**Interesting facts regarding the Creeks and Seminoles**

From the Kent Carter Book

 Carter, Kent, The Dawes Commission and the Allotment of the Five Civilized Tribes, 1893-1914-Ancestry.Com/ Incorporated, P.O. Box 990, Orem, Utah 84057. 1999

1. The Commission was specifically ordered to make rolls of the freedmen in each tribe… PG 37
2. According to the 1890 federal population census, there were 1,761 Indians, 806 Negroes, and 172 whites living in the Seminole Nation. And 9, 291 Creeks, 708 other Indians, 4,621 Negroes, 3,289 whites, and 3 Chinese living in Creek nation. Enrollment was not based on this numbers. Page 39
3. About one-third of the tribe were freedmen, and “ intermarried” were not a concern because tribal law prohibited granting citizenship through marriage.  The commission believed enrollment would be simple because the Seminoles were essentially a nation of full bloods.
4. The Seminoles had taken an official roll of the tribe’s fourteen bands in 1897; it was used by the Commission to verify the applicant’s eligibility. The commission completed a roll, which listed 2,526 Seminoles on August 30, 1898.
5. Essentially the Creek proved to be much more complicated because they were essentially a confederation of forty-four bands whose members lived in separate towns, each of which had a king who was supposed to keep track of its citizens.
6. An enumeration in 1859 showed a total of 13,537 Creeks, the Upper Creeks” living along the Canadian River and the lower Creeks along the Cimmaron  River.  Page 42
7. The Creek Constitution of 1867 took the power to decide away from the town kings and gave it to tribal courts in Coweta, Muskogee, Arkansas, Eufaula, Wewoka, Deep Fork, and Okmulgee districts.
8. The first general post removal census of the Creek Nation apparently had not been taken until April 1882
9. A special committee under the chief’s brother, L.W. Perryman, was authorized to prepare an “Omitted Roll” of persons who had not participated in the payment of and any children born after April 3, 1891. This roll brought the total number of names listed to 13,842 citizens, including 4,203 former slaves who were adopted by the tribe after the civil war.  The commission noted that those figures were rough. It’s comparable to the ones reported in the 1890 federal population census. Page 42

1. The Colbert Commission -It was authorized to summon witnesses, take testimony, and make final decisions; it admitted 79 blacks, and 156 citizens by blood and rejected 202 blacks and 99 persons claiming citizenship by blood before it was abolished on September 30, 1896.

               Curtis Act

1. The Dawes Commission decided that its task was not to find everyone who had Indian blood; it was to enroll only those people who met the exact requirements of the law as they defined it. Page 44
2. The cards were considered the official records and became the final work in any dispute.  The key step in the enrollment process was an examination of the step in the enrollment process was an examination of the authenticated rolls of 1890 and 1895 and the various omitted and supplemental rolls that the commission had finally acquired to determine if the applicant’s names could be found on any of them.  Page 46
3. Determining an applicants’ degree of Indian blood proved to be difficult and became a source of intense controversy later when congressional legislation based restrictions and eligibility for benefits on it.  None of the rolls taken before 1896 had included a “ blood quantum”, and only a few of them recorded whether a person was “ full –blood” or “Mixed blood”- the only distinction most tribes considered important at the time.  It appears that if an applicant did not claim to be a full blood, the enrollment clerks estimated the fraction, which they put in the “ degree of blood” column on the official card based upon answers given about parents and grandparents. Some applicants claimed to be full’ bloods because they were afraid that admitting one of the their relatives was not an Indian would prevent them from being enrolled.  In cases where an applicant’s parents were members of different tribes, the commission calculated the degree of blood based strictly on the mother’s tribe. In cases of mixed freedmen and Indian parents, which were common among the Creeks and Seminoles, the applicant was always enrolled as a “freedman” and not given credit for having any Indian blood. Some freedmen would later challenge this practice and try to have their names transferred to the “By Blood” rolls. Page 49
4. The job of enrolling clerks was further complicated by the fact that “surnames were practically unknown” in the creek Tribe; this made it very difficult to match people to a particular family group because they seldom used the same last name.
5. While the commission was trying to enroll the Creeks, the Creeks elected Pleasant Porter as Principle chief on September 5, 1899.   … Porter also tried to resolve the controversial question of the status of the freedmen and the criteria for determining Creek citizenship.  On December 13th, he sent the commission a copy of the a law that would define “ bona fide Creek citizenship” and recognize only those freedmen adopted before November 29, 1883, unless their names had been added to the rolls by fraud, forgery or unlawful use of money or influence.   Page 51

1. Many Creeks were too concerned about the present to speculate on the future, and one of the issues that created both worry and anger was the enrollment of former slaves as freedmen.  … A roll of freedmen had been prepared in 1867 by J.W. Dunn, the Creek’s agent at Fort Gibson.  It listed 1,774 persons who Dunn believed were entitled to participate in a payment.  Page 53
2. The federal government refused to be bound by a tribal court opinion, and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs sent the Dawes Commission a copy of the Dunn roll on May 2, 1899, which the commission insisted on using as the basis for determining eligibility in spite of tribal objections. On November 25, 1900, the “ colored” members of the National Council suggested that P. Bruner, G. Immersion, and Robert Grayson be appointed as attorneys to represent the enrollment of the former slaves.  Chief Pleasant Porter complained to a senate select committee that the freedmen” come forth from the four quarters of the earth and employ a lawyer here to assist them and they and the lawyer will get up the proof that slides them through, and on the rolls they go.  It is as slick as grease.  He also charged that surrounding states were “unloading criminal negroes” on the Creeks and that they were enrolled because “ they can prove anything, those rascals can” Page 54
3. This is from the Extra Census Bulletin.  The Five Civilized Tribes In Indian Territory: The Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek and Seminole Nations. United States Census Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1894 Headed by Robert P. Porter, Superintendent from April 30, 1890 to July 31, 1893 and Carroll D. Wright, Commissioner of Labor in charge.  Appointed October 5, 1893       the excerpts are as follows: The Creek Nation census of 1890 gave 14, 800 Creeks. This included                                                                                                                                                               the recognized Creeks of Negro descent, but not the other Indians, claimants of Negro descent, or whites.  The census enumerators for the Creeks were almost all Creeks or have Negro descent, and probably attempted to define citizenship, as they knew it by Creek law. On the abstracts they gave the Indians other than Creeks as colored. Page 7

               General Conditions of the Five Tribes:  1890

1. Much of their progress is due to a large Negro population in the several l nations. The greater portion of these Negroes was at one time a slave, and they are now the laborers of the Five Tribes. They are fairly well advanced and are steadily increasing in numbers, wealth, and intelligence. In 1836 Albert Gallatin stated that the number of plows in the Five Tribes answered for the number of able bodies Negroes.
2. The Creek nation is an alert and active one, which is largely due to the Negro element, which fairly controls it… In any of the Five Tribes where the Negroes have a fair chance there is a perceptible progress due to them.  The Negroes are among the earnest workers in The Five Tribes. The Creek Nation affords the best examples of Negro progress. ***The principal chief, virtually a Negro, comes of a famous family in creek annals. His name is Lequest Choteau*** **Perryman**. He was born in the Creek Nation, Indian Territory, March 1, 1838: educated at Tallahassee Mission of the same nation, enlisted in the Union army in Kansas November 1862, and was mustered out as sergeant major of the first regiment Indian Home Guards, 111865.  He served as district judge of the Coweta district. Muskogee Nation, six years was elected to the council and served 13 years. He was elected principal chief and inaugurated December 5, 1887, for the term of four years.
3. The Negroes, once slaves of the Five Tribes, are of much interest in connection with the final settlement of the land question. The five Tribes, except the Seminoles, all owned slaves prior to and during the war. In 1860 the total number of slaves held by the five tribes was 7,369.  The population of Negro descent in The Five Tribes which includes former slaves, in 1890 was as follows with the …Creeks, 4,621
4. 24,594 Creeks were removed west of the Mississippi in 1832 and after. .  At the breaking out of the civil war   the western Creeks were estimated to number less than 15,000. The Creeks divided on the war of 1861, and engaged in pitched battles against each other, the unionists suffering badly, many fleeing to Kansas. They were brought together again after the war, and in 1872,numbered, as estimated 13,000, and in 1890, by their census, 14, 800.

In Goat v. United States, 224 US. At 465. The restrictions upon the alienation of homestead lands applied as well to the Freedmen as to the other allottees; but it was removed, with respect to the freedmen, by the act of Mary 27, 1908, c. 199 (35 Stat. 312.  This status, in fixing the status-after sixty days from the date of the act-of lands of allottees of the Five Civilized Tribes, theretofore or thereafter allotted, provided:  “All lands, including homesteads of said allottees enrolled as intermarried whites, as freedmen, and as mixed blood Indians having less than half Indian blood including minors shall be free from all restrictions”. as Page  465 of this case.