

KNEEDLER, ELLA PERRYMAN

INTERVIEW.

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SECOND INTERVIEW

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KNEEDLER, ELLA PERRYMAN (MRS.). - INTERVIEW.

Effe S. Jackson  
Field Worker  
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MRS. ELLA PERRYMAN KNEEDLER  
(Daughter of George Perryman -  
interview at her home, "The White  
House" - block 150 - on 41st  
Street, between Peoria and Lewis,  
Tulsa, Oklahoma.

My father was George Perryman, brother of Legus Perryman, last chief of the Creeks. My mother was a Creek Indian, Rachel Alex - usually called "Aunt Rachel." I have a sister, Mayme Shirk, who lives here with me, and a brother, George, who lives on 31st, near Lewis. My father was a rancher, and owned (by lease) all the land south from where Tulsa is today to 51st Street, west to the Arkansas and east to Lewis Avenue. His brothers Legus, Tom and Josiah, controlled all the land from 51st Street to Broken Arrow before allotment. They all took their allotments in the same vicinity.

I was born in 1876, in "The Old Ranch House." It was on what is 34th Street now, about half-way between Peoria and Lewis. This was a double log house one and one-half stories high. As many as fifteen cowboys often stayed there. My father was always taking some homeless boy or girl to raise. When I was about three years old we moved to this place, "The White House." It was large for those days and painted white.

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My father had the lumber hauled from Coffeyville, Kansas, by ox team. It took three days to make the trip one way if the weather was good. We got all of our clothing and necessary groceries from there, too. We children all went to school at Tallahassee Mission.

You see how the house looks today. Only these two rooms in front have been added, the other six large rooms were the original house and you see they are in good condition yet. In 1879, my uncle, Josiah Perryman, who lived with us, was appointed post master and the post office was in this house, in fact, it was in that room on the east. Not many people came for the mail in those days. Just a few Indians lived in the whole region.

In 1886 my father built the "uptown" house - the one that was in the center of the block where the court house now stands at 6th and Boulder. (Writer can remember this rather fanciful two-story house with its cupola, and always "Aunt Rachel" sitting on the porch, smoking her pipe. When the land was bought for the court house and a business district established around it, the Perryman house was moved out to the 13th block on South Elwood, and there it stands today, a rather run-down place with the sign - "Rooms to Rent.")

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The Perryman family, from early times, have all been buried in the family cemetery, known as the Perryman Cemetery. It is about 500 feet south of the corner of what is today 31st and Utica. My grandfather, Lewis Perryman, Chief Legus, and all of his brothers are buried there. So is my mother, Aunt Rachel, who died a few years ago. This is not a private cemetery, both Indians and whites are buried there. It is still in use.

COMMENTS

Ella Kneeder is a well-preserved woman, rather talkative, speaks good English and has a fair memory - though given to making general statements.

A description of "The White House" as it appears today may be of interest. Originally the house consisted of six large rooms, four on the lower and two on the upper floor. During recent years there have been two additional rooms added across the front - the interior remodeled but of similar construction.

The skillfully fashioned sandstone foundation stones are just like they were first placed, firm and compact, no settling indicated, but moss-grown with age.

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The sills are large, square timbers that were hewn by hand and mortised together. The studding and joints are heavy boards and closely spaced to give strength to the building, making it exceptionally sturdy. The outside covering is drop-siding nailed on with wrought iron nails. These nails have been in so long that to-day many of them are rusted through.

The false rafters are artistically designed with scroll work - cut open work through the wood. This looks as if it had been done by hand. The door and window casings are also decorated. The wainscoting, molding, and six inch flooring in the interior are all the same as when first constructed. The walls were first covered with canvas and then papered, but of recent years they have been plastered - except the northeast room, which is still canvassed.

The house is still painted white. It rests on the top of a low hill five hundred feet from the highway, on 41st Street, and is surrounded by trees, with no other houses in proximity. It still retains some of the dignity of the former "White House."

#### THE POST OFFICE MONUMENT

Five hundred feet south of the "White House" stands a marker which serves as a monument to "Tulsa's First Post Office."

This marker of red granite, about three feet square, with a white wooden paling fence in the background; stands on the north side of the pavement in block 150 on 41st street, about half way between Peoria and Lewis.

It bears the following inscription:

522 ft. north of this point

On March 25, 1879, was established

Tulsa's First ----- Post Office

Known at that time as "Tulsey Town"

Creek Nation, Ind. Ter.

This Memorial erected on July 4, 1936, by the Oklahoma Society of Daughters of The America Colonials.

There are some conflicting statements which are to be checked as carefully as possible. This is Ella Kneedler's version of where the first post office was. The Daughters of the Colonials seem to have accepted that location. But many published reports and personal statements have not had the "White House" constructed before 1884. If so, then where was the first post office located?

Mrs. Arthur C. Perryman, whose husband is the son of Rev. Thomas Perryman, who was a brother of

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George Perryman, told me that she has a picture of the cabin, the home of Lewis Perrymen, which was the "first post office." It was located on what is now 34th street in a ravine. She says she will give detailed description when I interview her.

Mrs. Arthur Perryman told me of a Bible in the possession of the Perryman family, a translation into the Creek language made by Rev. Thomas Perryman (her husband's father who was a minister) and Miss Alice Robertson's mother. Other documents to be checked at an interview to be made soon (at her convenience). Mrs. Arthur Perryman was a missionary sent from Pennsylvania to Tulsa about forty years ago.

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