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Ball games--Creek

Pond Switch

Onapa

1-23-37

CREEK INDIAN BALL GAME

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One of the old Indian ball grounds was two miles west of Sand Switch which is Onapa today, six miles south of Checotah on the M.K. & T. R. R. They do not have a diamond with bases as the whites do; they cut two long poles, about twelve or fifteen feet long, and peel the bark off all around the center of each pole and they are placed in the ground about one hundred feet apart. On top of each pole is a white skull of a cow which was plentiful on the prairie. They did not touch the ball with their hands but made their ball sticks out of second growth hickory and one end was hewed thin and formed into the shape of a spoon and was laced with raw hide, similar to our tennis racquet. They would pick the ball up with the stick and throw at the skull, on top of the pole, and if they hit it scored ten; and when they hit the blazed place in the center of pole, it scored five.

Most generally, one neighborhood of Indians would play another and the game gets exciting as they scramble for the ball. It would remind you of our foot ball games, as they piled up on each other. The games were generally played on Sunday afternoon, and the whites, as well as the Indians, would go several miles through the hot sun to watch the Indian ball games.

Carl B. Sherwood