

## INDEX CARDS

Hardridge Family  
Goodin, Joseph  
Hardridge, Joseph Siah  
McIntosh, William  
Removal--Creek  
Indian Fights--Osage-Creek  
Buffalo Hunting--Creek  
Buffalo Hunting--Seminole  
Indian Fights--Seminole-Tonkawa  
Intertribal Relations--citizenship  
Food--Plains Indians  
Plains Indians  
Civil War--Creek Nation  
Checote, Samuel  
Political Parties--Creek  
Ispärhechar  
Green Peach War  
Food--Creek  
Medicine--Creek  
Feyote  
Schools--Creek Nation  
Ranching--Creek Nation  
Courts--Creek  
Law Enforcement--Creek  
Stage Routes  
Hotels--Creek Nation  
Mercantile Establishments--Creek Nation

## Interview with Loney Hardridge

by

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Historical Indian Research Works

(3-74 31)

Mr. Hardridge has answered the questions asked from his own personal knowledge and that related to him by his forefathers. *Address - Route 1 - Kattysville, Okla.*

I was born July 22, 1882, at Okmulgee, Indian Territory, and enrolled on the Creek rolls as number 102. I am a three-quarter blood Creek Indian.

FATHER: Siah Hardridge, born in the Creek Nation near the present town of Yahola, Oklahoma, in 1845. Died November 1, 1885. Buried, 4 1/2 miles northwest of Okmulgee, Oklahoma, near the present church of New Town.

MOTHER: Julia Beecher-Hardridge, born on Cane Creek, near the present town of Yahola, March 15, 1863, and is still living, making her home with me.

GRANDFATHER: My grandfather on my father's side, Joseph Siah Hardridge, was born in Alabama, at date unknown to me, and died on Cane Creek, near the present town of Yahola, Oklahoma, about 1868.

GRANDMOTHER: My grandmother, on my father's side, was named Stidem, and was a sister of George Stidem. I do not know the date born or when she died.

GRANDMOTHER: On my mother's side, was a McNak. Born in the Creek Nation at date unknown to me, and is buried in Toskegee cemetery, (eight miles west of Beggs, Oklahoma) alongside my grandfather.

GRANDFATHER: On my mother's side, was named Alec Beecher. He was a half-brother of my mother, born in the Choctaw Nation, at date unknown to me, and died on Brown Creek, Oklahoma, in 1875. Buried eight miles west of Beggs, Oklahoma, in Toskegee cemetery.

GREAT-GRANDMOTHER: My great-grandmother was a sister to Joseph Goodin, who was a scout for General Jackson at the Creek uprising in Florida. ~~This massacre~~  
~~four miles west of Beggs, Oklahoma, and today is known as the "Osage Hill" as~~  
~~result of this massacre.~~

MIGRATION

There was an agreement made back east whereby no Indian was to sell to a white man any of the land belonging to the Creek Indians in Alabama. William McIntosh was the first man to violate this treaty, and it became the duty of my grandfather, Joseph Siah Hardridge, to take his life. This agreement was prior to the treaty made for the removal of the Creeks to the Indian Territory.

In 1834 or 1835 a treaty was made by representatives of the Creek Tribes to be removed to Indian Territory and the removal started in 1837. Some of my grandparents on my father's side was in the removal.

EPISODES WITH THE WILD INDIANS BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR

Massacre of the Osages by the Creeks before the Civil War as told to me by my grandfather. The Osages traveled in bands of 25 or 50 and carried their camping outfits with them. They took their women folk and children with them, except, when they were on the war-path, and then, they left the women and children and the old men behind. They traveled in single file on horseback.

The cause of this battle was that a number of the Creek men had gone out on a buffalo hunt and during their absence the Osages stole into their settlement and stole their women, children, horses, and personal affects. A runner was sent out by the Creeks, to the men on the hunt. The hunters returned and during the night surrounded the hill. At daylight, when the Osages were camped, the massacre started, and the Creeks were victorious, taking back all their possessions, and killing the Osages almost to the last one. This massacre was few miles west of Pegg, Oklahoma and known today as the "Osage Hill," as the result of this Massacre.

THE FOLLOWING STORY HAS BEEN HANDED DOWN TO ME  
BY GEORGE BROWN--CREEK INDIAN, WHO BECAME AN  
ADOPTED MEMBER OF THE SEMINOLE TRIBE.

One time Mr. Brown accompanied the Seminole Tribe on a buffalo hunt, and they came in contact with a warlike band of "Tonkawa's". While the

buffalo hunt was in progress, some of the Tonkawa's made off with two young Seminole men, roasted them, and ate them. When the Seminole tribe learned of this, they went to the Chief of the Tonkawa's and demanded as the revenge-- the scalps of the men who committed the crime. But the Tonkawa Chief steadfastly refused to give them up. The Seminole Chief then began war on the Tonkawa's and nearly all of the Tonkawas were killed.

#### WILD INDIAN'S METHODS OF COOKING

The wild Indians with flint and steel started their fires. They roasted meats more than they boiled.

They made bread from cornmeal they bought from the trading posts, except that which they made from flour, stolen from the civilized tribes.

They made a bread called "Cornmeal Bread" which was made by rolling cornmeal mixture into a ball, and dropped them into hot water.

Their meals consisted of bread and wild game of all kinds. The tallow or grease from buffalo was kept on hand and was used for shortening in their bread and for other seasonings.

#### WILD INDIANS CUSTOMS

They did not farm or try to raise anything, but ~~was~~ were marauders, rovers and thieves. They lives in tee-pees, made of poles and buffalo hides. Their clothing was scant, made of different hides and skins. They were almost in the nude at all times except for the blankets ~~an~~ buffalo hide wrapped around them during cold weather. They did not remain long at a place and had no definite place to stay or call their home. The squaws did all the work that was done, dressed the game, cooked the food, cared for their paposes and packed the luggage when they started moving. The men only hunted, fished and ~~when~~ <sup>went</sup> on raids.

#### BATTLE OF PEA-RIDGE (CIVIL WAR)

My grandfather Siah Hardridge fought in the Confederate army in the

Battle of Pea-Ridge, and his son, Younger Hardridge, fought in the Union army under General Butler or McCullom. The father was wounded in battle, and the son carried him home--captive to Fort Gibson, Indian Territory. The father secured medical attention at Fort Gibson and his health was regained and he was sent home. He suffered no ill effects from the gun shot wound, the son continued to fight until the war ceased and peace was declared.

#### GREEN-PEACH WAR

Sam Checotah would be termed a Democrat, Isparhechar would be called a Republican. Sam Checotah was elected the Chief of the Creek Nation but Isparhechar would not concede the election to Checotah. He began to take steps to see that Checotah did not take the oath of office, or be seated as Chief. The steps taken were organizing all the Creek and negroes on his side until he had secured a good sized army and it became necessary for Checotah to defend himself. They had several skirmishes along on Pecan and Sugar Creeks but the first major encounter they had, was down on Greenleaf Creek, on the 24th day of December, 1882, near the present town of Okemah, Oklahoma, one of his officers <sup>Sitting Rabbit</sup> ~~Swing Rabbit~~ was killed along with many of his men. Checotah won the battle--and Isparhechar was forced to retreat into the Sac & Fox country near Fort Sill, but the Sac & Fox people would not let them fight on their reservation and they retreated to Cheyenne country. Finally Government troops were sent out from Fort Gibson, to take them (prisoners) back to Fort Gibson. It was here that Isparhechar signed a treaty and that was the end of the "Green Peach War."

#### CREEK INDIANS METHOD OF COOKING

"Ossafka" was a soup made entirely of corn.

"Obuskee" was a soup made entirely of green corn. Green corn was ground up and made into a meal--and was also used as a drink.

Hickory bread was a bread made entirely of ground hickory nuts.

"Tuk-a-lege-Tuxey"--was a sour-meal bread.

Then there was another bread, made and rolled in flour, cut into the form of a biscuit, and dropped into hot grease and fried. This made some-<sup>331</sup> thing like the present day "Do-nuts."

"Huptupke" was made from a batter of cornmeal--small bits of meat were rolled in cornmeal and made in the form of a biscuit and cooked in ashes. This made something like the "hot-Tamale" of the present day.

#### CREEK MEDICINES

The Indians used Roots and Herbs to cure their ills. There was one especially, in which the Creeks placed a lot of faith, <sup>peyote</sup> ~~and~~ "Pocita". This was a species of Cactus that grows in Texas, and New Mexico.

Some of the roots were as follows:

Red Roots	Ginsings
Button Willow Roots	Sasafrass and Black Haw were used for making tea.
Wahoo Roots	Frost Weeds
Bone Set	Milk Weeds.
Butter Fly Root	

#### MISSIONS

The Creek Indian school and mission--"Wealaka" was located out on the <sup>Arkansa</sup> river between the <sup>Present</sup> towns of Jenks and Bixby. <sup>Okla.</sup> My Cousin, Eli Hardridge, was superintendent.

The Nuyaka Mission was located 12 miles west of Okmulgee near the present town of Ofuskee, Oklahoma.

The Creek Orphan's Home located on the Northeast city limits of Okmulgee, Oklahoma. George Tiger, Superintendent and son of Moty Tiger, who was once the principal Chief of the Creek Nation.

Netumka Mission located near the present town of Netumka, Okla.

Mickasooka Mission was located north of the present town of Maud, Okla.

Sac & Fox school--south of Stroud on Deep Fork Creek was an exclusive

RANCHES

- Spaulding Ranch -----located on Pole cat and <sup>Brown</sup> ~~ground~~ Creek, owned by H. B. Spaulding--Their brand was an "H. B." (He was a line rider at one time on the Spaulding Branch) 332
- Half Circle Ranch----- Located near Bald Hill, Oklahoma owned by F. B. Severs.
- Bar-O-Ranch----- Located west of Okmulgee, on Salt Creek owned by John Porter.
- The "D.C." Ranch----- Located on Deep Fork Creek-- Owned by Dave Carr.
- Bar-B-ranch----- Located south of Kelleyville, Oklahoma on Mountain Creek-- owned by Ben McIntosh.
- Spike-S Ranch----- Located on Snake Creek south of Bixby and east of Mounds--Owned by Sango.

TRADING POST & COURT HOUSES

The Creek Nation was divided into districts and the ones with which I was most familiar were:

<u>DISTRICT</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
Muskogee -----	Lee Post-3 mi. N. of Boynton, Okla
Coweta -----	Coweta, on <del>Deep</del> <sup>Deep</sup> Creek. Okla.
Isparhechar -----	On Salt Creek--near Beggs, Okla.
Deep Fork -----	Nyaka, Near Nyaka, Okla.
Okmulgee -----	Okmulgee, now Okmulgee, Okla.
Wewoka -----	Wewoka now Wewoka, Okla.

Wewoka is a Creek Indian word meaning "Thumping Water".

At each of these locations were trading posts, some instances stage stands, courts, court houses and a whipping post. The officials of each district was a judge, prosecuting attorney and five Light horsemen who served as a Sheriff and deputies of today. If the Lighthorsemen brought their prisoners for trial and if they were found guilty, they were whipped at the post so many times or shot according to the number of offenses or the crime. All courts of those days are abolished and the trading posts at Lee and Isparhechar are no more. The towns of Boynton, Okla took the residents of Lee, Beggs, Okla from Isparhechar and towns at the present became the same name as they were in the pioneer days.