EVANSVILLE.

This little band of Cherokees who came to cast their lot with the Eastern and Western Cherokees in the Territory which the government had assured them before leaving Georgia should be theirs as long as grass grew and water flowed, and

landed near Evansville, Arkansas, in the Cherokee Nation and immediately set about building cabins for their families and shelters for their teams.

My grandfather was a leader among the little group and had made arrangements with the government that this group should be furnished rations after they arrived, until they could get started up and some crops raised.

My grandfather said the reason they left Georgia was because the state and national authorities kept after them to give up their land and to join the other Cherokees over here and they believed that eventually they would be dispossessed, as Cherokees in other parts of Georgia had been. They sold their land to the government before leaving and that is how they came to get the rations furnished them.

SOME CHEROKEE FAMILIES WHO CAME IN 1869.

Some of the families whom I remember my grandfather mentioning as coming to the Cherokee Nation in 1869 were: the King Wetsell families, John Moreland, John Kincade, Andy Alberty, Andrew McDonald, Collins McDonald, D. W. Harrison and sister, Narsisse Malisse Harrison, Edward Alexander Adair and sister, Margurite Martha Adair, Frank Adair, John Hogan, the Terry family, the Bigby family and the Indian named Petijohn and others whom I do not recall.

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Many of this little group of Cherokees scattered out in later years to different parts of the Cherokee Nation and some of them became prominent citizens of the Nation and held many offices of trust among the Cherokee people. Some became rich and influential in business and farming. Two of these Cherokees met untimely deaths after they had become rich and influential.

JOHN CHRISTOPHER HOGAN.

John Christopher Hogan who came with the little party from Georgia married Margaret Martha Adair, another one of the party who came here from Atlanta. He settled one mile west of the present town of Pryor Creek on a little creek of the same name, and engaged in farming, and in the early '80's went into the cattle business on a big scale. He soon became rich and entered the mercantile business in Pryor, and later got into the banking business and was rated the second wealthiest man in Mayes County when he died.

His wife preceded him in death a few years and from the time she died he seemed like a lost child. He lived alone in his fine home in the city of Pryor and for several years had been on the retired list. He still owned his fine farm one mile west of Pryor, where he first settled and very

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often would walk out to his farm for the exercise. He never owned an automobile and I never heard of him riding in one, although he was able to own several.

One day he made his usual trip to the farm on foot and walked off down through a wooded pasture on his place and in attempting to cross Pryor Creek on a foot-log he fell from the log and was found drowned, laying face downward in the water where he had fallen.

He had one son, Zol A. Hogan and one daughter, Mrs. W. A. Hancock. Zol A. Hogan preceded his father in death, while Mrs. Hancock is still living in Muskogee.

EDWARD ALEXANDER ADAIR.

Edward Alexander Adair married my aunt, Narcissa Malissa Harrison. To this union two sons and two daughters were born: Harve, Arthur, Georgia V. and one girl whose name I do not recall, now Mrs. Lee Jones.

Edward Adair settled four miles west of the present town of Adair on Pryor Creek and like J. C. Hogan who married his sister was farming when the cattle business sprung up in the Cherokee Nation in the early 80's. He plunged in to the business on a large scale and was soon rated a rich man.

He was elected sheriff of Cooweescoowee District in 1889 and became very popular in his district. He was a great hunter and usually kept a bunch of fox hounds on his place.

In 1899 Edward Adair was elected to the council from Cooweescoowee District, and was among the last to serve on this council before turning the reins of government over to the United States.

Edward Adair drove to the town of Adair one day in the early part of 1900 with a wagon load of hogs and before starting home bought a barrel of salt and loaded it into his hog wagon. The sideboards were just high enough for the barrel to roll under and as he went down into a little hollow, just west of the town of Adair, the barrel rolled from the back end of the wagon to the front end. He was sitting on the front end with his feet hanging over the dash board and the barrel went right on through the front end gate, knocking him off and hitting the horses, causing them to run away. He was killed in the run-away.

Edward Adair was buried in what was then a private cemetery on his farm four miles west of Adair; in a cemetery which he had established before the town of Adair was laid off. There was no town cemetery established at that time and

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the Edward Adair cemetery became the public burial ground for the entire neighborhood for many miles around. When statehood came this plot of ground was segregated and it is still in use, being one of the oldest cemeteries possibly in Mayes County.

One of his sons, Harve, is still living one mile east of the old Ed Adair farm which has passed into the hands of strangers since Ed Adair's death.

One of his daughters, Georgia V., was married to Ruben E. Delozier and is still living in the town of Adair, and is rated as one of the wealthiest women in that vicinity. At the time of her husband's death about 1920 she owned over 1,200 acres of fine farm land some of which has passed into the hands of her sons.

Another one of Edward Adair's daughters was married to Lee Jones who was an early day merchant in Adair, Before statehood Mr. and Mrs. Lee Jones moved to Talala where they took allotments of land and where they are still living.