

INDEX CARDS:

Choctaw Nation
Tribe-Choctaw
Handicraft
Native Dyes
Boggy Depot
Fillmore
Captain Hester
Bois D'Arc
Homemade Articles
Camp Meetings

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Interviewer.
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My Childhood Days by Mrs. Ella
Fillmore Carter, Caney, Okla.

My father was Gibson Fillmore and my mother was
Isabel Perkins.

My father was in the removal from Mississippi,
but my mother was born here.

I was born near Fillmore, Indian Territory, in
January, 1879.

We lived near Fillmore till I was grown. My
father farmed and raised corn, cotton, and vegetables.
We had sheep, too, and my mother spun cotton and wool
thread and knitted our socks and stockings. The
thread was dyed many different colors. The dye was
made at home from plants and bushes known to the
Indians.

Our dresses were made very long and our pretty
stockings could not be seen so we girls would get
out of sight of the grown people and fasten our dresses
up so our stockings would show and then we would parade
and play for hours.

Our mother did our sewing by hand but she was
very painstaking and what she made was beautiful. She
selected beautiful colors for our dresses and we loved
them.

-2-

We had no bedsteads except the ones made by hand. Our chairs and tables we made by hand also. We had woven spreads and hand made quilts, and woven sheets. There were no mattresses but we filled bed-ticks with straw or chucks, sewed them up and they made good beds.

Most of us had featherbeds made from the feathers of geese and ducks raised at home. We had several feather beds.

We dried fruits and vegetables and raised enough corn to make our bread through the winter, and meat was plentiful. Our market was at Atoka, and Boggy Depot and we crossed the Boggy River by ferry.

Captain Hester had a hotel and store at Boggy Depot. Hester was very kind to the children and he knew my father well so when we went there to buy or sell, we had a grand time.

The woods around Boggy Depot and Fillmore were full of walnuts, hickory nuts, and pecans. Hester bought all that was brought to him.

We Indian children were kept busy gathering these nuts all during Autumn. We just exchanged them for groceries.

-3-

We also sold bois-darc apple seed and we gathered the apples, put them in a barrel and covered them with water. After so many days the seed of the apple floated on top and the pulp went to the bottom. The seed was then dried and Hester bought them and sent them to Kansas to plant as hedges in the place of fences.

I came through Kansas in May of this year and saw the bois-darc hedges with some of the trees at least three feet through and I wondered if I had helped to make those fences.

Acorns were also gathered and sold to Hester, who shipped them to treeless states for trees. I do not know where he sent them.

A wagon load of bois-darc apples would only make one half gallon of seed and they sold for \$12.00 a bushel.

Our schools did not amount to much but I managed to get through high school.

There was a water mill at Boggy Depot but most of the Indians preferred to beat their corn. Then there were a few hand mills that were used.

We went to camp meetings at Blue Spring, Pleasant Hill, and Double Spring. Everything was free, the

-4-

the meat being prepared on the ground. In the early days Indians did not care for money. If one got as much as thirty-five cents he would carry it for months. He just wanted to exchange the products he could not use for food he could not raise. He had no idea of the value of money.

But we were happy and contented. We were fed and clothed and what more could one want.

Our shoes were made at home by my father. He made the pegs to tack the soles with from wood and the thread was made from the sinew of the deer.

Harness was made at home also. The rivets were made of wood. A rivet was cut larger at one end and driven through the place in the harness to be riveted. A small wedge would be put into the small end of the rivet after the end had been split a small bit.

Our shoes and harness were made from the skins of animals, tanned, and prepared at home.

We made our own mauls with which to make rails and we made the rails, too.

No one hired help in those days. We all helped each other. We had rail makings, fence buildings, house raisings, quiltings, quilt piecings, and any kind of work. The needed work was done by gathering together

and doing it. Of course a big feast always followed a working of any kind.

Each year the Indians had an annual meeting in the Chickasaw Nation at Sand Creek. The meeting was for the purpose of correcting and punishing wrongs committed in the tribe during the year. There would be preaching and singing in the mornings and at night. The afternoons were devoted to investigating the actions of the tribe since the last meeting.

A chair was built for culprits to be seated in. If there was a complaint against a man for whipping his wife, he was put in the chair and each preacher talked to him. After the talking was all over, he was made to go out in the yard and whip himself just as he had whipped his wife.

Other misdemeanors were punished other ways. Two weeks of each year were spent in this work and much good was done for the Indians knew that if the same crimes were reported on them the following year, the punishment would be more severe and that finally they would be shot.

This meeting brought all the tribe together and many differences between families and neighbors were

-6-

satisfactorily settled and every body went home with a good feeling toward his neighbors.

Those were happy contented days and I am glad that I lived at that time.