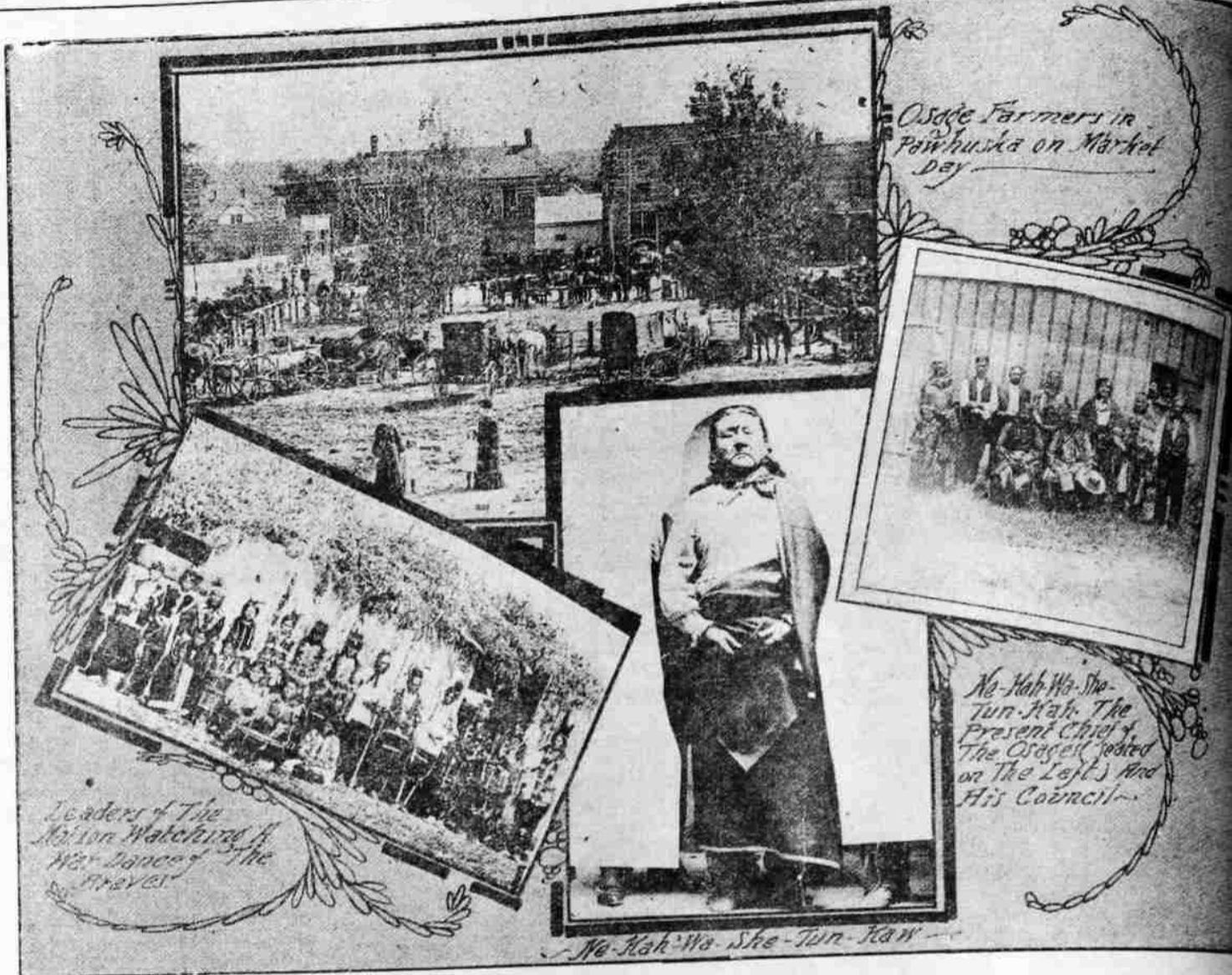


LO, THE RICH INDIAN AND HIS UNIQUE RACE FOR MORE MONEY



PAWHUSKA, Ok., July 20—Probably the most unique contest in the entire history of the world closed on the night of June 30 among the Osage Indians. It was no less than a contest to see which family could produce the greatest number of children having Osage blood, because each child born before that date would, by act of Congress, immediately become worth \$20,000. The lucky man who had twins born to him during this last week is today \$40,000 richer than if the happy event had been delayed, and the poor Indian who had three children born to two wives on July 4 is out on the war-path.

This strange condition comes about from the fact that a new law has gone into effect, by which the wealth of the Osage Indians is at last to be divided up among the members of the tribe. It is not going too far to say that this community is probably the wealthiest in the entire world, for the per capita wealth is estimated to be about \$20,000 for every man, woman and child having Osage blood in his veins, and the annual income of each is in the neighborhood of \$500 per year. Here is an ideal socialistic condition, for the lone bachelor of 60, who has loafed all his life, is just as wealthy as and no more than the new born babe who comes into the world under these circumstances, with no fear of having to descend to the degrading level of work—unless, after this allotment and the Indian comes into possession of his inherited wealth, some shrewd Yankee or half-breed gets it away from him.

The Osage Nation today consists of about 2200 people, of whom about 1000 are full-blooded blanket Indians, speaking no English and living in very much of the primitive manner of their forefathers. The other 1200 are of various degrees of Osage blood, from one-half to one-sixty-fourth, but under the law, every individual having any Osage blood is enrolled as a nation and consequently entitled to his share of the division of wealth. Away back in the first part of the last century the French traders came down this way from St. Louis, as well as a considerable number of enterprising Irishmen, and their intermarriage with the native maidens created a mixture that has been growing continuously ever since, although until about ten years ago, there was a long period when marriages between a white man and an Indian woman of this tribe was practically interdicted. Marriages between white men and half or quarter-bred Indians have continued, and during the last ten years a considerable number of enterprising young white men of the East and North, having heard of the wealth of the Osage maidens, have taken up their residence here, wooed and won these favored

children of wealth. Others, not so enterprising, have contented themselves with writing letters to the Indian agent at Pawhuska, asking how the desired end might be accomplished, and have scarcely received encouragement in their ambition. One of these letters, addressed to the postmaster at Pawhuska, was referred to the present Chief Ne-kah-wah-ha-ton-kah. His reply when translated proved to be "tell the young man to send big chief ear-load ponies. Tell young man to send big chief many presents. Tell young man to send much present; he get girl; but young man make promise. Young man promise he no work."

There are probably lots of young men who would welcome that prospect and make that promise without any mental reservation, just as there are a great many on the reservation today who, without having made that promise, are sticking to it religiously. For that is what the Osage Nation is, a community without the necessity of work. When the Osage had their reservation in Kansas, the land became so valuable for wheat and for agriculture that an arrangement was made by which their entire holdings were taken over by the government at \$1.25 an acre, and with that money a smaller reservation, aggregating in all about 1,500,000 acres, was purchased for them in Oklahoma, at 70 cents an acre. The balance of this money, amounting to nearly \$9,000,000, was placed to the credit of the nation by the Federal government and 5 per cent per annum guaranteed to them thereon.

From this income, certain tribal expenses are paid, that of the support of the agency and of the Osage school, and the balance is paid over quarterly to the enrolled members of the tribe. But their income does not cease here. Luck of a financial kind seems to have followed the Osages. Moved as they were from lands that had become valuable for agriculture to lands that could then be bought cheaply, they were unwittingly deposited on new lands that have since been proved to be rich in oil and minerals, as well as extremely fertile for agricultural purposes. The richness of this oil country is scarcely believable to the easterner. At what stands on the railroad maps as the town of Kiefer, which is in reality nothing but a box car standing on a siding of the Frisco railroad, the freight receipts in that box car office have been, during the past month, over \$140,000, due entirely to the bringing in of the various machinery and implements for oil wells. This is not far distant from the Osage Nation, and its million and a half acres are tapped throughout by oil wells which are yielding enormously. Ten years ago a blanket lease was made by the United

States Government of all the oil lands of the Osage Indians. That is, for 480,000 acres. And last year this was renewed for a period of ten years on the basis that the Indians should receive \$50 for every well that was driven and yielded, as well as 12 1/2 per cent of all that was realized from that oil. There are now on the reservation something over 600 of these wells flowing 15,000 barrels per day, and the total income from them is about \$240,000 per month, of which the Indians' share is \$30,000. In addition to this, grazing rights are leased, and these net \$200,000 per annum more, while all over the reservation are farms and farm lands which are rented by their Indian owners to white farmers at \$2.50 or \$3 per acre per year.

Thus the total income of the nation for the year ending June 30, 1906, was \$1,228,458, and this was divided among the enrolled members of the tribe. Thus, if the Indian had two wives, which is not an uncommon thing, and ten children, which is no less common, he would draw, as the head of the family, a pro rata share for twelve people, live in his little tepee or small cottage, wrap himself in his blanket, eat heavily of beef, grow fat in contentment on his \$6000 income, and lease out his land to the hated paleface, who cultivates it as a tenant of his lordly master. It is small wonder, then, that there has been an influx of whites to the Territory seeking Indian wives who could bring them such opulent charms, but the mixture is not looked upon with favor by the full-bloods, whose chief endeavor at the present time is to bring about an allotment that will eliminate some of these of mixed blood. The department's rulings stand, however, and up to June 30, 1907, when the rolls were closed, any child born of such a union stood on an equal footing with the full-blooded Osage in the matter of the division of this wealth.

Some curious results were seen working out from this situation. The time was when the Osage braves were among the most dignified, mentally acute and famous as hunters of all the Indians. Their traditions are full of poetry and nobility of thought. Their annals are filled with brave deeds in hunting and their chases of the buffalo have been sung in story and song. Today the full-bloods, as a rule, are ambitionless and obese, spending their time wrapped in their blankets, posing before the doors of the Citizens' National bank of Pawhuska, where they cash their checks and draw their dividends. The rest of the time, when they are not slowly pacing the streets in front of the Agency, meekly followed by their equally obese wives, they are sleeping or

feeding, living in dog kennels or gambling, or quietly smoking cigars which have taken the place of their peace pipes. Once the beautiful tradition, by which called upon the dove, the peace, to intercede for them in their shortcomings with the Government, but their old religion has been planted within the last few years something which partakes of the nature of a worship of the money, the product of that plant from their Mexican cousins and pulque. Your Osage Indian, chary about describing the nature of this new religion which has brought in among them, but as I have been able to make there is still the pretense of being the Great Spirit through the use of this bean. As a matter of fact, the bean makes them very fat, is as a result of this makes them consider they have been raised in purities of the spirit and of mind. Incidentally, the effect of the undoubtedly very similar to the hashheesh, because the only way has been able to get regarding it is "um see heap big vision."

The intermarriage of mixed blood has been going on and the Indian blood has been in some cases to so small a part that it would hardly be supposed the president of the Citizens' instance, was on the rolls as a more especially as he bears the Matthews, and it is as between full bloods and the mixed blood the politics of the tribe had been for being. The tribe has a chief, an assistant chief and of ten, who are elected by the two years, and the tribe has two political parties, the Progressive party, and the Progressive party, is, as its name applies, the full bloods, who want to retain something of their old traditions. The Progressive party stands for advancement and for the people with their neighbors, though the mixed bloods are still in a majority among the young age, although this situation is changing. It results, that a full blood is always chief, for the reason that the progressive party, or mixed blood, nominate at their caucus as their candidate in order to get votes from the opposite party.

These mixed bloods are the leaders of the Nation in the city and advancement. They

Continued on Page Six