

Judge Hunter Often Called "God-Father" Of Choctaw Indians County Judge Part Indian Himself; A Real Pioneer

The Hugo Daily News August 28-29, 1941

County Judge Thomas W. Hunter is often called the "God-Father of the Choctaw Indians." He is a half-blooded Choctaw Indian and was born near the town of Boswell.

His father, a full-blooded Choctaw Indian whose Indian name was Bina Ahanta, came from the state of Mississippi with the first migration of the Choctaws in 1832, along the "Trail of Tears." His mother, Tennessee Hunter, was a white woman whose parents came to the Indian Territory from the state of Tennessee.

Hunter's parents were Christians, both members of the Presbyterian church. The Presbyterian churches in the Indian Territory during those early days were few and scattered over a wide area.

Quite a number who lived a distance from the churches walked the winding trails to attend the services. And these Indians attended their church services whenever possible.

The Hunter family was no exception and theirs was not only a Christian home, but was also a haven of rest to the tired and worn out missionaries who passed that way. All were welcome to the best that the home afforded.

Taught in Jones Academy

His first work of a public nature was as an instructor in Jones Academy, a school for Indian boys near Hartshorne, Okla. After this he was appointed superintendent of Armstrong Academy, a historic school where Revs. Lloyd Caldwell and Read had already supervised.

He was twice elected to the Choctaw Council, serving one term as speaker; two years a member of the Choctaw town site commission, a high public position; was a candidate for office of principal chief of the Choctaw nation against Green McCurtain in 1902, but was defeated. In politics he is a democrat.

Hunter was the first mayor of Boswell.

Other Activities

He was elected first court clerk of Choctaw county upon Oklahoma's admittance in the Union. He served in this capacity for two years, and was then elected and served two terms as a member of the lower house of the Oklahoma legislature.

Judge Hunter is now serving his eight consecutive term as county judge of Choctaw county. He did not have to run for the office in many of the elections because no opposition was offered.