

A GIRL'S FIRST PERIOD

(What did your mother tell you when you started your period?)

She said, "When you get a little older there's a thing that a woman does every month when she passes blood from down there.

Once a month, you know, you'll have it for so many days, you know."

And I sat there, and I listened, you know, and so, I'd wait, you know, cause she explained it to me for quite a while. And then when I was eleven years old when I got it, and oh, I knew, you know, what it was, and yet I thought, "Well, maybe it's something else."

I was living with my aunt at that time, and then we walked to school, my cousin and I, he's bout the same age as I am, and then we was coming home from school one day, and I felt funny, you know, so I told him, "You go on ahead and I'll be there last." So....he never did like to walk with me anyway, you know. So he went on ahead, and I sat down and went to the bathroom there in the creek, and oh that blood was just all;over, and I got up and started to run all the way home. And it was a good mile and I got to the door, you know it was just on my legs, you know, and oh, I stat to crying, and I told my aunt, "Something's wrong with me." So she started laughing you know. And I said, "What's the matter?" And she said, "Oh, Sister you're a woman now." The old people...of course, they had quite a few medicine men in those days, and the medicine men knew just by looking at the woman they knew she had it, and they wouldn't let this woman around. I don't know if my grandfather was a real medicine man, but every time I went around him with mine, he told me to stay away, so I knew then, and then I stayed away from him.

(Which grandfather?)