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Billie Byrd,  
Journalist,  
March 3, 1938.

An Interview with Eunah Hobiya,  
aged 40 Alabama town(tulwa)  
Weleetka, Oklahoma

## OPUITHLI YAHOLA

The terms of the treaty of 1832 gave the Creeks five years in which to leave their homes in Alabama and to re-establish themselves west of the Mississippi River and between the Arkansas and Canadian Rivers.

Opuithli Yahola was the leader of the Tukabatchies tribal town at the time the treaty was made between whites and Indians and he realized that he and his people had five years to make any preparations for removal and to negotiate with the Government for any land they would wish to settle on in the Indian Territory. He loved his people while they were all living on the banks of the Chattahoochee River in Alabama. He left his people and started west and went as far into Texas to Nacogdoches. While there he negotiated with Sam Houston for a large tract of land in the neighborhood of Nacogdoches for the sum of \$100,000.00. He intended to bring his people there and upon the agreement

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only \$20,000.00 was paid in advance with Opuithli Yahola promising to pay the \$80,000.00 when he returned with his Indians. All this was made in oral agreement and the \$80,000.00 was never paid.

All the ancient tribal towns of the Muskogee-Creek Nations were not bound by the traditional customs of other tribal towns but they turned to the Tukabatchi for instruction in guidance in their way of conduct for the Tukabatchies were old in their ways and strong for tribal rites. The Tukabatchies never acted possessive when they were sought for advice and guidance by the other towns.

The Tukabatchies were puzzled about their townsman's action, Opuithli Yahola, as he would be found in council with some whites, representatives of the Government and other strangers. They wondered about his actions because he did not take them into his confidence and when he was asked, he maintained his silence about all his actions. His people accused him of conspiring with others to sell them so that they seized him, bound him and were eagerly preparing to hang him, but before hanging him, the Tukabatchies asked him to cease his mysterious actions

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and Opuithli Yahola steadfastly refused. This refusal forced the Tukabatchies to start their hanging and they had their victim's feet a few inches away from the ground when again they asked him if he had anything to say to which he replied. "It was for many of you that I was doing what I was going to do, but for some many of you I am willing to die." When the Indians heard these words they immediately stopped their task and let Opuithli Yahola go free.

Tales have been handed down of how the old Indians of the Tukibatchi town in the old country observed their busk ground ceremonials. The rules were that the individual camps of the town members to be placed at least one mile away in each direction, away from the ceremonial fire site. These rules were laid down to prevent the cooking odors from the camps to reach those within the busk ground who were taking medicine. All camps were placed in a circle around the council fire site with the fire site being the center of the busk ground camp.

From each camp a path led to the center of the busk grounds and was like a spoke of a wheel. Numerous bands that made up the Tukabatchi town made their camp around

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the busking grounds and it happened that many that did camp there never knew one another because there was such a number of Tukabatchies.

The father and mother of Opuithli Yahola were never known to a majority of the Indians although there might have been some who knew them on record somewhere. There is a strange legend that is told regarding his birth.

It is told that he was sentenced to be killed even before his birth as one of the strict Tukabatchi laws was that an unmarried expectant Indian woman was punishable by death. In the Tukabatchi town there lived a young lady (name never told) whose duty was to carry water from the spring to her home. She was always seen going about her duties of carrying water and was just like the other young maidens but she was found to be an expectant mother.

The members of the town were called to a meeting to decide what was to be done. The town met in a council early in the morning in a fast and reached the agreement to carry out the laws of the punishment of death. The executioners were all selected and were ready to finish their work when in their midst and through all the town

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there was heard the sound of a voice and they became fearful upon hearing the words, "Do not kill him, but protect him for he will be useful."

Another council was held and the decision was to obey the voice and let the maiden go free, but she was left in the hands of the older women of the town for they were to stay by her, care for her and watch over her until after the birth. Opuithli Yahola grew up strong and clean and protected from birth.

The first treaty that he took part in was on May 11, 1801, and was made between whites and Indians for the right to live on peaceful terms for all times but the whites were not long in falling away from the terms.

Again, another treaty was made and was the same as of 1801 but the whites fell from their promise although they did observe it for a short time. In conference with the whites on many times he repeatedly said, "The treaty we first made between one another is binding, we have never carried it out; it is not been abolished and I will stand up for the terms of that treaty even though it be my death."

The whites became annoyed by these repeated accusations for the things they never recognized as binding and finally

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captured him and making him a prisoner, the whites requested Opuithli Yahola to accomplish a difficult feat. If the feat was done before their eyes they would recognize the treaty. The whites showed him a small ring of about twelve inches in diameter and requested that he pass through the ring. Opuithli Yahola asked that he be given eight days before doing that - it was granted; and after the eight days was up, Opuithli Yahola did what was requested of him. The whites began to recognize the treaty when their request was fulfilled.

Although Opuithli Yahola was sentenced to die before his birth yet no one knows of his burial ground as some have said he was buried somewhere in Texas while the records of Washington, D. C., state that he was buried at Eloy (LeRoy) in Kansas or near Coffeyville, Kansas.