

February 26, 1969

T-379

Index side A, second part, recording time 12 minutes. Interview time 1 hour.

Informant: Jennie Robertson, 80-year-old Cherokee of
Chloeta, Delaware County, Oklahoma

Subject: Jennie is one of eight children of James B. and Nannie Walker. Born in 1889 in Muskogee, Indian Territory, she came with her family to Mose Ridge Prairie in 1902. She recalls that it took nearly five days to make the trip in covered wagons.

Chloeta is still the quiet peaceful community to-day as it was when she first saw it. In those early days nearly all of the people on this prairie and woodland high country were Indians and to-day many Cherokees still live here. Soon after the Walker family established themselves, her father put in a little country store, stocking with supplies hauled by wagon freight from Southwest City, Missouri. A boon to Chloeta was the establishment of a post office about 1904 and James B. Walker was the first postmaster. Apparently Chloeta showed promise as Mager & McGee also put in a trading post there, which was later taken over by a Cherokee by name of Dick Rogers. Next to boost this little community in east central Delaware County was the erection of Mose Ridge School. This was the first school that Jennie attended since she came here. Land for the school and grounds was given by Mose Ridge, a full-blood Cherokee. She remembers this kindly old Indian as very intelligent and a good man. He traveled considerably as he was a circuit rider minister and preached throughout all of the northern part of the Cherokee Nation. Chloeta also had a church which served a wide area to the spiritual needs of the people. Before the family came here an Indian cemetery had already been started, which was on land that became her mother's allotment. Her mother gave an acre and a half of land for the cemetery and had the Dawes Commission so record it. This same burial place has served the community for over 80 years that Mrs. Robertson knows about, and has always been known as the Mose Ridge Cemetery. One would expect that Rev. Ridge would have been buried in this place that bears his name. But not so. Probably long before the present graveyard was started, some of Mose Ridge's people were buried in a little family plot about a half mile northwest, and it was there that Rev. Ridge wished to be put when he died. His wish was carried out.

It was a great day when the family would make one of their few trips to Southwest City, but more often to Afton. In going to Afton they would cross the Bacon Ferry, which later became the Thompson Ferry. That was always a big thrill for the children. In Afton the sight of trains, drug stores, and the big general stores which handled just about everything were experiences that would talk about long afterwards. On one such trip to Afton a couple other families went along