

FUSLEY, LIMON

INTERVIEW

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344

Charline M. Culbertson,
Investigator,
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Interview with Limon Pusley
C & Hickory Streets
McAlester, Oklahoma

I was born in the year of 1847 at Indianola, and raised three miles north of Krebs.

My parents were Edmond and Susie Pusley. Father was buried in North McAlester while Mother was buried at Carbon near Krebs. Both were full blood Choctaw Indians.

The little place where I was born was a double log house. It had a fireplace at one end with a chinked and daubed chimney.

We Choctaws never had any trouble. The only time I remember any trouble was the little land dispute which came up between the Choctaws and Chickasaws and in this fight there was one man killed. The murderer was tried.

The little place where I was born was not very thickly settled as our nearest neighbors were a mile away.

My mother cooked over the fireplace with convenient equipment. She would cook our bread and fix our meat in this way; bread and meat were our principal food. She would spin and weave and make the cloth to make our clothes.

PUSLEY, LIMON.

INTERVIEW.

12593.

-2-

The farming my parents did was done in small patches. We raised mostly cabbage, corn, beans, and potatoes. We killed our meat such as deer, turkey and wild hogs. We also killed beeves and hogs and dried the meat. Many times the beef was prepared in what we called jerk beef by cutting it into thin slices and laying the slices some place to dry. When this was ready to use it would be very hard and was quite nourishing. We only killed one deer at a time and never killed more for sport. The men enjoyed hunting while the women did most of the planting and raising of vegetables.

I never attended school as we had no schools until after the war.

We bought our supplies at Fort Smith, a distance of one hundred and ten miles. It would take two weeks to make this trip and it was made not more than twice a year and most of the time only once a year.

Father never drove his cattle to market but buyers would come and buy, then drive their stock home.

We had our church services which were mostly of the Baptist faith. Our camp meetings were held under a brush arbor at what was called Double Spring, which was west of

PUSLEY, LIMON.

INTERVIEW.

12593.

-3-

McAlester. We also attended meetings at what is known today as High Bridge, near Wilburton. I recall two preachers, the Reverend Mr. George Washington Morntby and the Reverend Mr. James Williams. Many people had their own tents in which to spend the night and cooked over a big fire on the outside. Food was served on a long table made with planks laid on a scaffold. Everyone was invited to attend these meetings.

The women attended the Indian "cries" more than the men. A date was set when a preacher would be available and for this reason the funeral would be delayed. They often had a meeting on Friday and Saturday and on Sunday the Choctaw cry would be held.

I recall one ferry across Gaines Creek operated by John Simpson.

We often had the pashofa dances. The Chickasaw and Creek tribes still have them today near Allen. These we held for the sick to drive away the evil spirit.

Our medicine and dyes were made from herbs and bark such as red bud, elder and slippery elm.

Our mortars were made out of the gum tree. We beat the corn then with hickory sticks called pestle. The women beat their clothes clean with paddles against the stump of a tree.