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ESPARHECHER

Capt. S. B. Callahan, a close friend and supporter of Esparhecher in the late Creek campaign gives the following interesting history of the chief-elect:

Esparhecher is about 75 years old, a large, fine looking man. He retains his physical and mental ability to a remarkable degree.

He is a native of Alabama and immigrated to this country with the rest of the Creeks in 1837, and was a young man then. Up to the recent war his career was uneventful and it was not until after the war that he figured in Creek politics. In 1861 he went into the Confederate army, a member of the Creek regiment. He served with the Confederates until 1863, when he joined the Union army and enlisted for service. In the Confederate army he was orderly sergent. During the entire civil war he was in conflict. After the war he went back to his home and was elected Judge of the Okmulgee district. Here is where his prominence began. He was not accustomed to a constitutional government, which came with the treaty of 1866 and was new to the Creeks.

He believed in the execution of the law as he found it without much respect for its frills or furbales. Just then there was considerable lawlessness in Okmulgee district and Judge Esparhecher was active in running it down and punishing offenders. He took the field himself at times to make arrests, and one offender he killed. Impeachment charges were brought against him for this killing and Chief Checotah suspended him from office. Council ignored the suspension and he was again Judge of the district. He was a man of strong individuality and the killing which he had done and the active course and speech which marked his public career incited hostility to him. He claimed that he was being persecuted and he sought shelter among some of his old army friends and others of his way of thinking. They began to hold little councils in the woods and his friends and adherents increased. They didn't like what they termed the new constitutional government and they said so. He was then charged with treason and a force of Creeks undertook to arrest him, and put him down. This trouble brewed for about two years and was the beginning of what was termed the Esparhecher war.

Esparhecher's adherents grew and when their arrest was attempted they took up arms. The country was greatly excited, and the people took sides. A battle was fought about 20 miles northwest of Okmulgee and several parties were killed. It is said that during the entire conflict from the beginning to the end about fifty people were killed. Esparhecher and his force withdrew to the Cheyenne

country. The United States sent troops to suppress his force. He told them that he was not fighting against the United States, but his own country, for what seemed to him a justifiable cause and he would surrender to the United States as prisoners of war but not as rioters. He and his men were carried to Fort Gibson as prisoners of war and were held until terms of peace could be arranged by a peace commissioner sent from Washington when they were released and allowed to return to their homes. The same year he was a candidate for chief of the Creek nation, and was defeated by the informal return of the Arkansas colored town. The town was thrown out and it caused Esparhecher's defeat by about three dozen votes. That year he was elected delegate to Washington, and four years later he again ran for chief and was defeated. Again in 1891 he was a candidate for chief and was defeated at the polls. In the present campaign of 1895 many of his former opponents became his active helpers and he won by a flattering vote. For two terms, eight years, he has been an Associate Justice of the supreme court of the nation, which trust he occupies to day. He was one of the delegates who negotiated the Oklahoma sale to the United States, and helped to make the transfer. He is a man of great force of character, of unimpeachable honesty and integrity, of considerable executive ability, and is an enemy to lawlessness. It is stated that he has made the promise in advance that he will be very slow to pardon convicts. He is a full-blood Indian, with not a drop of other blood in his veins, it is said.