

ROSS, ELIZABETH

OLD PARSONAGE.

#12136

494

ROSS, ELIZABETH.

OLD PARSONAGE.

12136

Interviewer, Elizabeth Ross,
November 11, 1937.

Old Parsonage.

A weatherbeaten and somewhat dilapidated house which stands a mile southwest of the Park Hill Post Office was once a Presbyterian parsonage and was occupied by several ministers of that denomination at intervals. But after withdrawal of the Board of Missions from mission school activities in the Park Hill locality a short time before admission of Oklahoma to statehood, the parsonage passed into possession of a new owner, and during the years which have followed there have been several owners.

The parsonage was completed in 1886 and was occupied in the autumn of that year by the Reverend Arthur G. Evans, pastor and superintendent of the Presbyterian mission school then existent, and by his sister, Miss Carrie L. Evans, and Miss Sarah S. Mathes, teachers. (The death of Miss Mathes occurred October 19, 1936, in Pasadena, California). The mission school and Church building, with two large rooms, stood a short distance west of the parsonage, having been completed likewise in 1886.

ROSS, ELIZABETH, OLD PARSONAGE.

12136

-2-

The parsonage was built of yellow pine lumber made at a saw mill in the Cherokee hills east of the Illinois River and Barren Fork, and contained two rooms on the ground floor and two in the upper story. There was an extension on the west side which contained two rooms, which were used as kitchen and dining room, and there was a loft above the extension which was used as a storage room. The house was warmed by wood stoves, but a few years after completion of the building a sandstone chimney and fireplace were built on the east side of the north room. By this means the living room was heated as also was the room directly above.

During the period the parsonage was occupied by the preachers and teachers connected with the church and mission school, the house and outbuildings were enclosed with a substantial plank fence and there were shrubbery and flowers on the lawn. A number of large forest trees stood near the house inside the enclosure and there were others in the near vicinity. One of the old roads which had been in use since the early years of the Cherokee Nation passed near the mission station, which stood nearly a mile north of the site of the early-day station of the American Board, which had

been abandoned at the beginning of the sixties of the nineteenth century.

The pastor and teachers kept cho'ce saddle horses and they were often used on various trips to Tahlequah and on calls on persons and pupils who were ill, etc. A "hack" was kept and frequently used which was as greatly admired in the eighties by some of the country folk as are automobiles of today (1937).

The present Park Hill Post Office was established in 1890 and was at first maintained in a building near the church and school house, but eventually the office was removed to the parsonage, Miss Margaret McCarrell, principal teacher, (originally from Blauvelt, New York) having received appointment as postmistress. The post office remained in the parsonage for several years before being removed to another location in the vicinity.

Several notable ministers from distant cities and states were guests at intervals in the parsonage in the decade of the nineties of the last century, some of them on business connected with missions and some as visitors.

ROSS, ELIZABETH,

OLD PARSONAGE.

12136

498

-4-

The parsonage stands at no great distance from the sites of several of the oldest homes in the locality. Its appearance at the present time is that of a building somewhat older than fifty-one years, the coat of paint applied in 1886 having completely disappeared.