LULA HEADMAN'S STORY (PIPE DANCE, CUSTOMS)

My name is Lula Headman. My father was a Headman. My mother was Virginia Headman, both were full Ponca Indians. I was born 1894. I went to school in 1901. I was hidden by my folks but by peeping from my hiding place I was picked up and taken to school, forcibly. I was taken to school in a hayrack. I didn't know a word of English but relatives of mine being there first helped me to understand and make out what I did learn in the school. This school was called the Ponca Indian Boarding School.

My experience in pipe dance was started when I was about five years old. I was prepared by my mother--that is washed, cleaned and dressed, our faces were painted to look nice and presentable, moccasins, shawl, black scarf and earrings. The family that danced the pipe dance for me were Otoes. Being so small and being carried on the back of the man I cannot remember the Otoe family's name. The crowd had already formed a circular arena for our coming. An eagle plume was placed on the back part of my head. Being so small it seemed like they danced forward and backward shaking the gourd rattles and feathered pipes being danced with over me. And experiencing all of this gives me the right to wear the plume of the eagle. The second plume I got I placed it in the hand of my younger sister, Nellie Headman Jones, who died in 1960.

The reason for all of this--it seems my folks were proud of me being their oldest daughter. Their hopes were for me to live long, prosper, have children and most of all to better myself and my family as a Ponca. Unfortunately, I raised only one boy out of five children which I hope will live so that they will read this in the years to come. My people also told me that I must never face my brother. I can speak with him but not to look at him directly in the face because sometimes I might speak with anger and I was to spare my brother the angry look in my face.

I was also told to wrap myself with some cloth down to my ankle on windy days to my legs will not be seen. And also when