

A CUSTOM

An interview of Martha Henneha, age 56,
Okemah, Oklahoma

Billie Byrd, Field Worker
Indian Pioneer History
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There is a custom by which the different tribal towns (tulwas) of the Muskogee-Creek Nation notify other tribal towns about the date of their tribal ceremonies or dances.

Certain men of a town (tulwa) prepare a bundle containing eight short sticks. These bundles of sticks are delivered to persons or at the homes of other members of other towns on whom they wish to bestow invitations to their ceremonial dance.

These bundles are delivered eight days prior to the ceremonial dance. The eight sticks represent each of the eight days prior to the dance and the person who has received a bundle is supposed to throw one of the sticks in the bundle away each day. Each stick thrown away represents a day gone while the number of sticks left in a bundle represents the number of days before the ceremonial dance.