McPeters, BILLY

BIOGRAPHY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Thad Smith Jr.
This report made on (date) 6-10-37

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Name</th>
<th>Billy McPeters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Post Office Address</td>
<td>Chickasha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Residence address (or location)</td>
<td>417 East Idaho Avenue</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month</td>
<td>April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Place of birth</td>
<td>Creek Nation, Oklahoma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Name of Father</td>
<td>James McPeters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other information about father</td>
<td>Father was full-blood negro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Name of Mother</td>
<td>Elizabeth Jeter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other information about mother</td>
<td>About Creek Indian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes or complete narrative by the field worker dealing with the life and story of the person interviewed. Refer to Manual for suggested subjects and questions. Continue on blank sheets if necessary and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached ____________________________.
I was born in the Creek Nation in 1872. I lived there until I was seven years old. Then my mother died, and my father took me to Louisiana, and kept me until 1885. I then ran off and came back to the Creek Nation, near Bofaula, and worked for Jake Hutton, my uncle. I worked as a handy man on his ranch for two years. He wasn't paying me any salary, so I ran away again. I was then fifteen years old, and could do a man's work. I got a job nearby working for George Woodward, who ran about fifteen hundred head of cattle, which were branded ninety six (96).

Mr. Woodward was an intermarried citizen. He freighted his supplies from Dennison, Texas, and Caldwell, Kansas, but mostly from Dennison, Texas. I made several trips for him driving four horses to a wagon. I forded Red River at what was called Skinner's crossing. Sometimes I would have to wait several days for the river to go down before I could cross. It took me from two to four weeks to make the trip, depending upon the weather.

We got our mail at Dennison, Texas. Our letters had a return on them stating that if not called for in
six months to return to the sender. A man named Sloan ran a store at Eufaula, and his merchandise cost about five times what it did at Dennison, that was the reason we freighted.

Our doctor at Eufaula was Dr. Keno, a Cherokee Indian. Our preacher was named Matt Russell, and he was a cowboy preacher. Everyone but the preacher left his six shooter outside the church; the preacher usually wore his until it began to bother him, and he would take it off. At first the denomination of the church wasn't named, but later it was named Baptist.

While working for Mr. Woodward I was paid seventy-five dollars a month and half the worth of all the unbranded cattle, that I branded in his brand. I got quite a few of these mavericks or perishable cattle. I mean by perishable cattle those that may be claimed by anyone putting his brand on them.

Mr. Woodward trailed a good many cattle to Caldwell, Kansas to ship. At home, on the range, cattle were worth from six to eight dollars a head.

The Government issued rations to the Indians at Tishomingo, but their rations weren't sufficient. The
Indians killed deer, wild turkey, prairie chickens, and quail. They usually had small patches of corn, out of which they made what they called Tom Fuller.

I had many Indian friends, who were the very best. If you never mistreat an Indian he is your friend; however, if you do mistreat him, he is your enemy. The Creeks wore gee strings and moccasins in the summer, and in the winter they added a blanket to their dress.

In the winter some of the ranchmen and Indians trapped game. There were a good many loafer wolves caught. Their hides were worth about three dollars each. The wolves were very detrimental to stock raising, as they killed many calves and yearlings. When they got hungry they would chase a calf, and cut his ham string with their teeth, this would cripple the calf so that he couldn't travel, and then the wolves would eat him.

In 1889 I moved to Winter's Creek, in the Chickasaw Nation. This was east of where Chickasah now is. I worked for a man named Goldsmith there. Lots of corn was raised there, and it made around seventy-five bushels to the acre. Corn sold for from ten to fifteen cents a bushel.

In 1891 I moved near Minneah and went to work for
George Beeler, I worked on his farm raising cotton and corn. The cotton was worth six cents a pound.

When the lots in Chickasha were sold, the lots in the low part of town (which is now negro town) sold for from two dollars and fifty cents to four dollars a lot.

I helped to build the grade for the Rock Island road, that came through Chickasha in 1892. My salary was twenty-five dollars a month, with board.

Tom Fitzpatrick built the first brick building in Chickasha. This was used for a general mercantile store.

Matt Cook, John Swain, Ben Goode and Chris Madison were some of the United States Marshals in those days. The marshals' principal work was catching the bootleggers.

I was given an allotment in the Creek Nation, and traded it to a Chickasaw Indian for his allotment near Blanchard.