

WPA Alabama Writers Project

FOLKLORE

Houston County, ##3

HOUSTON COUNTY

*District 3*

Dying Indian Chieftain Prophecies Future

OCT 30 1936

There is an old Indian tradition that many, many years ago, before the foot of a white man had been placed in the neighborhood of where Dothan now stands, a tribe of Indians camped one night beside a little stream, which was afterwards to be known as "Poplar Head." The Indians were carrying an old chief, who was in a dying condition, back to his old home in Florida to die. The tradition runs that the Indians laid down to sleep; there was no sound save the sighing of millions of virgin pine, the hoot of an owl or perhaps the scream of a wildcat.

It was the time of the harvest moon in Autumn and as it sank slowly in the west the old Indian rose slowly to his feet and pointed at the sinking moon, said: "My children, my time has come, I go the way of my fathers, to the happy hunting grounds, but I have just had a strange vision. I seem to see many pale faces rushing to and fro where we camp tonight; the wolf, the wildcat and the deer have vanished and the red man is no more. My children, my mind is troubled, what can this mean?"

If the above prediction is true it has been more than fulfilled. This is now the location of the interesting and progressive little city of Dothan.

Bibliography: Houston county files, State Dept. of Archives and History.

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9/29/36

Bessie Bigbee, Houston County  
Authority and approved by,  
Julian Hall

In 1899, Dothan was still living up to the reputation of being the worst town in the south. It seemed that someone was continually getting in fights or killed.

The Dothanites kidnapers capable of doing anything were made up of thirty-five carousing citizens who went by horse, buggy and wagon to Ozark to seize the engine from the Central of Georgia, and turn it over to workmen so the Alabama Midland road could extend to Dothan. The Mayor A. C. Crawford of Dothan received a message stating that the engine the Alabama Midland, needed to lay track in Dothan's direction to get the kidnaped engine back. The engine was shipped from Eufaula to Ozark over the Central track and the C of G<sup>G</sup>\* agent refused to turn it over to the Alabama Midland workmen, running it on a side track and securely draping it in locks and chains. The Mayor got a second message that read like this "Come up here and get it loose for us."

The party numbering thirty-five was headed by J. L. Domingus. He was a city marchall but one that sensed a good time. They left at sunset on horseback, in wagons and buggies. All of the party were well stuck with liquor. They looked like a firearm showing that every body was "well heeled."

Somewhere about Newton, Alabama, the party stopped to take a drink and examine a haunted tree, where a Negro had been hanged during reconstruction days. They spent an hour there getting well oiled up. The party landed in Ozark at dawn. All of the party were there except three that stayed hid outside of town.

At noon the C. of G. telegraph wires, were cut and the "howling bunch" from Dothan came racing out of the woods as the Central of Georgia's agent Dan Mabry tried to wire Eufaula to get help to save the engine. He spent the next two hours glumly while the Dothan kidnapers broke the shackles on the engine, laid improvised track and pushed it on the Ala., and Midland property.

The "abduction" did not require long friends in Ozark. They quietly made arrangements. They even stacked cross ties and rails near the engine,

\* Central of Georgia RR

where they could reach them in a hurry. The Dothanites were hoping to have some fight, but they did not fight.

Once the engine was safe on the Midland property, the kidnapers let out a war whoop of victory and tripped to the painter hotel, where they were lavishly entertained by Ala. Midland officials and Ozark residents. They had plenty of Beer and whiskey that made them high spirited when they started home. The bunch felt like a young army and had just as much fun coming back.

The Central of Georgia never made any complaints about the forces taking off the engine, and it was all forgotten as the Alabama Midland pushed its tracks to Dothan.

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Authority and approved by an elderly citizen Mrs. Carrie Anglian

"INDIAN HISTORY."

About the year of 1900, Indians could be seen walking the streets of Dothan. The space that the Junior High School now occupies, which is on Dency St. was once occupied by small tents, better known by the name of Wigwams. The Indians lived in these small tents all the year round.

All that Houston County has left of any signs of Indians are some Indian villages on the Chattahoochee river near Fulmore's upper landing. Somewhere near this landing is found an Indian burial mound 15 feet by 60 feet in diameter.

Some characteristic earthenware has been secured near this mound. The property owned by Green Pate, swamp land east of the Choctawhatchee river from the mound is interesting scenery for some great artist to paint. Indian Poetry has been written about this mound. And Indian village site is located on a farm of T. J. Watson about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles below Columbia on the property of W. L. Crawford.