



COKER, MONIE

INTERVIEW

6895

Billie Byrd,  
Field Worker,  
July 24, 1937.

Interview with Monie Coker, age 66,  
Muskogee Tribe,  
Bristow, Oklahoma.

There are many beliefs and customs still observed and practiced among the Indians of the Muskogee-Creek Tribe and some of them are told now.

#### Beliefs

Pointing with the finger at a rainbow will result in the finger becoming crooked.

If a corn cob is found standing on one end in front of a house, a visitor is to be expected.

A woman will have a hard time during the child-birth period if she stands in the door, lies across the bed or eats of the chicken gizzard.

A young boy or young man who eats the chicken gizzard will be thirsty for water during the war time when he is in battle.

Some say that if a person does not spit four times on seeing a shooting star, that person will go blind or all his teeth will fall out.

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The feeding pan of a dog is turned over if a pet dog has strayed away from home. It is believed that beating often on the pan at the regular feeding time will bring the dog home.

The right front foot of a squirrel is cut off and a dog induced to smell it. This is done four times before the dog is fed and sometimes the squirrel foot is tied with a string around the neck of the dog. This will turn a dog into a good squirrel dog.

A person becomes bald if a hat is worn at the table during meals.

A hunter, on killing a squirrel, pulls hair off the under side of the right foot of the squirrel and buries it at the foot of the tree where the squirrel is killed. It is believed that a hunter will kill more squirrels if this is done. A bushy tail of a squirrel killed indicates that more squirrels will be killed.

Young wasps are fed to small pups for four mornings to turn them into ferocious dogs or watch dogs.

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Remedial Customs

For a muscle strain or sprain, a live squirrel's right foot which has been cut off, a thorn or a piece of the cane from off of the cane bottomed chair is used to scratch over the spot of the sprain or strain.

Blowing through a pipe stem three times in the ear not aching and the fourth time into the aching ear will often lessen the earache.

For a cut where the vein has been cut and the blood comes in spurts, moist dirt is taken and placed directly over the cut and the bleeding is quickly checked. Even a small piece of the dirt is given to a person to be swallowed.

Often, an old key is hung on a string around the neck of a person who is subject to frequent nose bleed.

If a pregnant woman, for at least four months before delivery, takes internally as a tea and bathes in the water in which the slippery elm and cottonwood barks have been boiled, the labor will not be difficult nor of long duration.

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A muddauber's nest placed in warm water and dissolved and taken internally also helps to make a quicker delivery during childbirth.

The tongue of a mocking bird fed to a small infant will cause the child to grow up to be an imitator in everything.

The toes of a quail scratched on the feet of a baby in infancy will tend to make the child grow up fast and nimble.

A baby who has drunk any liquid from an old bell will have a very pleasant voice and also be a good singer.

The toes of a lizard scratched upon the feet of a baby is believed to cause the child to become a good and alert climber.