

INDEX CARDS

Houses--Cherokee Nation

Ross, Lewis A.

Potts, Nellie

Ross, Jane

Ross, John

Ross, John G

game--Cherokee Nation

intertribal settlements--Creek-Cherokee

fruits--wild

ranching--Creek Nation

earthquakes

churches--Cherokee Nation

, ELIZA. INTERVIEW.

LA ROSS, Informant
ogee

Jas. S. Buchanan

I was born December 15, 1872 at which our family called the "old place" a two-room log cabin which stood near the old spring just south of the main building of the Sequoyah Indian orphan's training school, as the place where that institution now stands was my father's farm. My father was James A. Ross, 1-16 Cherokee and my mother was Nellie Fotts, a fullblood Cherokee. My father sold this old place when I was very young and moved to the old John S. Ross place near the Illinois river at Park Hill. John Ross was my grandfather and a brother-in-law of Chief John Ross, but was of Indian blood, he was a native of Scotland. My father and mother spent the remainder of their life at Park Hill. It was much easier for the people to live in those days than it is at the present time. We raised almost everything we ate, and game was so plentiful, deer, turkey, wild pigeons and prairie chickens. I have seen the wild pigeons pass over in such large droves that they obscured the sun from view, and I have seen my father shoot into low flying droves and kill countless numbers of them. Prairie chickens were so plentiful that they would come around the house, once I remember one either ran or flew into the house through the chimney and we caught it. The neighbors went on turkey hunts at night, when they would shoot into the roosting flocks and see limbs and kill many of them. A small settlement of Creek Indians lived on the Illinois river from our home at Park Hill and they used to hunt and come and they would come to the settlement to peddle their fish and wild game, deer, etc. My mother had a choice flock of turkeys and had selected a young tom to keep in the flock, one morning in the late summer we heard a noise in the nearby woods, and in the afternoon, Ned, one of the young Creeks-

up to the house and offered a fine dressed turkey for sale, and our young
ey was seen no more and we always thought that Ned had killed it, tho the
ence was circumstantial and perhaps only a coincident. My brothers would
deadfalls, a heavy piece of plank supported by a trigger baited with
meal sprinkled beneath the board to trap quail in the snowy weather as
were very plentiful. Often hunters were out with their hounds at night
ing fox. We could almost follow their trail as we listened to their bark-
as they trailed across hill and vale. Once we were almost speechless with
when we heard the scream of a panther near by as one of my brothers was
on an errand and the night was very dark and we feared for his safety but
he returned, the panther had not been far from his pathway. My foolish
ish fear was that the panther might leap onto the roof and then down thru
chimney into the room as the prairie chicken did. Deer were plentiful up
ate as the 80's. I remember seeing them in an open space not far from our
and one occasion I saw a beautiful doe gracefully sliding thru some
growth near the roadside in front of our gate. (There was an abundance of
strawberries, sweet and of a pronounced flavor and more delicious than any
vated berry I have ever eaten, also, wild raspberries and blackberries,
and luscious to be had for the picking and we canned gallons of them
summer. There were plenty of wild plums, both red and damson that we
for jelly and preserves of the finest grade, but the wild plum is no longer
iful. In the early days the Indians were very careful about forest fires
fort to preserve the wild products, but in later years since the country
een settled, the fires that have been started accidentally or otherwise
burned the berry vines and wild fruit trees that they have been almost
oyed. In the summer of 1882, my father went with a group of men to drive
of cattle to a ranch near where Tulsa now stands and was gone

st a month on the trip. While he was gone a severe wind storm came up and
mother and aunt Jane Ross, my father's sister gathered up some bedding so
the little ones would have a bed in case the house was destroyed and
brought all us children to the cellar beneath the house, but as it happened
there was no harm done. Time seemed endless while father was gone, and when
he returned he brought with him an ivory handled revolver, the first I have had
known him to own and I looked upon it with fearful delight. Our beloved
Jane Ross lived with us when she was not away teaching. She often went
along with us children and on one occasion I remember when upon our return
after a Sunday afternoon walk the house shook and rattled, and later we were told
it had been an earthquake. That was in 1882 or 83. Walking was one of the
diversions allowed us on Sunday. The old rope swing was thrown over the
top of the tree and our toys put away and we had Bible lessons when not at
our school. My father, mother and aunt Jane were outstanding in their
piety and unselfish living.