

Notice of Copyright

Published and unpublished materials may be protected by Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S. Code). Any copies of published and unpublished materials provided by the Western History Collections are for research, scholarship, and study purposes only.

Use of certain published materials and manuscripts is restricted by law, by reason of their origin, or by donor agreement. For the protection of its holdings, the Western History Collections also reserves the right to restrict the use of unprocessed materials, or books and documents of exceptional value and fragility. Use of any material is subject to the approval of the Curator.

Citing Resources from the Western History Collections

For citations in published or unpublished papers, this repository should be listed as the Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

An example of a proper citation:

Oklahoma Federation of Labor Collection, M452, Box 5, Folder 2. Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

MARCUS, NANNIE.

SECOND INTERVIEW.

13223.

205

Pete W. Cole,
Investigator
March 16, 1938

Interview with Nannie Barcus,
A Choctaw Indian woman.

Ways of Indian cooking in brief.

Nannie Barcus, an aged Choctaw Indian woman, who was one of the last immigrants from the State of Mississippi to Indian Territory, now Oklahoma, states:

I am nearly sixty five years of age but when I came to this country, I was about thirty four years of age. I did not know as to why we were compelled to leave the old state and never did know any better until our arrival here, when we were told that the United States Government had taken over the land in Mississippi in exchange for a vast country in what was then the Indian Territory and that this was to be our country to live.

So much has been given and said on this subject, that I shall not dwell much only to say that the Choctaw Indians are great lovers of different ways of cooking and I shall give a few of our real dishes. Unlike our white friends who are lovers of cakes and sweets, we enjoy the different ways of corn as cooked. I have yet to see my white friend

to dislike the taste of the ways of Indian cooking. I have seen white woman wife of Indian man learn the different ways of cooking, they have learned how to beat corn, make tafulla (hominy) banaha (shuck bread) sour bread (puska Hawashko) pish-ofa (Chickasaw dialect for hominy cooked in fresh meat, preferably a backbone of a hog, beef or venison.) A bowl with its contents was placed in the center of the cabin and the husband and wife sat around it with a wooden or horn spoon (now rarely seen) helped themselves one after the other.

Tafulla (tomfuller), as commonly known, was their favorite dish and hence standing dish, and is to this day. It consisted of corn pounded in a wooden mortar with a wooden pestle to take off the husks, then thoroughly boiled; sometimes peas or beans are mixed and cooked with it, then it is called Tafulla tubi ebahlto (tafulla cooked with bean or peas.)

Then again hickory or walnut kernels or meats are mixed and cooked with it; it is then called Tafulla oksak nipi ebahlto; if walnut kernels then it is Tafulla oksak hanhe nipi ebahlto.

They used a very pleasant beverage of acidulated fo-i (honey) and oka (water); also they made a very palatable

BARCUS, NANNIE. SECOND INTERVIEW.

13223

3

jelly from the pounded roots of the China brier, strained through the baskets, and mixing the dried farina with honey. They pounded hickory and walnuts together and having passed them

through boiling water, and then through strainers of fine basket work, it produced an inspissated liquor the color and consistency of cream, and richer and of finer flavor. It is nothing uncommon to see all of the different dishes cooked and prepared at any Choctaw public gathering places or at any big Indian meeting.