

CHISHOLM, WILLIAM. SECOND INTERVIEW. 13762

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Billie Byrd
Journalist
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Interview with William Chisholm
Okfuskee, Oklahoma.

Jesse Chisholm, known as the first of the trail blazers across what is now Oklahoma, was an early times trader and traveler. He owned large herds of cattle which he drove north across the Territory from Texas to the cattle markets in Kansas. He was my grandfather while William Chisholm, his oldest son, was my father. I don't know so much about my grandfather's life or of the earlier days for I have heard only a few and scanty remarks about him and his activities.

One was that he was an old settler who had come over from Tennessee before the final removal of any tribes of Indians and settled across the Red River in Texas. In his travels, he made quite a bit of trade among the western Indians in what is now Oklahoma, and was known to have established a trading post out near Council Grove. It's exact location is not known, but it was originally an old council ground and meeting place for the Wichita

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Indians. They were the ones who took his body and buried it in a secret place, and no one ever found out the exact spot where he was buried.

Jesse Chisholm was gifted for his ability to make friends with any tribe of Indians, and because of this, the government looked to him for his influence, in dealing with the Indians. He could easily talk to the Indians, being part Indian, Creek, Cherokee and Scotch. It was told that he was able to speak fluently, several of the different tribal languages.

Jackson Chisholm was an adopted son of Jesse Chisholm. When Jackson died, his burial was made somewhere west of Shawnee. It was never known to what tribe he belonged or what his name was as he had been adopted when a small child and raised by Chisholm. The name of Jackson was given to him. Some of the western tribes who had taken him was holding him captive and had bargained off this child to Chisholm. In trading with the Indians, ponies were used in exchange.

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ENROLLMENT.

Before the work of the Dawes Commission in the enrolling of Indians, the ages of each older Indian to be enrolled was not certain. It was a difficult task for the members of the Commission to take and make an accurate list of the ages as they never knew what year they were born, on what day or the month. They would forget their ages in the following years and wouldn't bother about keeping up with them. They could only fix the time of their birth by the different changes occurring in a season as they knew it, or by some certain incident that was generally known, such as: Cherry blossom or plum blooming time; some told of how they were able to ride a horse alone at the outbreak of the Civil War (Ho-the Thak-ko, Big War) or indicate how tall they were. Others told of how they were able to walk at some certain event they remembered; some spoke of the time of the first fall of leaves or when corn was so high and indicating this time with the hands showing an imaginary height of corn.

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They never knew the names of the months of the present calendar, but they used their own adopted and selected names for the different months according to the changes of the season, such as: May being Mulberry month; June being Blackberry month; March being wind month, while December was designated as Big Winter month. Each month signified a moon (Has-see).

Sunday is called Sacred Day (ta-cha-ko-echee); Tuesday is Morning following Monday (Monday en-ha-yat-ke); Wednesday was middle (En-nath-ka-pa); Thursday being Morning following Middle (En-nath-ka-pa en-ha-hat-ke), while Saturday was Sacred Day's younger Brother (Ta-cha-ko-chee E--cho-see). Monday and Friday are pronounced just as closely as the Indian can say the names.