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ADAIR, JOHN M.

INTERVIEW

12806

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INTERVIEW.

12006.

Elizabeth Ross,
Investigator,
Jan. 24, 1933.

Interview With John M. Adair,
Tahlequah, Oklahoma Route 2.

The residence of Dennis W. Bushyhead, for eight years principal chief of the Cherokee Nation, was at Fort Gibson; the house had been built in the early days of the fort and was during a considerable period a Government building. Besides other commanding officers of the military post, Brigadier General William Belknap once occupied the house, which was built of hewn logs and was well finished throughout; a large stone chimney carried away the smoke.

As commandant of the military post General Belknap was there several years before the abandonment of Fort Gibson by the Government in 1867. After the removal of the Garrison to another post the houses and grounds reverted to the Cherokee Nation and various Cherokee citizens became owners of houses which had been erected by the United States.

Dennis W. Bushyhead, who returned to the Cherokee Nation from California in 1867, acquired the former headquarters building and occupied it as a home until a number

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Several years after establishing his home in Fort Gibson, Dennis W. Bushyhead was elected Cherokee national treasurer, a position he held eight years, later he was elected Principal Chief.

A Cherokee Indian soldier who died in the vicinity of the old building was reputed to have hidden a sum of money near the house and for a number of years many persons sought to find the money. All failed, but when the Ozark route of the St. Louis and San Francisco Railway was being built in 1902, some Creek workmen are related to have found a considerable sum in an excavation and immediately gave up their employment and left the country.

A mound of earth and scattered stones now indicate the site of the old headquarters building.

Mrs. Eloise Bushyhead, age seventy-eight or seventy-nine, widow of Chief Bushyhead, also furnished a part of the above information. -Elizabeth Ross, Investigator.