

PINEHILL, SALLY.

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Billie Byrd,
Journalist.
February 14, 1938.

Interview with Sally Pinehill,
Bristow, Oklahoma.

Tulsey - Town (Tulwa)

Being an old member of the old Tulsa, or sometimes called Lochapoka town (tulwa), I can remember the time years ago when there were a great many, many members. The old busking grounds of this town are said to be at 1730 Cheyenne Street in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and it is of those grounds that this story is told.

The ceremonies, customs and the beliefs were kept up like all the other tribal towns had been doing all the time, with the medicine man performing all the rites and duties that fell to him. He prepared the medicine which served to make the members strong in the beliefs and the power to keep up the ceremonial customs to which they were familiar.

It has always been a known fact that any disregard to the custom in the use of tribal medicine caused sickness or some other epidemic among the people.

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For a long time the Tulsey town and its members kept their medicine clean and stayed within the bounds of their tribal beliefs so that the membership became large while the members themselves lived healthful lives.

There came a time, though, that death began to come in their midst and take the lives of many of the members. The members began to die off, day after day, and one person after another. This was one of the results of the disregard of the belief in the tribal medicine which all the members had been told over and over by the elders but a great many of the members were falling under the influence of the whites as they began to appear in their midst when the Indians were trying to get adjusted to the new life in the new home. The whites soon bribed the Indians with their easy talk and promises into using the whiskey. The Indians seemed to like it and were ^{not} long in turning to it, for the charm of the medicine in keeping the members together seemed to have been broken and they could not return to their ceremonial customs quickly.

The medicine man and the town chief tried in vain to keep the remaining members within the beliefs but when they saw how useless it seemed they also took to taking the whiskey.

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When the rapid use of whiskey took hold in their midst, death stalked everywhere and took the lives of a number.

That was why the elders who have lived and experienced are very particular in keeping up with the old ceremonial beliefs and customs. They seem to know what will happen.