

INDEX CARDS:

Creek Nation
Tribe-Creek
Baptist Mission School
Silver Springs Church
Native Preachers

21

KELLY, WADLEY

INTERVIEW.

7672

Interview with Wadley Kelly (Fullblood Creek)
2107 Delaware Street Muskogee
By James S. Buchanan--September 28, 1937

I was born May 23, 1875, on the claim my father established in the early days of the Indian Territory, seven miles southeast of Henryetta.

My father was Ahfalakee, fullblood Creek. My mother was Louvene Kelly, fullblood Creek.

My father died when I was very young and I have no recollection of him. My mother died in 1906.

My father was given the name of Kelly by my uncle, Magar Kelly, who was my mother's eldest brother, and during the Civil War he and my father both served in the Confederate cause: hence my family name Kelly.

I was reared on the old home place and educated in the Creek public schools.

I also attended the Baptist Mission school at Wetumka.

In 1898 I was married to Mahally Tiger, the daughter

KELLY, WADEEY

INTERVIEW.

7672

2

of Wilson and Eliza Tiger, fullblood Creeks of near Henryetta. Four children were born to this union, two of whom are now living.

My wife, Mahaley, died January 20, 1915, at Henryetta. On January 25, 1916, I was married to my second wife, Mary Colbert, the daughter of James and Lizzie McComb Colbert, fullblood Creeks.

Two children were born to this union. In the early years of my active life I engaged in farming and prepared myself for the ministry. In 1908 I was ordained as a Minister of the Gospel in the Missionary Baptist Church, and devoted my time and efforts to that calling. Since that time, until my retirement in 1932, I devoted my time as pastor of the Silver Springs Missionary Baptist Church.

The Silver Springs Missionary Baptist Church was first organized in 1902 by Creek Indians, the majority of them being Bullbloods who were old settlers in that vicinity. These descendants of the original pioneer settlers in the Indian Territory, inspired with the desire for Christian teaching of

KELLY, WADLEY

INTERVIEW.

7672

3

their future generation, established this church at what is known as Silver Springs, ten miles east of Henryetta.

Silver Springs is a very old and famous watering place of the Indians. It is situated on a hillside and flows down the beautiful little valley creating Silver Springs Creek which winds its way among the hills and through a canyon a short distance from the springs on its way to where it empties into the North Canadian River.

The country surrounding Silver Springs was a great hunting ground for the Indians in the early days of the Territory. For several years hunting parties of the Wichita tribe, from the vicinity of where the town of Anadarko now stands, would make extensive hunting trips to the territory around Silver Springs.

The first church, which was a frame building, was erected in 1904, although Baptist Missionary work was carried on at that place in the way of camp meetings for three years previous to the organization of the

KELLY, WADLEY.

INTERVIEW.

7672

4

Church by Reverend John McIntosh, his two sons, Amos and Alexander, and his son-in-law, Frank Likoski.

The first church built was used until 1933 when it was moved from the original site and a beautiful native stone church built in its place. This stone church stands today about two hundred feet southwest of the springs. Reverend John McIntosh was the first pastor and served in that capacity until his son Amos was ordained for the ministry. It was at this place that Reverend John McIntosh conducted the first meeting and their love feast was served on a large flat rock which is still on the church grounds. The Gospel was taught by Reverend McIntosh beneath the large native oaks that shaded the grounds.

After the retirement of Reverend John McIntosh, his son, Amos McIntosh, succeeded him as pastor until his death which occurred in the fall of 1907, when his brother, Reverend Alex McIntosh, and Reverend Tommie Thompson succeeded ^{to} the pastorate.

KELLY, WADLEY. INTERVIEW.

7672

5

In 1908, I, Reverend Wadley Kelly, was appointed to the pastorship of the church, and served intermittently until 1916; then I served as permanent pastor until 1931. At that time I was compelled to retire on account of failing health.

During my pastorate in 1913 the Muskogee, Wichita and Seminole Association was held at Silver Springs for the second time. Soon afterward the membership decreased to five members; some of the old members died and some deserted the work of God. At one time the only members on the Church roll were myself as pastor, my wife, Mary Kelly, Deacon Bunnie Riley and his wife and Lillie Riley. For several years we remained faithful in the work of God, enduring many hardships.

From 1929 to 1931 the membership increased to a total of fifty-one members. In August, 1931, at the time of my retirement Reverend John D. McIntosh was elected pastor of the Church.

In January, 1933, during the greatest panic for the

KELLY, WADLEY

INTERVIEW.

7672

6

.Indians, we undertook the building of the new stone church, the members furnishing the common labor and employing Mr. Bert Minick as contractor and stone mason. On June 24, 1933, the new church was practically completed and dedicated, and the Cornerstone was set by Deacon Bunnie Riley and myself.