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Indian-Pioneer History
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Indian, Pawnee, Oklahoma.

I was born in Oklahoma sixty-six years ago in 1871, and spent my boyhood in the Pawnee Reservation in the vicinity of Skedee.

I did a lot of hunting and fishing, as most boys did at that time. There was plenty of game, and we were always successful in bringing down as many animals and birds as we wanted. Along the banks of Bear Creek was a favorite hunting ground of mine, because game was so abundant there.

The Sac and Foxes and Pawnees have been friendly for a very long time. I remember when I was a very small boy the time when the Sac and Foxes saved the Pawnee's lives. Most of our tribe had gone out on a hunting trip. While we were camped a tribe of western Indians came upon us and started a battle. We were outnumbered ten to one, and defeat was certain.

A war party of Sac and Foxes heard of this and rushed immediately to our aid, and it wasn't long until the western tribe had been defeated.

War parties have since been discontinued, because of the invasion of the whites. Then it was common for the braves of the tribe to go out armed

with old-fashioned muskets and muzzle-loaders.

The last trip the tribe made was over near Skedee about fifty-five years ago. After that the townlots at Pawnee were opened up, and Indians started moving to town and around the Agency.

One of the tribe's ceremonial dances has ceased altogether. That is the Ghost Dance. These were conducted in what is called a sod house, and the last one that I took part in was about forty-five years ago.

There are very few sod houses left, two that I know of, both of which are located on Pawnee Bill's land.

To make the framework of these houses, four logs approximately two and a half feet in diameter and ten feet high were hewn out, also four logs one and one-half feet in diameter and the same height as the other poles. These were placed in a circle, the smaller pillars in between the larger ones alternately. Each of the pillars was forked so that beams could be laid on them and tied into position with slippery elm string. Branches were tied onto the rafters and around the sides in an

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open lattice-work fashion. Then mud was put on over this, followed by twigs. A second coat of mud and twigs followed this, and after that a layer of sod.

The door faced the east and was oval in shape, looking very much like the opening to a cave.

In the center were four poles comprising the fireplace.

The Pawnees made these sod houses, because they lived more on the prairie than in the woods, and it was simpler for them to make.