



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

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Field Worker's name John F. Daugherty

This report made on (date) June 15 1937

1. Name Sam Mahardy

2. Post Office Address Davis, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) Route 2

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month October Day 15 Year 1868

5. Place of birth Tishomingo County, Chickasaw Nation. South of the  
present site of Davis.

6. Name of Father Wyatt Mahardy Place of birth Indian Territory

Other information about father Hunter and Hilde - Tanner.

Name of Mother Betsy Steadham Place of birth Indian Territory.

Other information about mother \_\_\_\_\_

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 6.

LIFE OF A CHICKASAW and CREEK INDIAN MAN

My father was Wyatt Mahardy, born in the Indian Territory, at Old Nail Crossing on Blue River, in the Chickasaw Nation (date unknown). He was a farmer, hunter, and hide tanner. He made buckskin, principally, and sold it.

Mother was Betsy Steadham Mahardy and she was born at Fort Gibson in the Cherokee Nation (date unknown).

I was the only child of this marriage who lived. I was born in Old Tishomingo County just south of the present site of Davis, October 15, 1868.

We got our mail at Mill Creek. I was born in a log house with one door and a puncheon floor.

We used water out of a spring. I never saw a well until I was half grown. Mother cooked on a skillet and lid on the fireplace in the winter, and out of doors in the summer. We bought our first cook stove in 1884. I saw the first barb wire fence in this county in 1882. We had rail fences. In the fall and winter wood and prairie fires would often burn our fences, then we would ask the neighbors to come and help cut some more rails. This was called a log raising and we always had a big feast on these days. Our beds were built of poles in the corner of the house on

which we had a straw mattress covered with a feather bed. We pulled or cut prairie hay for the mattress and used wild turkey feathers for the feather bed.

We built our cribs and stables of logs. The roof was put on with weight poles and wooden pins instead of nails. The doors were hung on wooden hinges which worked on bois d'arc pins.

Nathan Price, for whom Prices' Falls is named, had a farm of eight hundred acres, south of the present site of Davis about five miles. He put this entire farm in grain sorghum, and made sorghum molasses. He traded this to the Indians for cattle and thus became a very wealthy man. His farm was called Sorghum Flat. In 1882 he built a cotton gin on Prices' Falls Creek and had a general supply store and postoffice. The Santa Fe Railroad was built through this noted flat in 1886.

In the fall and winter when the weather was cold father and I killed and dressed deer and hauled them to Denison, Texas, to sell. We received about ten dollars each for them. We sold the hides which we had tanned for a small sum. We often went on hunting trips near the present sites of Ada and Roff and would be gone for a week or two. We rode horseback. In August when the sun beamed

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down hot we would kill deer and hang the meat on a pole in the sun to dry. We brought this home on horses and stored it away for winter use. This dried Venison was soaked in warm water, then pounded with a pestle on a mortar block until it was all to pieces. Then it was cooked and a hash was made from it.

We made bread of corn flour. The corn was pounded on the mortar block until the husks came off, then it was soaked all night. The next morning it was put on the mortar block and pounded again until it looked like flour. This was made into bread. We liked grit bread, also. It was made of corn which was in roasting ear stage, which was gritted on a grit board. In October when the weather got cold and pole cats got fat, we killed and dressed them and hung them on a pole to cool over night. The next morning the cat was put into a pot and boiled until tender. Then it was put in a skillet and baked until brown. This was as fine meat as we wanted.

I went to school in 1882 and 1883 at the Colbert Neighborhood School east of Berwyn. During the time I was here Col. George Harkins came to our school and made a talk. He said, "it won't be long until big iron horses

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will be running through here." I arose and asked what he meant by an "iron horse." He explained that he meant a train. I had no idea then what he meant for I had never seen nor heard of a train. He went on to say that people would come in here from everywhere, and if we were not prepared to care for ourselves, they would knock the dirt from under our feet. That very thing has happened to me. I have lost all the land I allotted, to the white man. I now live in an old log house which my father built in 1887, but it belongs to some negroes at present.

Father hunted so much that he made me quit school and stay at home to farm. We raised corn and cotton. We had our cotton ginned at Prices' Gin.

In those days if one wanted to borrow money, he went to a neighbor and asked for the amount he wanted. If the neighbor had it he loaned it willingly without a note or a mortgage. When the crops were harvested or cattle sold the money was returned without interest.

Father fished with a bow and arrow. Fish were plentiful then, and each evening they came near the bank of the river to feed. Father stood on the bank and shot an arrow into the fish he wanted. These arrows did not have feathers on the end, while those he hunted squirrels with did have.

The points were made of old brass kettles.

We made fire with spunk, gun powder, and flint rock.

I can remember the big camp meetings we had in August. Everybody donated money to buy supplies such as sugar and salt, and then brought his own food from home. These meetings lasted for ten days or two weeks and people came forty or fifty miles to attend them. We had a circuit rider preacher who preached once a month. Sometimes people would camp from Saturday night until Monday morning when we had the monthly service.

We bought lumber and made our own coffins when a member of our tribe died. We covered it with black sateen and lined it with bleached muslin.

I can remember my first suit of clothes. It was bought in 1887. Until then I wore jeans which mother bought by the yard and made up into clothes. She paid about thirty or forty cents per yard for it. She knitted our socks. She helped a neighbor shear his sheep for wool which she spun into yarn and knitted into socks.

I was married to Mattie James, a fullblood Chickasaw, in 1897. We didn't have a license. The preacher who married us put our marriage on record at Tishomingo.

My parents are buried in a neighborhood cemetery south of Davis. There are about thirty graves here.

I have lived in this county continuously all my life.