

Coweta of Wagoner County, Oklahoma, was a name brought from Alabama, where one of the 'towns' there by that name was most important in the old country. Wilson says that to his knowledge there is no translation of the word 'koweta', other than it means 'a principal town'.

Wilson's maternal grandfather was William Berryhill. William came with the removal of the Creeks from Alabama. He was one of those mentioned in Wright's account of the removal in 1836. It must have happened, but the civilized mind of the Indian of 1970 just cannot believe it, for it is stated that "14,609 Creeks were chained and handcuffed, forcibly removed, most of them walking overland under military guard to Indian Territory. Hundreds died on the way. - - Shortly after arrival at Ft. Gibson, Indian Territory, 3,500 died from exposure and fevers." (The year was 1837). But these immigrants to Indian Territory survived and became a great people. Had the United States Government honored their Treaty of 1866, only the imagination could tell how far and what progress this people would have accomplished. In that Treaty the Government wrote down on a document "United States will take the western half of the Creek Nation lands, and the eastern half to be FOREVER SET APART AS A HOME for the Creek Nation". How the 'Whitemans' United States ever got this far the Indian cannot explain. William Berryhill was only one of thousands of Indians who endured the Trail of Tears and all the attendant suffering at the hands of the whites, who turned his back on those bitter memories and offered his life in the Whitemans Civil War. Wilson tells that his grandfather was sent as a scout by his regiment during the Civil War up into the Catoosa-Owassa country to get information on the enemy. He traveled up the Verdigris and located the enemy. On his way back, somewhere around Tulsa, the enemy got after him. He rode his horse in a dead run down the river a long ways, finally loosing his pursuers. He hid in the woods. He told that he was so tired that he just leaned up against his horse and slept standing up. When it got daylight he and his horse were rested enough that they went on back to Ft. Gibson. Among his papers, Wilson has records of the Creek Lighthorsemen, the Indian police of early times.

Wilson received his education in the Indian country schools of the Coweta area and also went to Haskell Institute where he graduated in 1918. Mrs. Haynie has the distinction of being in the last graduating class of Carlisle Institute in Pennsylvania and the only Creek Indian of her class.

He tells that his great-grandfather, Chustunagee, was a Coweta Mekko, or Town Chief, when the Creeks were living in Alabama.

Okmulgee has been the main Creek Nation Capital as remembered by most Indians. It is related that the first Creek Capital was at Spring Hill, some 15 miles southeast of Okmulgee, but was only in existence a short while. At one time the Creek Nation maintained a Courthouse at Coweta, where rights and wrongs were separated. The Courthouse at Coweta also had a whipping post which was used on the occasions required.