

T-209

Informant: James A. Tyner, Cherokee

Interviewed by: J. W. Tyner

Transcribed by: Nona Kerr

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BRIEF INTRODUCTION

(This is March 6, 1968 and we are visiting with James A. Tyner, 83-year old Cherokee of Craig County, Oklahoma. He has spent all of his life in the Indian Nation. He now relates for us many incidents and experiences of his early life beginning with his first school attendance at Stony Point School, Adair County.

STONY POINT SCHOOL - HOGS SLEPT UNDER FLOOR OF THE LOG SCHOOL HOUSE

I spent my school life down in the Cherokee Nation.

(Who were your teachers for instance?)

Well, we had different teachers, different years. We had Lula Smith, Lula Duckworth, and George Smith, and Inez Morrow, Abel Vann and my father, Jeff Tyner, were our teachers. And they were all Indian children and talked Cherokee. Very few of them talked English.

(They had to learn to speak English at school.)

They did learn it there. I remember one time, my father was teaching at that time, he asked one little girl to do some counting--no, say her A, B, C's. She said, "A, B, C, W, X, Y, Z." She wanted to hurry and get through.

(What was your school building like?)

Just a cabin. Log school building with split log benches. That's what we had to sit on. There was no back to 'em at all. It was hard to sit on those benches, but we had to do it.

(How did you heat the place?)

Just by the wood fire. Big fireplace and we had plenty of wood. And that's all the way we had heating the building.