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Field Worker
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Life of a Fullblood Chickasaw Indian
told in an interview by Mrs. LaFayette
Owens, Sulphur, Oklahoma.

My father was Scotland Hawkins born in Mississippi in January 1824. My mother was Rebecca Greenwood Hawkins born February 16, about 1826 (exact date unknown). Father and mother came from Mississippi to the Indian Territory (date unknown). Mother was just a girl when her parents moved here. While they were camped one night, someone stole part of their horses and she had to walk and drive the cattle. It was a hard trip for her. Father was a stockman. He was just a boy when his parents moved here from Mississippi. He attended Armstrong Academy for five years. This Academy was for Chickasaw boys and was located north of Tishomingo. They taught only through the fifth grade. Father was graduated from this school. He later became a member of the Chickasaw Legislature under Governor Byrd. And finally was county Judge of Tishomingo county. There were three children in our family, I being the youngest.

I was born October 9, 1879 on Oil Creek, near the present site of Mill Creek. The first school which I attended was in the immediate neighborhood. There were

only six or seven children attending and we boarded with the teacher. ~~The building~~ was a frame structure and we had a stove for heating.

I attended Bloomfield Academy for Chickasaw girls, at Kemp for six years. The building later burned and was rebuilt in Ardmore.

We got our mail from Daugherty. We had to go for it. There were no mail deliveries near our place. Father took a monthly paper called "Brother in Red", published in Muskogee by the Methodist Church. I read it carefully each month, after I learned to read.

Father and mother did their trading at Ft. Smith. They went horseback; and would be gone several days each time they took the trip. On one of these trips, she saw a clock which she decided to buy. She bought a foot tub and put the clock in it; so she could hold it on her lap as she rode her horse. She had it wound and set at the correct hour, and brought it home. That was the only time piece in this country. Everybody told time by the sun. But we had a clock, and we never let it run down. We were all very proud of that clock.

Most of my clothes were made of Henryetta, which was a coarse woven woolen cloth, and calico. For

very special occasions, I wore flowered sateen dresses.

I also had some dresses made of linsey, which was a heavy cotton material. We wore dresses with Basques and long full skirts. It took ten yards of material for a dress. We wore three or four petticoats, very stiffly starched. The neckline was softened with Rushings.

Mother cooked on a stove. She had no bread pan. She kept the bottom of the oven clean, and put her biscuits on this to bake. We used a brass lamp with no globe. It was kept polished and bright. We had very few matches. Mother kept paper rolled into small rolls, in a buffalo horn which hung on the wall. When we lighted our lamp, we would put one of these rolls into the fire and touch the wick with it.

We had to pull cotton seed from cotton every night before going to bed. We didn't buy coffee or tea. Mother gathered wild tea, and hung it up with Bear Grass to dry. Then she boiled it and made tea.

Mother died when I was a young girl, and that left just father and me, as my brother and sister had died also. I always went to Tishomingo with father

4

when he went to court. We usually camped out. All we needed was a lariat rope with which to stake our horses and a quilt to sleep on. I enjoyed these trips. The court bailiff was a quaint old man with a small goatee and no teeth. He was a funny sight as he opened court.

I was married to LaFayette Owens in 1899 with the Indian Ceremony translated into English. Father married us. We have three children.

Father and mother are buried at Nebo, south of Sulphur in a family graveyard. There are twelve graves. We do not have any tombstones. There are small rock houses built over their graves.