

**T-5**

MRS. BESSIE M. WILTON, NON-INDIAN  
TRANSCRIPT OF TAPE MADE 6-8-67  
INTERVIEWED BY: WILLIAM SAVAGE  
TRANSCRIBED BY: MARY HAIR

GENERAL SUBJECT: EARLY CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES AND EXPERIENCES AS A POSTMISTRESS

PARTICULAR TOPICS DISCUSSED:

TERRITORIAL SCHOOL IN NINNEKAH  
CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES  
INDIAN TUITION IN SCHOOLS  
BEN FILLMORE  
EFFECT OF FARMING ON EDUCATION  
LIFE WITHOUT MODERN CONVENIENCES  
SEEKING INDIANS IN CHICKASHA  
EXPERIENCES OF T. E. BASSETT  
SAMSON T. JEFFERSON  
LEILA DUKE  
EXPERIENCE AS POSTMISTRESS IN HOCHATOWN

BACKGROUND OF INFORMANT: Born in Arkansas; father T. E. Bassett, was merchant in Wilton, Arkansas; when she was two, her mother died; father re-married, moved to Oklahoma; brought her, three brothers and grandmother.

PRELIMINARY CONVERSATION

(This is Bill Savage with Mrs. Bessie M. Wilton in Norman, Oklahoma. The date is June the 8th, 1967. Mrs. Wilton is going to tell us about her experiences in early day Oklahoma when she and her family moved here from Arkansas.)

TERRITORIAL SCHOOL IN NINNEKAH

We came here from Arkansas in October of 1904 and I attended school, a territorial school, in Ninnekah. The school was a two room building, quite dilapidated, and seen a great deal of wear. It had been very well marked by pencils, inks, and a few pocket knives, and other things the children managed to take to school with them. There were some Indian children and we all played together and enjoyed ourselves immensely. The teacher was a young lady, a very attractive young lady, and we were in school in the morning at 9:00. And in our desks which were home-made desks and the chairs that we sat in were nailed by boards underneath and we were sitting--oh, about like sardines in a can and there would be times when our pencils would be missing, our pens would be broken, our