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Miss Lula Everidge  
1000 - 11th St. N.W.  
Washington, D.C.  
April 15, 1968

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NAME Mrs Lula Everidge,  
Hugo, Oklahoma.

BIRTH: Ohio, 69 years old.

Field worker; Mrs. Hazel B. Greene.  
Indian-Pioneer History S-149  
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#### PIONEER DAYS.

Just a rambling sort of a story, about pioneer days in this part of the Choctaw Nation, how she raised her family, what they had to eat and how they prepared it.

Also, a sketch of the history of her husband, Robert Turner Everidge, who was born in what is now Choctaw County, about ten miles S E. of Hugo, and her father-in-law, Joela W. Everidge, who was born in Miss. came to Choctaw Nation in 1832 or 1833 lived, raised a large family and died on his farm, now known as the B. Nation place.

Mrs. Robert Turner Everidge, a white woman, now 69 years old was Lula Hulén, in Ohio, and came to Texas quite young, with her parents and was raised just across Red river from Frogville. Met and married Robert Turner Everidge, about 50 years ago, and settled near Frogville, about two miles from Old Goodwater, church School, the Presbyterian Mission School, which was about 20 miles S E of what is now Hugo, Oklahoma.

Several children were born to this union. To quote Mrs. Everidge. "I did not raise my children, I had so many, they just grew up in the Jimson weeds and dog fennell, and I hadn't much time to visit my neighbors, but when I did go to church, we were

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not snurled at because we were not dressed in silks and satins. We wore calico dresses or gingham -- tho, they didn't call it gingham then, it was chambray?

"These children walked the two miles to Goodwater to school and thought themselves fortunate to be so near it. Then we moved to a place about 10 (ten) miles from there. We needed a school, so all the men of the community got together, hewed logs, made clapboards and built a school house, with split logs, for seats. Two (2) holes were bored in each end of the logs, and legs were inserted in them. The holes were bored at an angle, so that the legs were farther apart at the bottom, and kept them from turning over.

Hiskory Ridge was the name of this school and Lon Gladdish paid him for the Indian scholars and white people paid tuition. Books were furnished by the school board, and of course paid for by the Choctaw Nation. The blackboards were, in reality, just boards painted black. This school was built about 1897. The children all managed to learn the "three R's."

" My husband, Robert Turner Everidge, was about one half Choctaw, and was born and raised in the Indian Territory, Choctaw Nation, at what is now known as the B. Nation place, about 10 miles SE of what is now Hugo, Oklahoma. It was then the Joel W. Everidge home, and consisted of a big double log house, which

was built by my husband's father, Joel W. Everidge in about 1847. He planned it, but no doubt the actual work was done by his negro slaves, He had lots of them.

And how we all loved to go to 'Grandfather's' house. My husband's mother ( who was Sophia Folsom, prior to her marriage) was a most excellent cook, and the recipes I am giving were her way of cooking, and I learned it all from her. But she could prepare every thing most deliciously.

"Robert Turner Everidge was a Representative of the Choctaw Council for twenty years out of twenty one. He lost the 19th election by one vote, and won the next two. They were elected every year. A son of ours, Ed M. Everidge, has in his possession now, some of the old House Journals, telling of the procedure of the Choctaw Council."

Joel W. Everidge, was born in Miss. in 1828, came to the Choctaw Nation in 1832 or 1833, married young and settled this place in 1847. His wife, Sophia Folsom, was raised upon Boggy somewhere.

He was Justice of the Supreme Court of the Choctaw Nation for 30 years, and was when he died at the age of 74 years. They had several children. Who they are and what, is a matter of history, and can be learned from histories of the Choctaw nation. I will try to get hold of one. There is one at the old home place in the possession of Will Everidge, who lives there in the household

of B. Nation. Mr. and Mrs. Joel W. Everidge were each about 3/4 Choctaw.

"This granddaughter here of mine," pursued Mrs. Everidge, "is an orphan. I have raised her. Her father Claude Jones and Walter McFarland were killed by Lucien Webb at Grant, twenty-one years ago."

She stated that simply and with no apparent resentment toward Mr. Webb, who was the cashier of the bank and fired in defending himself and the bank. They were not killed instantly, but died a few days later, and Mr. Webb was entirely exonerated.

"Old Joel Everidge would not permit his children to speak the Choctaw language. He said that they would always have to go to school with white children, study English textbooks, have mostly white teachers, and later compete with white men, and if they undertook to learn both languages, they would probably master neither, and always be at a disadvantage, perhaps when they would most need to be otherwise. Or master of the situation, as it were. Yet he and his wife would sit around evenings and entertain them with old Choctaw songs.

"My husband, Turner Everidge, was a splendid marksman. Once when we were going over to his father's, two deer sprang up in front of us. One ran to the left, the other bounded off to the right, he shot one, and turned and killed the other.

One, he took to his father, and the other we kept for our own use. I will tell you how we saved the meat. No matter how warm the weather, we never lost the meat. We sliced and dried all that could be sliced. We called it "jerked" beef or venison. It was dried on the roof in the hot sun.

The woods were full of berries, plums and nuts, and we always tried to put up enough to do thru the winter. We dried peaches and apples, but had to can and preserve berries and plums. And believe me, we lived at home. We had always lots to eat.

The following are "receipts" given by Mrs. Everidge.

MORTAR AND PESTLE.

The Choctaws made a mortar by either burning a large hole in a stump, or a section of a log, cut the right length so as to make it the correct height when using. They would burn it to about the right size and then scrape the charcoal out with sharp stones or shells. A pestle was then hewn out of a piece of hickory usually.

This mortar and pestle were used among other things to beat corn in and the corn was used for many delicious dishes. According to Mrs. Robert Turner Everidge, who lives about 3 miles east of Hugo, the recipes given below were commonly used by the Choctaws in the early days.

TOM FULLER.

Was made by pounding the corn in the mortar until the grains were just about quartered of a little smaller. Then it was cooked and served many different ways. If cooked alone it was called "Tom Full er" Cooked with meat it was called,

"TONCHA BONA"

If the meat was young and tender, the corn was cooked nearly done, and the meat added. If it was tough or dried meat it was put into a pot and boiled together until done. No seasoning, except salt.

"RIDDLER AND FAN"

What they called a riddler and fan was made of cane, split and woven basket fashion. The riddler was a basket like affair with meshes large enough for meal to sift through as the husks were fanned away from the beaten corn. The beating loosened the husks.

"CORN RICE"

There is a certain part of the corn that is too hard to beat to pieces with a mortar. This was called corn rice, and cooked and served like rice. Tho' seldom ever with "sweeting" or milk. It was usually just cooked and served.

Corn was beaten as finely as possible for meal, and this was cooked many different ways.

"SHUCK OR FODDER BREAD"

The desired amount of meal is put into a mortar of wooden bowl, and enough boiling water poured over it to make a stiff dough. This is rolled in green corn shucks or fodder, tied and boiled for about an hour. No salt is used in this bread.

**"SOUR BREAD"**

Sour bread is made by scalding the meal, with enough boiling water to make a stiff dough, and then is permitted to sour. When it begins to bubble, it is put into the skillets and baked, over hot coals, first on one side and then on the other, unless one had a dutch oven, as a few of them had.

The "Dutch Oven" is a skillet with a lid, both of which are made of steel or cast iron. The lid had flanges of a rolled edge, to prevent the coals of fire from rolling off. The lid also had a handle in the center of the top under which a stick could be run to lift the top off. Sometimes a forked limb would be cut, with one limb left only about three inches long, the other three or four feet long. That made a hook to lift the lid with.

**"HICKORY NUT HOMINY"**

Boil Tom Fuller until nearly done, then put in hickory nuts and cook just a few minutes. This is varied by putting in pecans or walnuts.

**"TONCHI BEAN HOMINY"**

Tom Fuller boiled till about half done, then peas or beans added. No salt was ever used in any of the above recipes.



"JERKED" Beef or venison.

"All the beef or venison that could be sliced off of the bones was dried by putting on the roof of the house or barns, in the hot sun. Once the drying process was begun, the flies seldom ever bothered it. We had to go up on the roof several times each day to turn it over, to keep it drying uniformly. It was THOROUGHLY dried hard, then put away in sacks and hung up where nothing could get to it. (Sacks were used in more recent years) The older Choctaws, hung it with hickory withes, in trees, when they didn't have smoke houses. Sometimes it was dried in the trees. It was just about as hard to dry it one place as another. It was all hard work.

"Jerked" beef or venison was cooked thoroughly, water drained off, then placed in a wooden bowl or mortar, and beaten to shreds, then served with a thickened gravy, made of flour, poured over it.

All the meat that was unfit for drying, the bony pieces etc. we put in a wash pot and cooked down real low till a thick brown gravy was in the pot bottom. Usually enough of the meat was cooked at once to last a family for several days, and sometimes it was warmed up, sometimes not, but the bony pieces were all used up before the precious dried meat was ever touched. It was usually divided around

among the neighbors too. Salt was used as a preservative in drying beef or venison.

" A SIDE OF VENISON RIBS".

Take a side of venison, with the ribs still on. Slit with a sharp knife between ribs and side meat, fill with slices of bacon. Cook till all to pieces and fallin off of the bones, and there is a rich brown gravy in the bottom of the pot. Served with shuck or sour bread or just any kind one happened to have.

The Indians always kept lots of dogs, so no small part, even of the carcass was wasted.

If the color of a piece of cloth didn't suit us we went into the woods and got our dye. Black was obtained by boiling dried walnut hulls, straining and then boiling the cloth in the water. The green hulls made one shade of brown, and the inside of the walnut bark made another shade of brown. Scarlet was obtained by crushing and straining poke berries.

We raised ducks and geese and made our feather beds and pillows. Our "mattresses" were made of straw or shucks--wheat straw if we had it. If not, the long luxurious grass that abounded made desirable and comfortable beds. Some people had no other kind.

We would go to Paris, Texas, twice a year to purchase our supplies that we could not produce at home.

Some families picked up hickory nuts and walnuts, and took them to Paris and sold them for , sometimes as low as 25 cents per bushel and bought their clothes.

We kept a few sheep, had them sheared each spring, and the wool was sold to provide money for clothes. That was in later years. When we wore 'Store boughten' clothes, but some of the older ones had looms, which, of course, were home made, and spinning wheels upon which they wove and spun the wool and cotton they raised.

We dried green corn, beans, both green and matured peas, okra, and pumpkins.

A lot of our furniture was home made, mostly of hickory. That was one nut bearing tree that we were permitted to cut for our furniture, etc., but not to waste it. It was not used for wood for many years. (fuel) Our chairs had hickory withe or cow hide bottoms--strips of eithe were woven back and forth criss cross to make the bottoms. Sometimes beadsteads had the hickory withe woven back and forth to support the straw beds and feather beds. It was springy to a certain extent.

We did the most of our cooking on the fireplace, till stoves were obtainable. We had plenty of native flat stone  
all around us to build chimneys and fireplaces.