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Etta D. Mason
Investigator
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Interview with Kate Impson
Stringtown, Oklahoma.

I was born in a little log house on Peaceable Creek; Choctaw Nation, near Krebs in 1871. My father was just known as Anderson to us, though of course he had a given name but I never heard it called. He died when I was real small. My mother was Lizzie Green and was half white. My father was a full blood Choctaw.

We lived a typical Indian life, had our schools, churches and entertainments which we all enjoyed. I have attended many of the witch dances and worn the terrapin shells strapped around my ankles. The shells were fastened together with strings and a few small pebbles were put inside them so that they would rattle while we danced. I can still feel the thrill of those dances. As we danced we had to pass by the vessel that held the witch medicine and each person must taste the medicine to keep off the disease that the sick person in the house had. If one danced across the forbidden line he or she was bathed in the medicine.

I also attended many of the Indian "Cries" and took my place among the mourners.

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When we lived at Krebs I remember when Mr. Krebs, the man for whom the town of Krebs was named, died. He made his family promise not to bury him, so a vault was built on top of the ground and a brick house built over the vault. His body was placed in the vault and a lock was put on the door. I saw his body several times after he was buried but for some reason, though the body had been embalmed, it was not preserved and in a few weeks his family was forced to put the body under the ground.

My mother was among the refugee Indians who fled to the southern part of the Indian Territory during the Civil War. She said that she rode a mule and sat on a feather bed strapped to the mule's back.

