

LASLEY, MOSE

INTERVIEW

#12425

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"TALL MAN" and "LITTLE PEOPLE"

An interview of Mose Lasley, age 54,
Wewogufkee town (tulwa), Vernon, Okla.

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Indian-pioneer History
12-13-37

No one seems to know just how the "tall man" and the "little people" came to be known but the stories and accounts told by some tell that these legendary things did live in the minds and beliefs of the Muskogee-Creeks. Some have even heard the "tall man's" activities in hills. The "tall man" is commonly called "este chup-co" while the "little people" are called "este lo-boch-kee", with the meanings being carried just what the words mean. No one personally seems to have ever met up with the "tall person" but stories have been told of two areas, that is, it was thought and believed that it was the "tall person" that made the loud noises that were heard.

Before the present Hanna, McIntosh County, Oklahoma was ever established, the route to go to Ft. Smith was by way of the present Indianola, Crowder City,

after the Canadian river was crossed where the Ft. Smith and Western railroad bridge is now. The river was earlier forded but a crossing by ferry was in use later, being operated by an old Ochai member named Okfuskee Harjo.

At one time, a party of Indians had made a trip to Ft. Smith and were returning to their homes which was in the present Hanna, Oklahoma, community, and they had made camp for the night as they could not reach their homes because the yet unsettled country without roads. They had made camp in the hills and they heard the sounds made by the "tall person" as it came through the hills and trees by slapping the trees with loud sound and making the sound as if it was saying, "cho-cho, cho-cho, cho-cho." It only took up the hilly and wooded area and returned on the course it had traveled, probably back to its lair. Among that party that heard the "tall person" was an old Indian named Willie Catch, now deceased, who often related of the time he heard the sounds and actions of the "tall person". The "tall person" was heard in the hills four or five miles southeast of the present Hanna.

There was another place where the "tall person" was heard. It was also in the hilly section of the country about seven miles northwest of the present Hanna. It was believed that those wooded hills was the course and path traveled by the "tall person", because it was told that the "tall person" never was heard in the prairies but that it was believed to live in the wooded rough hills.

"LITTLE PEOPLE"

There is only way in which "little people" (este lo-boch-kees) may be seen as no normal or well person has ever seen them. They appear to sick people who fall under their influence and spell. The "little people" lure persons who are under their spell away in their company if those persons are not given immediate attention upon the tribal prophets diagnosis of a case of this kind. The prophet tells that the disease or illness resulting from "little people" is known as "eto ov este tha-hee" (shot by people of the woods).

Proper steps taken for treatment to ward away

the spell of the spirits from medicine prepared by the tribal medicine man will ease the feeling of the ill person.

The "little people" make their homes in the trees of the woods and those homes can be distinguished by the extra thick growth with small twigs of branches in the trees, but the homes cannot be found in every tree.

If no trouble is given to the "little people", they do not harm one, as is the belief. Any one with known intentions molests them, they are not still about their business but they repay for what they receive by causing instant pain to strike any place on the body, but that is believed to be caused from their arrows from bows which they shoot direct at the person. Sudden pains of this sort almost paralyzes a person and no aid at that time of sudden pains might result fatally.

"Little people" are said to think of large objects as being small while they take the very large objects as being very small and cannot do the small work while a small work is large to them. They can climb or crawl up large tree which seems small to them, but the person under their spell and in their company

is unable to do these things and the "little people" have a lot of sport laughing at that person. Then, that person can cross the small streams easily but cannot jump across the large streams of water. It is his duty to help "little people" across the little streams of water which to them is difficult to cross. It is when a thing is difficult for a human to do that the "little people" are over-joyed at what they think is fun.