

December 2, 1968

T-353

Index side A, fourth part, 15 minutes

Index side B, first part, 25 minutes

Informant: Dora Early Tucker, 88-year-old Cherokee,  
Bushyhead Community, Rogers County, Oklahoma

Subject: Mrs. Tucker recalls the early day church services. Circuit riding ministers would conduct church in homes when no church building or meeting place was available. Those old time preachers rode horseback and their pay was what the people could give them. They were usually paid by gifts of food, clothing or some other commodity, but seldom got any money, as money was scarce. She recalls that when her family moved into the Bushyhead area in 1888, there was a building standing that had been built earlier by missionaries and abandoned. The community organized a Sunday School in this building and started the first church. Occasionally a preacher in the area or a circuit riding minister would come to conduct services.

She likes to remember the times when no one had locks on doors or other belongings. A feeling of trust existed in those days that is unknown now. In telling of family life when she was a girl, her father would give orders to have all work and chores done so that there would be no work on Sunday and he was very strict on this matter.

The ingenuity of the early pioneers is again expressed in storing their grain. They built type s of "Pole cribs", either by placing a circle of poles in the ground and binding at the top, or by building up horizontal from the ground. Tops would be covered with limbs and grass sufficient to shed water. Hay was cut and stacked around a pole, with the top sloped to shed water. Their ways of preserving guaranteed winter feed, and seed for next years crop.

As a small girl, Mrs. Tucker can remember wash day at their home in Adair County. Washing was done near a big spring. Clothes were boiled in an iron kettle with homemade soap. After the clothes had boiled they would be taken out and placed on a stump and beat with a heavy paddle. If not clean enough to suit her mother, the process would be repeated. Clothes would be rinsed in the clear spring water and hung on tree limbs to dry.

For home lighting, she recalls her grandmother making candles from beef tallow. One of her chores as a little girl was to clean the kerosene lamp chimneys, trim wicks, and fill with oil. There were times when the only light they had was a lighted string protruding from a little pan of grease. And she remembers times when they would read by light from the fireplace.