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

Field Worker's name Marvin G. Rowley

This report made on (date) May 13, 37

1. Name Susan G. Maxey

2. Post Office Address Poteau, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) Poteau, Oklahoma

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year 1859

5. Place of birth Pike County, Arkansas.

6. Name of Father William Maxey Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Other information about father \_\_\_\_\_

7. Name of Mother Ruth Brooks Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

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 5.

Name-----Susan G. Maxey  
Poteau, Oklahoma

Date of birth-----1859

Place of birth-----Pike County, Arkansas

Father-----William Maxey

Mother-----Ruth Brooks

Field Worker-----Marvin G. Rowley

Project-----Indian-Pioneer History, S-149

Date May 13, 1937

Interview with Susan G. Maxey  
Poteau, Oklahoma

My name is Susan G. Maxey, I was born in 1859 in Pike County, Arkansas. My father was William Maxey. He was a Confederate soldier and was killed in his first battle. My mother was Ruth Brooks.

We came to the Indian Territory in 1866, moving to what was then known as the Killion farm, about two miles west from where the town of Monroe, Oklahoma, is now. We then moved about one and one-half miles southwest of the place now called Glendale, Oklahoma. We lived close to Pott's crossing on Poteau River.

When we lived on the Killion Place, west of Monroe, (there was no town of Monroe then), we lived in a hewed log house with a room of lumber built on. They called hewed logs then "scalped logs." The logs had two sides flattened and the bark cut off all around or scalped off. When we lived at Pott's Crossing, we lived in a log house with a lumber side room on it.

My mother married a full-blood Choctaw Indian, whose name was Tom Sexton, while we lived at Pott's Crossing. We traded at Fort Smith and at Skullyville, Indian Territory.

About two miles down the Poteau River, Pott's Crossing was what was called the Texas Crossing. At this crossing was what was called the Texas Military Road. This was a Military road that went from Fort Smith to Fort Townsend. It was used by the soldiers to go from one Fort to the other; they also used it to carry supplies over. It came through where Howe, Oklahoma, is now, from Texas Crossing on Poteau River near Glendale, Oklahoma, on north close to where the Meadowview School house is now located, southwest of Monroe, Oklahoma. It then went on up and crossed James Fork Creek, thence on to Fort Smith. The Texas Crossing was a deep crossing and when the water was high they would use the Pott's Crossing, instead, as it was a much more shallow ford. We lived on this road when we were on the Killion place.

We stayed at Pott's Crossing about a year or two and then moved up on James Fork Creek on this same Texas Military Road. My mother taught school here on James Fork. The school was a free school and was called Greenhill. I went to school there also. We moved there about 1869 or 1870, I don't remember which year it was. We lived there until the year of 1875, when I met and married Able Harris, a full-blood

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Choctaw Indian. I am one-eighth Cherokee Indian and the rest white. We had nine children, eight are living.

They are as follows: Will, Tom, Henry, James, Martha, Zado, Elizabeth, Ruth, and Emiline, the only one that is dead.

After our marriage, we moved back to the old Killion place, where I had lived before, west of where Monroe is now. My husband was a farmer. In 1885 we moved to Tarby Prairie, Indian Territory, north of Poteau, Oklahoma, about three miles. Then in 1891, we moved to Summerfield, Indian Territory, about one mile east of there, close to where the Summerfield Graveyard was then and still is. We then moved to a place about one and one-half miles west of Houston, now called Hodgens. We lived here until my husband died, in 1915. He is buried in the Summerfield Graveyard.

"TANSHLABONA"

This is an old time Indian food. It is made as follows: Take Tom Fuller and cook in a pot with water, backbone, hog-shanks, hog's head, or just any kind of fresh bony meat. No salt. Indians did not eat very much salt, that is, the Choctaws did not. I have fixed Tom Fuller with beans in it,

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peas, bean leaves, pumpkin, hickory nuts, but never any salt in it. Real Tom Fuller is just the Tom Fuller Corn after it is beaten up and run through the Fanner and Riddler. It is boiled in water with no salt. If meat is cooked with it it is called Tanshlabona.

#### "SOUR BREAD"

Take Tom Fuller Corn and pound the husk off with pestle and mortar like making Tom Fuller, then put in water and soak until soft and then put in mortar and beat until it is about like meal, sift and then beat the coarse, finer. Take this meal like corn then, and mix with water into a kind of a dough, using warm water. Let the dough sour, then bake in an oven and eat it. It is sure good, I like it better than this white bread one buys now.

Indians did not care much for a very big variety of foods. They would kill a deer, cut the venison in squares about the size of their fist, then put it on any kind of a stick that would not leave bitter taste in the meat, sprinkle a little salt on the meat, then put the sticks with the meat on them on a kind of a scaffold they would build over a fire. Let this barbecue, turning the meat by twisting the stick ends. Fix a little Tom Fuller and eat this with

their cooked venison and this would be all they would care for.

I used to attend the Choctaw Indian Camp Meetings at Tarby Prairie, and Green Hill where I used to live. The people would all come Friday afternoon, make their camps and stay until Monday morning. They had prayer meeting before breakfast and then ate. Then, the nine o'clock service, this lasted about an hour or an hour and a half. At eleven o'clock they had another service and then dinner. At two o'clock there was another service, any business was attended to at this time. This service lasted about from one to one and a half hours. Then supper was served and after supper was the last service which began at dark. When seated at the table on benches, the men sat on one side and the women on the other. At Green Hill they had a church house. In this the men sat on the left side and the women sat on the right side of the building. They used this building in the winter and in the summer they built an arbor in which to hold church service. The Choctaws were not like the whites, they did not mix up with the women very much, they were very strict about that. The church at Green Hill was made of lumber. It is not there now, but the Green Hill

Graveyard is still there. The church had a pulpit, bench seats, and no collection was taken up. This church was of the Presbyterian Denomination. I have never seen a Choctaw Indian that was of the Catholic religion.

Kelly Harris, a full-blood Choctaw Indian, the grandfather of my children, or the father of my husband Able Harris, went to school with John Page, full-blood Choctaw, at Louisville, Kentucky. They graduated together. John Page came out of school as a lawyer and Kelly Harris came out as a blacksmith. He could make anything in the blacksmith line.

I can run the spinning wheel but not much weaving. Mother did most of the weaying. I can speak, read, sing, and write a little in the Choctaw Indian language.

Some of the Choctaw Indian Preachers who preached at Green Hill were: Thomas Benton, full-blood, a Circuit rider, Cunningham Wade, full-blood, Byington Wade, full-blood, all Presbyterian preachers. Byington Wade lived close to the church. When he died he was a Methodist Preacher.

"INDIAN MEDICINES"

Blackroot - This plant used to grow in the river bottoms.

It had a kind of a pointed leaf and there were four leaves centered around the stalk. They grew in series on the stalk about three or four inches apart. This plant grew to the height of about four or four and a half feet high. It had a long white blossom on it. Take the roots and boil to make a tea, used as a purgative.

Snakeroot - This plant grew in the up-lands and the low-lands and it smells like turpentine. Dig the roots and make a tea, drink while hot. This plant does not grow very high, just about a foot. It is used to cool the fever.

Bone Set - This weed grows anywhere, it is used to break the chills. Use the root to make a tea. It is as bitter as Quinine.

Burn Weed - Make a hot tea of the stalk and leaves, drink and go to bed and cover up good, makes you sweat. It grows anywhere, is about a foot high and is in clusters or bunches. It never blossoms. Used to break up the chills.