

INDEX CARDS:

Creek Nation
Reconstruction
Creek Government
Creek Officials
Green Peach War
Lighthorseman
Isparhechar
Pleasant Porter
Trading Posts
Asbury Manual Labor School
Tallahassee Mission
Creek Foods
Allotment
Interpreter
United States Marshals
Buck Gang

Field Worker: Jerome M. Emmons
May 27, 1937.

Interview with Sam Haynes

Born Southwest of Okmulgee,
January 8, 1860.

Parents John Haynes, father
Lucy, mother.

Mr. Haynes was born southwest of Okmulgee on January 8, 1860. His father, John Haynes, lived to be fifty-seven years of age and his mother, Lucy, to be sixty-two. They are both buried in the Newtown burial ground. His wife died September 15, 1924. Three children, Stella Haynes Cox, John, and Sam Elijah, are still living.

After the Civil War ended in 1865, the Creeks returned to their homes. In 1866 they made another treaty with the Government. The Creeks who had gone North had as their Chief, Oktaishars Harjo and as 2nd Chief Cartchochee. Samuel Checote, who had been elected around 1858, was still the Chief of the Southern Creeks. They decided to call a Council of the leading men on both sides to be

316

held on the south side of Deep Fork River about three-fourths of a mile from Okmulgee. This was called Hopwood Ferry and also Red Stick Standing. There was a large blackjack grove nearby. The Council discussed the adoption of a constitution with original laws, offices such as Principal Chief, Second Chief, Judges, etc. Finally, one was adopted agreeable to both factions and election of a Second Chief and Principal Chief considered. Mico Hotky, Oktaishars Harjo, and Samuel Checote were among the candidates. Samuel Checote was selected Principal Chief with Mico Hotky as Second Chief.

Council meetings continued to be held under the blackjack grove for some time afterwards. Then selection of the present site of the stone council house was made for a log council house. W. H. Brown, called Red Neck because of a birthmark, received the contract to construct this building. This was about the year 1868. My father selected the trees for this structure. My mother cooked for the men who were getting the material ready for this building, which necessitated our camping near the work.

When the Council House was completed, an entirely new Legislature was elected. Isparechee was among those

elected to the House of Warriors. While in this service, he was made a Judge of the Okmulgee District and resigned as Councilman. As Judge he was accused of exceeding his authority by arresting people without evidence or filing an indictment against them. Impeachment charges were filed against him in the Council. He was tried and found guilty. I think it was about 1873 or '74 when he was removed from office. At any rate, he was angry and refused to recognize authority. He hoped to gather enough followers to overthrow the government as it existed and go back to the type of government as it existed in 1832 before the written constitution.

About the time of the Green Peach War I was a lighthorseman. The duty of the lighthorsemen was to enforce the laws of the Creek tribe. I was with a cattle buyer, named William Harrison, when he went down near what is now Wetumka, Oklahoma. Captain Scott, of the Wetumka District lighthorsemen, wanted me to help him disarm two men, Heneha Chupco and Cawine Harjo, who were in the T. H. Scale Store. Afterwards, he decided it might not be legal for me to help with the arrest, so he reported

to the prosecuting attorney that these men had resisted arrest. When they were finally arrested, Captain Scott and Joe Barnett were detailed to guard them. The Isparechee mob killed the guards and escaped with the prisoners. That is the reason Chief Checote got together enough lighthorsemen to go over and arrest part of Isparechee's followers. Those arrested were convicted in court. Isparechee and the rest of his men moved over east close to Fort Gibson. Chief Checote then called on the militia.

Colonel William Robinson and Thomas Adam, leaders of the militia, went after the Isparechee mob, who scattered and that is when the war started. We sent word to the Indian agent, a man Tufts, that we wanted arms. I was among the hundred men selected to go to Muskogee and secure them. I was then twenty-two years of age. Twenty-five were selected to scout ahead of us on our trip. We had a scrap with some negroes on the way and killed one. At Muskogee we found that the arms had not arrived. Near what is now Taft, some of the warriors climbed a fence and got some peaches out of an orchard.

They said, "We're fighting on peaches," and that is how this uprising got its nickname.

Around three hundred of Checote's men, headed by Tuckabatche Harjo, fought Isparhechar's men close to what is now Okemah, Oklahoma, then McDermott's Ranch. They were defeated in this battle. Chief Checote then decided he needed to change leaders, so General Pleasant Porter and Ray McIntosh were made the heads of his forces. General Porter received information that Isparhechar was at the Nuyaka Square Grounds and went after him. When he got there, Isparhechar had gone on still farther west to Helupa Creek. At Helupa Creek there was no Isparhechar. We overtook him in the Sac and Fox Country. An Indian Agent for the Sac and Fox's came on the scene of the battle and said he didn't want blood spilled on that land. Pleasant Porter asked the agent to try to get Isparhechar to surrender and give him the names of his men and he would promise him a fair trial. Eventually, Isparhechar, who wouldn't consider this proposal, camped over near the Kickapoo Reservation. General Pleasant Porter, with his men, came on back to Okmulgee.

320

The Government sent troops after Isparhechar and his followers and brought them back. Isparhechar, agreed to obey the Creek Constitution and cause no more trouble. After running several times, he was finally chosen as a Chief of the Creek Nation.

COUNCILS.

When the log Council House was completed, one of the first Councils held there was to decide a name for the place. Hotulke Emarthalas suggested the name Okmulgee; Tony Burgess the name Columbus, both old Creek names used in Alabama. The former was selected.

TRADING POSTS

There was a trading post north of what is now called Newtown. The father of C. J. Shields, of Okmulgee, had a store there. Another place was owned by a man named Atkinson. Captain F. B. Severs and Captain C. C. Belcher owned these stores later. When Okmulgee was started they moved there.

MISSIONS.

I attended the Asbury Manual Labor School at Eufaula for two years. Students there built fences and raised crops and livestock. The Tallahassee Mission was

321

over near Porter on a highway on the north side of the Arkansas River. These were the only schools I remember when I went to school.

LIFE AND CUSTOMS.

My parents, who had lived about a mile and a half southwest of Okmulgee, moved to a place near Newtown in 1869. My father and Samuel Checote were second cousins. They nearly always lived pretty close to each other.

Sofkee grits, puskee, blue dumplings, and soaked cornbread were prepared by nearly every Creek family. These all seem to be very healthful foods. Puskee, which we sweetened with sugar, was fixed with honey by the Indians long ago.

Wild game was plentiful here. We killed wild turkey, deer, and ducks. I used to eat so much duck I would get tired of it.

I left Okmulgee in February, 1877 for Jackson, Tennessee, where I attended the Southwestern Baptist University.

ALLOTMENTS.

I received the usual 160 acres for my allotment. The Dawes Commission employed me and I was so busy for

a while that I did not think much about my allotment. When I did look it over someone else was on it and I had a hard time getting it cleared up.

EPIDEMICS.

I had the smallpox during the Civil War. Helupa Creek had a bad epidemic and many people died. The Patterson Mercantile Company had a store at Naulsburg, later named Morse, and during the smallpox scare called on me to manage it. I stayed about two weeks and received seven dollars a day and my meals.

U. S. MARSHALS.

I was in Fort Smith as a witness and interpreter, when Col. Crump, then U. S. marshal, sent word that he wanted to see me. When I went in, he handed me a long envelope and told me to go see Judge Parker. I was sworn in as a deputy U. S. marshal and continued to serve for about a year and a half. I was due in court as a witness, but the judge told me to come on back to Okmulgee. He gave me a list of Creek Indians to subpoena as witnesses. A colored deputy saw me after my appointment and said, "That's fine, we can work together." He was killed

that night by the Buck gang. The oldest in the gang of five was only about twenty years old. I was notified of his death and wired to Fort Smith. The answer ordered me to go get the killers. We followed them from Preston to close to Hitchita. They wounded a man, raped his wife, and held up another man. I had to come back to Okmulgee for another horse. Dr. Bell suggested that I move my family into town as the gang, no doubt, knew that I was after them and might attempt to harm my family.

I, and five others, got on the trail again.

We followed them for some time east of Okmulgee to east of Mounds, to a house back in the woods, close to Beggs. We surrounded the house, thinking we had them trapped but they had gone on. At Snake Creek we lost the trail. About 10 o'clock that night we pulled into Wash Adam's place near Beggs and unrolled our bedding for some sleep. In the night we heard firing, which seemed to be in the west and later more shots closer, so I had the boys saddle up and we went over to the river crossing. The gang had turned into a blackjack thicket and we started

firing. They ran down a rocky hill and rode off.

Just after the gang had robbed a store at Morse of guns, shells, and boots, we arrested three of them. A wagon was used to take them into town. Some Creeks wanted to lynch them then and there. We put them under guard in the Council House. Of the others, one was brought in later shot in the leg, and the other came in and gave up.

A mob here and than at Muskogee, where we had taken them, wanted to lynch them all. I told the mob that I had risked my life to capture them and they were going to be tried first. The Buck gang was taken from Fort Gibson to Fort Smith by train for trial. They were all found guilty and hung.

Only ten days had lapsed since my appointment as a deputy and I was highly praised. This was in 1893.

COMMENTS

Mr. Haynes who speaks very good English is well versed in the history of this Tribe.