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By

O. C. Davidson, Field Worker

I was born October 27, 1847 at Hilloby, 12 miles west of Eufaula.

My father, John Gibson, a white man, and my mother, Polly Gibson who was a full-blood Creek Indian, came to the Indian Territory from Mississippi during the removal of the Indians in 1838.

When they were crossing the Mississippi River the boat on which they were crossing collapsed about the middle of the river and a number of Indians were drowned. Father and mother were among those who were fortunate enough to be able to swim ashore.

I had two brothers, John Gibson, Jr., who died at Eufaula in 1935 at the age of 90 years, and Charley Gibson, who died four years ago and was also near 90.

I am a blood cousin to the late Jackson Barnett. His mother and my mother were own sisters.

When the Civil War started, we lived over in the east side of Eufaula in what is now called "Old Town". One evening the Federal soldiers came in and burned the town and they arrested Pa but they turned him loose and told him to get his family and start north. He came home and told us what had happened and I asked him if he was going. He said yes we are going but we are going south. We hitched our mules to a wagon and loaded what little stuff we could get in right quick and started south. It was late in the evening then and we drove all night and all the next day. That night we camped and rested a little and let the mules graze and the next day we drove all day, arriving at the Red River late in the afternoon. We made camp there and stayed that night and next morning Pa looked around and found there were lots of Choctaw Indians living around there and that they were not being bothered. Therefore, he decided that we would stay there. He went to work and built us a little log

house and cleared a little ground and we farmed there until the war was over. 377
The women had to spin and weave our own cloth to make our clothes. We had a spinning wheel but could not bring our loom along. However, there was a white lady named Roswell who lived near us who had a loom and no spinning wheel, so we would card and spin her thread for her and she would weave our cloth for us.

We did our cooking on a log fire out in front of our cabin. We had a hard time getting anything to eat part of the time and would have starved if the Choctaws had not divided with us. But they were always willing to give us a part of anything they had that we needed.

One of our principal dishes was called "black dumplings". To make it, we would sweep a spot of ground real clean, spread pea hulls on it and burn them real slowly; we would gather up the ashes, sift them, mix them with corn meal and cook it.

Both of my brothers fought in the southern army but the only injury either of them got was when a horse fell on brother John and broke his leg.

I went to school at the old Asberry Manual Labor Mission at old Eufaula. Each scholar had to do a certain amount of work to pay for their schooling. That is where I learned to sew. The girls would sew, piece quilts, cook, etc. The boys would plow and do other kinds of farm work.

The old Mission was burned during the war.

When the war was over, we came back to our old home at Eufaula but when we got there we found our house and everything we had left had been destroyed.

Mrs. Buckner, widow of the Rev. H. F. Buckner, the first Baptist Missionary ever to preach among the Creeks, still lived out on the Buckner farm 1 1/2 miles east of Eufaula and she wanted us to move out there and help her run the farm. We moved out there and farmed her land.

In 1867 I was married to John Ma-Toy, half Creek and half Cherokee Indian. We moved out west of Eufaula 1 mile and worked around for different people until the allotments were made.

We took our allotment 15 miles west of Mufaula where Boyds store is
now located. There were no other settlements for miles around it at that
time. 378