

ROSS, ELIZABETH

NO SUCCESSOR

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Elizabeth Ross, Interviewer  
Indian-Pioneer History  
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## No Successor

Among strange and erroneous claims made concerning the Cherokee Advocate is that which asserts that the Tahlequah Arrow, now merged with other publications in the present (1937) Cherokee County Democrat-Star, was the successor of the old Cherokee national newspaper. But those familiar with the history of the Cherokee Nation and of the Cherokee Advocate well know that not only was there no successor to the Advocate, but that in the nature of things such was absolutely impossible.

The first Indian newspaper, the Cherokee Phoenix, was established in the old Cherokee Nation in Georgia, in 1828. It was in existence until 1834. Ten years later, in September, 1844, in the new Cherokee Nation in Indian Territory, the Cherokee Advocate was started. It was not continuously published, but from 1874 appeared regularly until within a short time of the admission of Oklahoma to statehood.

The Cherokee Advocate was unique. It was established and maintained at the sole expense of the

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Cherokee government. Some persons ignorant of the history of the Cherokee Nation and of the Cherokee Advocate, have believed, and some have asserted, that the Cherokee Advocate was published by the United States Government for the benefit of the Cherokees. But, as a matter of fact, all expenses were paid by the Cherokee government from funds in the Cherokee treasury at Tahlequah.

When the Cherokee Nation ceased to exist as a distinct government, the Cherokee Advocate necessarily ceased publication forever. Had a successor been possible its characteristics must have been those which had made the Cherokee Advocate different from all other publications on the North American continent. But having been a governmental publication, and that government having ceased to exist, there was no way or method whereby the Cherokee Advocate could be continued as a publication, or have a successor.

The Indian Arrow was established at Tahlequah in 1889. Under that name it was published for several years, when it became simply the Arrow. Later it became the Tahlequah Arrow. Under these names this

newspaper was a contemporary of the Cherokee Advocate for approximately seventeen years. It was not the first contemporary, for a paper called the Telephone had been established at Tahlequah in 1886, continuing in existence until 1894.

The Indian Arrow was a political newspaper, the official organ of the National party of the Cherokee Nation. It was owned by a stock company, later passing to individual ownership. Had this publication become, in some unimaginable way, the successor of the Cherokee Advocate, it must of necessity continued issuing a newspaper printed in both the Cherokee and English languages. But a successor being impossible in view of the fact that the Cherokee government became extinct, the Cherokee Advocate permanently suspended publication.

Authorities: Acts of Cherokee council concerning the Cherokee Advocate; the Late John T. Drew, Editor of the Indian Arrow; History of the Cherokee Phoenix and the Cherokee Advocate.