

Grant W. Harrington and William E. Connelley correspondence

This correspondence between Grant W. Harrington and William E. Connelley addresses the efforts to locate the village where Shawnee Prophet Ten-squa-ta-wa lived at while in Kansas.

Creator: Connelley, William Elsey, 1855-1930

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Callnumber: Indian History Coll. #590, Box 7, Folder: Shawnee-Shawnee Prophet

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KAW LODGE NO. 272, A. F. & A. M.
STATED COMMUNICATIONS, FIRST AND THIRD THURSDAYS
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS 11/24/29

Wm. E. Connelley,
Secretary Historical Society,
Topeka, Kansas.
Friend Connelley:-

The task has been wished onto me of writing the report of the Committee appointed at the last meeting of the Wyandotte Historical Society, at which you were the guest of honor, to fix the place where the Wyandotte Constitutional Convention was held. Some years ago I published a school paper for a short time known as the School News. In this I ran a series of articles on Historic Spots in Wyandotte. I have no copies of these articles but I know your office has the file of the School News in the newspaper Department. Will you kindly make me a type written copy of the article on the Wyandotte Convention. I am sure there are some references in it that will be of value in making the report for our meeting on December 5th.

I see there is quite a little discussion in the Kansas about the grave of the Prophet. In Vol. 8 of the Historical Collections, page 253 I find a foot note about an account of his death by Dr. J.A. Chute of Westport in 1837 and the statement that it is found in Historical Scrap Book B. Vol. 2. I am sure I have read this account somewhere. I thought it was in the Historical Collections but I cannot find it. However I find my Vol XI. has disappeared. Possibly that is where it is. This article might throw some light as to where the Prophet lived at the time of his death.

Very Truly Yours,

GRANT W. HARRINGTON.
Grant W. Harrington

D---GWH.

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Prophet's grave

November 27, 1929

Mr. Grant W. Harrington,
Kansas City, Kansas.

Dear Mr. Harrington-

In reply to your favor of the 24th inst.

We find that we never did receive the School News which you published in Kansas City, Kansas. We have no copies of it. We have no record here that we ever did receive a copy. I am extremely sorry about this for I am sure it contained much about Kansas City, Kansas, that we should like to have had.

The article you refer to on the death of the Prophet by Dr. J. A. Chute throws no light on the location of the village of the Prophet. There was an article in the paper by one Adams saying that he was shown the Prophet's grave. Now I am very confident the grave was at the spring we visited but was on the west side of the ravine instead of the east side. The location was pointed out to me by more than one of the old settlers of Shawnee township. One of them was Stephen Perkins who owned 440 acres of land just west of the Prophet's town. Mr. Perkins was a member of the Board of County Commissioners when I was County Clerk. He was a Kentuckian and had known Abraham Lincoln in Illinois. He was of the same size and style of architecture. He told me that at the time he came to Shawnee township there were many remnants of the Prophet's old town and it was the only Shawnee town of which there were any remnants. He pointed out the Prophet's house as standing just west of the big elm at the top of the ravine on the west side.

John R. Matney also told me that that was the place where the Prophet had lived and was buried. He was an old time settler of Shawnee township but was not quite so old a settler as Mr. Perkins. My daughter Edith recalled a few days ago in talking with me, that she had gone with me in the carriage of James S. Gibson, who was county attorney of Wyandotte county, to look for the Prophet's grave. We went first to the house of



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Mr. Grant W. Harrington-2.

John R. Matney up at the Junction, and he took us all about the top of the hill and showed us the gum spring which was on the road running east and west just over the top of the hill on the south side at the junction and as I remember it, it was on the north side of the road. It was a fine spring and the people in the neighborhood were proud of it and kept it in good condition at that time. He showed us this spring to make us understand that it was not the spring where the Prophet lived although most people were saying that he died near that spring. He said the Prophet did not live there but lived down on the other side of the hill on the west side of the ravine at the spring. He pointed out the same location which had been pointed out by Mr. Perkins.

I talked with him after Chief Bluejacket had made his trip to locate the grave and he told me that he was with the party led by Bluejacket and that Bluejacket had mislocated the grave and that it was on the other side of the ravine and that he said so at the time. He also said that Bluejacket was not certain about it but that it was his judgment that it was on the east side. I am confident the Prophet's grave is 200 or 300 feet west of where Mr. Heisler placed his marker at the instance of Chief Bluejacket. As I recall now Mr. Adams said the cabin of the Prophet remained standing many years and was used as a residence by other people and that it was built of logs. It was not built of logs but of poles and elm bark, and was never the residence of any one but the Prophet. The Shawnees would never live in those bark dwellings after there was a death in them. Many times they burned them at the funeral of the owner. As they were temporary structures entirely, they did not last long.

I am satisfied that we have the location of Old Constitution Hall exactly right.

Sorry I can't be at your meeting Friday night.

With all good wishes

Sincerely yours,

Secretary