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INTERVIEW WITH MRS. LUCINDA HICKEY
415 S. Santa Fe Bartlesville, Okla

FIELD WORKER ALENE D. MCDOWELL
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THE LIFE AND EXPERIENCES OF A NATIVE OF OKLAHOMA.

Mrs. Lucinda Hickey was born in Stilwell, Cherokee Nation, in the Indian Territory, in 1854.

Father- John Gott- Born in Nashville, Tennessee, died in the Cherokee Nation, east of Wagoner at the age of 85 years.

Mother- Margaret Bean Gott--born in Georgia, died in the Cherokee Nation, near Stilwell at the age of 70 years.

My father was a doctor. He served as a Confederate soldier in the Civil War, under Colonel Stand Watie. My father was Scotch and Irish. My two brothers, William and George, were also in the war, William serving through the war, but George being killed near Tahlequah, Indian Territory.

My mother came from Georgia to Fort Smith, Arkansas by Steamboat. She was a quarter Cherokee Indian.

My parents were married near Stilwell and settled on a farm there. My mother, with the help of four negro women slaves, given to her by her mother who brought them from Georgia, took care of the farm and my father practiced his profession. One of these negro women carried all of my mother's money during the war.

OUR HOME.

Our home was a double log house, ceiled and weatherboarded.

We had four fireplaces and did our cooking on a fireplace, in a large iron kettle. We used flint rock and punk to light a fire and made our candles for light. These were made from tallow. Our water supply was a spring. My brothers made a spout of elder for the spring.

The mail was carried by stage coach from Fort Smith, Arkansas, through Stilwell to Wauhatchie (I do not think this town is still in existence.)

We bought our supplies from a country store at Dutchtown, located just across the Arkansas line. (I do not know if this store is still in existence). This store was located about ten miles from Cane Hill, Arkansas.

We traveled mostly in buggies and wagons, but I have traveled by ox cart. When we went to Fort Smith, we crossed the Arkansas river by ferry boat at Fort Smith.

CLOTHING

My mother raised sheep and cotton and our clothes were made of homespun. She would card the wool and we would weave it into cloth. We picked the cotton seed out of the cotton by hand, then wove the cotton into cloth. These materials were dyed with dyes made by boiling roots and barks. Our clothes were all made by hand.

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We knitted our stockings, gloves and scarfs. One time I knitted a pair of stockings for a girl who could not knit and she gave me six hens and a rooster for my pay.

EDUCATION.

When I started to school at the age of five, my negro mammy went with me and stayed all day. I only went a short time before the war, when the school closed. I did not go to school any more until after the war. I was then ten years old. I finished school and had what is now classed as a high school education. After my graduation, I went to school until I was twenty years old, just to keep up my education. I taught school two terms in a country school, Galor School, located northeast of Wagoner. This was in 1902, after my marriage, when my youngest girl was a baby.

ALLOTMENT.

My allotment consisted of sixty acres, thirty acres near Wagoner and thirty acres near Collinsville, Oklahoma. I sold my allotment later and invested the money in a farm six miles west of Nowata, Oklahoma.

MARRIAGE.

On May 10, 1875, I married Thomas Hickey, a quarter blood Cherokee Indian, at Fort Gibson, Cherokee Nation in the Indian Territory.

We did not have a marriage license. We were married by Judge Walker. After our marriage we settled in the Chickasaw Nation, where my husband later became an Indian Police at Savanna. Sam Sixkiller was Indian Police at Muskogee at this time. The first time I rode on the train was in 1889 while we lived at Savanna. I went from Muskogee to Savanna.

We later moved to a farm east of Wagoner, across Grand river, where we lived for twenty-five years. We later moved to a farm six miles west of Nowata Oklahoma. We lived at this place for ten years. We raised a family of eleven children. One boy^s lives in Colorado and the rest of them live in Oklahoma. Four are now deceased.

The first automobile I saw was at Tahlequah. It belonged to Congressman Jackson Ellis, a full blood Cherokee Indian. This was the first automobile brought to Oklahoma, to my knowledge. Mr. Ellis was a very wealthy man. He drove this automobile from Washington, D. C. in 1895.

The only newspaper published near us was at Tahlequah, by a man named Boudinot. This was the Tahlequah Advocate. Mr. Boudinot was a Cherokee Indian.

My husband was blind for fourteen years before his death six years ago in Bartlesville, Oklahoma. I have made my home

at this place since his death.

MISCELLANEOUS FACTS.

Tom Starr (Grandfather of the notorious outlaw, Henry Starr) killed a man who had won his money in a card game near Evansville, Arkansas. He hid the body in a hollow tree, where my father found it later. Tom Starr scouted for twenty years and was never captured. He was granted a pardon after the Civil War. This was before my birth.

My mother's brother, Starr Bean, lived in the Chickasaw Nation, near the Arkansas line. He was threatened by Tom Starr. My uncle was forced to leave the Indian Territory because of Starr's threat and he moved to Texas where he later became very wealthy.

The Starr family and my family intermarried in later years and Henry Starr was my second cousin.

CHOCTAW CRY.

When I was about ten years old, a little Choctaw Indian girl, I do not remember her name, asked me to go to the Choctaw Cry with her. This was held in Goodwater (No longer in existence). There was a beautiful Indian girl, whose name I did not know, and an old man named Walff wanted to marry her. There was a young man who also wanted to marry her, so they ran a race, the

one who won to marry the girl. The young man was in the lead when he fell down, so the old man won and the girl had to marry him, but she would not live with him.

That afternoon we had preaching at the cemetery and that evening we gathered around the graves and smoked the pipe of peace. They passed the pipe to me and I did not know anything to do but smoke, so smoke I did.

After they had all smoked they started crying, all started at the same time and all stopped at the same time, except me and I could not stop.

BALL GAME.

My next experience happened a short time after the "Choctaw Cry". This was an Indian ball game held at Doaksville, in the Choctaw Nation. I do not think this place is still in existence. A little Choctaw Indian Girl, named Chuffah, took me to the ball game. This girl could speak English very fluently.

The game was played with two sticks, with a cup on the end to catch the ball in. The bases were two poles about two hundred yards apart. The man caught the ball in the cup, then ran to the poles or bases. When they caught the ball, they would give a whoop.

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The women had long switches and as the men ran, they would whip their legs to make them run faster. The women were great gamblers and bet on the game the same as the men.

The men all played naked and I was very much embarrassed, so did not stay long.

FRIENDS.

I had a very dear friend when I was a little girl in school. She was a full blood Cherokee. Her name was Polly Keneltz and she was my seat mate. She taught me to speak Cherokee. I could speak this language fluently but have forgotten part of it now,. However, I believe I could hold a conversation.

WILD INDIANS.

When I was about sixteen years of age, we attended a fair at Muskogee in the Cherokee Nation. At Fort Gibson we saw a tribe of wild Indians, dressed in breech-clout and were terrible looking. They danced Indian dances and ate raw meat.

~~On this trip I saw a railroad for the first time at Muskogee. This was in 1891.~~

CAMP MEETING.

I attended a camp meeting at Eureka, a town located be-

tween Tahlequah and Wagoner. It is no longer in existence. A full blood Cherokee Indian preacher in his native tongue, with the aid of an interpreter so we could understand him. He was a Baptist preacher. This meeting was held in a brush arbor.

STOMP DANCES.

I have attended the Indian stomp dances all of my life, the last one I attended was north of Dewey about a year ago. I used to attend them at Stilwell when I was a child.

An old Cherokee Indian, 115 years old, used to beat the drum for the dances. The last time I saw him he was too old to stomp so he entertained himself beating the drums.

INDIAN MEDICINES.

I do not remember much about their medicines now, but I do remember they used Mullen, Dogwood Bark, Hickory Bark, Red Oak, Wahoo Root for liver medicine, Ginseng Root for a drug, Butterfly Root for Pneumonia, and Mule Tail Weed.

INDIAN FOODS AND COOKING.

The Indians made their lye by running water through hot ashes. They used the lye in making hominy. They raised hominy corn, this corn was harder grain than Indian corn.

The lye was poured over the shelled hominy corn and let stand a while, then it was taken out of the lye and put in a bowl, this bowl was made by hewing a deep hole in a log, and the corn was pounded with a pestle to remove the husks from the corn. It was then put into a cane basket with the bottom made of open work and sifted through to remove finer husks from the corn. It was then put into a closer woven basket and fanned through to take the bran from the first hominy. This was called a Fanna. The hominy was then cooked until well done.

They would take what was left of the last bran and make hominy soup.

CANUTCHI.

Hickory nut meats were pounded and added to the hominy, this was called Canutchi.

KAWHESTI.

Take an iron pot and put hot ashes in the pot. Wash shelled corn and roast brown in the ashes, take out and pound fine in the mortar. To the pounded corn, add equal part sugar. This is called Kawesti. The full bloods used this as a food when traveling.

ASH CAKES

Take corn meal, pour in enough hot water to make a stiff dough. Shape into balls and bake in hot ashes.

HOW THE INDIANS ATE.

The Indians formed a circle and all sat on the floor or the ground. Each had a dish and a wooden spoon. The Cherokees did not like milk or butter, but drank coffee, well sugared.

INDIAN SUPERSTITIONS.

My mother-in-law, Mrs. Rachel Hickey, a half breed Cherokee, was very superstitious. There was a very old Cherokee woman who came to Mrs. Hickey's house for breakfast every morning. One morning they had finished breakfast and she did not give her anything to eat. This made the old woman angry. Mrs. Hickey believed that the old woman would bewitch her. She thought something would make her ill, so that morning her tooth began aching. Mr. Hickey, who was also very superstitious, told her to pick her tooth and if she got anything out of it, the one who had bewitched her would die. She got a little black bug out of her tooth and the next morning, the Old Indian died. This old woman

could not speak a word of English.

INDIAN CLOTHING.

The Cherokee men wore pants and coats made of buckskin and were fringed. The pants were fringed down the outside of the leg and the coat was fringed around the bottom. They wore shirts made of homespun and were made loose like a sack. They called these their hunting shirts.

The women wore dresses made of homespun and were made with tight fitting waists and real full skirts. These were made of the brightest colors. The men and women both wore buckskin moccasins.

GUNS.

The Indians' guns were rifles. They used flint rock instead of caps. They moulded their bullets out of melted lead. Their most common weapons were the bow and arrow.

COMMENTS.

Mrs. Lou Hickey, or better known as "Grandma Hickey", is a very interesting character. She has reached the ripe old age of 82 years and has seen Oklahoma in the wild old days but she is hale and hearty for her years. She likes to walk and remarked to the interviewer that she takes a long walk every day.

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Grandma Hickey really enjoys talking of her beloved Oklahoma and was anxious to give us this story. She said people were not so happy now as they were in the early days, even though they have every modern convenience. She said they worked hard but they were happy.