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Etta D. Mason
Indian-Pioneer History
April 23, 1937

Interview with Mary McCarter
Morrison, Atoka, Okla., negro
town south of Court House as
given to Mrs. Etta D. Mason.

Mary McCarter Morrison was born March 14, 1871 at
Plano, Texas, Father was Jack Jones, born in Arkansas was
a slave. Mother was Harriett Foreman, born in Tennessee, and
was a slave.

My father came to Indian Territory in 1875 when the
country was nothing but a wilderness. My father and mother
were slaves and belonged to Foreman and Jones.

I attended the colored school at Atoka. We had white
teachers. One of my teachers was James Scissins, another
was Mr. Ryley. He was from Scotland. They both believed
in the switch to get results. That was the only way we
were punished.

One incident I remember well during my school days was
the shooting of a criminal. Our teachers dismissed school
and went with us to the execution. The place of the ex-
ecution was in the northern part of Atoka near our school.
The criminal was brought out and prepared for burial. His
coffin was there, ready. His cheeks were painted to rep-
resent blood. His chest was painted to represent powder.
He was not bound but an officer held each arm. He was made

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to kneel on the ground and the executioner fired the bullet into the painted circle on his breast. The boy's mother was present and took the body away in the coffin. I did not sleep much that night. It was something that I could not forget.

How the Witch Doctor Cured me of Neuralgia:

Aunt Kate Chambers was a witch doctor. All the colored people and fullblood Indians were afraid of her but if one became sick or was bitten by a snake or dog, she was consulted at once. It was said that all she had to do in case of snake bite was to spit on the ground and rub the snake bite with the dirt and spittal. The snake would die and the person would get well.

I had been suffering with neuralgia or something in my face. I had been suffering for weeks and had tried every remedy known to blacks and whites in our community but nothing had helped me. So I decided to try Aunt Kate. When I arrived at her cabin I was trembling with fear. She put me in a chair and told me to take the bandages from my head. After I had removed them. She leaned near me and blew her breath on my face. My head felt as if everything inside flew out the top. I could not move and I thought she had bewitched me and that I was dying. But she spoke

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kindly to me and told me she would blow one more time and that I would be well. She blew and the pain ceased and I have never had it since.

White people called Aunt Kate the devil, but we knew she was not. She was real to us.