

7-609
June 8, 1970

Index side A, recording time 23 min.; interview time 1 1/2 hours.

Informant: Hulsie King, 83-year-old full blood Creek Indian, Hitichita, McIntosh County, Okla.

Subject: Grave-Creek Indian Community.

The very old meeting grounds, the Indian Church, the semi-circle of community buildings is the hub of the Creek Indians of this old part of the Creek Nation. About a mile to the east is the little town of Hitichita, once an Indian village, but now completely taken over by whites.

The Christian religious life of the Creeks is very important to their way, and on the day of this visit some fifty Indians were making preparations for a revival and bible school. Perhaps the oldest of this Indian community is Hulsie King, who has lived in this community all of his 83 years. He was found sitting on a bench in the shade of the little church building which stands in the center of the meeting grounds. His working days past, he was enjoying the activity of the younger people as they built brush arbors, prepared food, and made other arrangements for the forthcoming events. As we talk about their church, he told that the first church was a little log building located about a hundred yards south of the present building. Later another church building was built and was used for many years, but burned down. The present church building was constructed a little farther north in the center of the old meeting grounds. With pride Mr. King points to the corner stone of their church which has the inscription: GRAVE CREEK I B M C 1857 1945. The interest and spirit of this Indian Baptist Missionary Church is equal to any to be found elsewhere.

Mr. King reflects on his early years and tells that he was educated at the schools at Hitichita, Eufaula Boarding School and Chilocco Indian School. Typical of the Indian he has a deep love of the woods and streams, and in his productive years he was a farmer.

The history of this community reveals some important events in the Creek Nation. Some two miles north of the little town of Hitichita is a woodland hill country. In this area was located the first capitol or council grounds of the Creek Nation after the removal of the tribe to Indian Territory. This place was known as "High Spring", probably because of the big spring that was located on the wooded hill. Probably the early Indian village of Hitichita was one of the very early settlements of these Indians. The name of the village was brought from their old country, and it was the name of one of the seven principal Creek Nation towns in the East. Mr. King does not know of the activity or history of the tribe's first council grounds at High Spring, but says that the present town of Council Hill a few miles east of that old place was named for the Creek Meeting Ground. He does say that the Creek Nation established and built their present Capitol at Okmulgee in the 1870s, although the seat of their government was set up there in the 1860s. He tells that he was a big boy when he made his first trip with his parents to the Creek Nation Capitol, and it was on that trip that he got his first pair of shoes.