

INDEX CARDS:

Tribe-Creek
Seminole Medicines

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

Field Worker's name Mildred McFarland

This report made on (date) April 28, 1937

1. Name Harry Kernal

2. Post Office Address Edmond, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month October Day 27, Year 1903

5. Place of birth Earlsboro, , Oklahoma.

6. Harry's wife was Edith Keys, daughter of J. C. Kern in Missouri.

6. Name of Father George Kernal , Place of birth Earlsborough

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Ritta Harje Place of birth Maude, Okla.

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 7.

Harry Kernal
(Creek and Seminole).
Edmond, Okla.

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By - Mildred McFarland, Field Worker.
Indian-Pioneer History S-149.
April 28, 1937.

I was born in Earlsboro, Oklahoma, on or
about October 27, 1903.

My mother was a Seminole and my father a Creek
Indian. My father died when I was about three years
old. I lived with the Seminole Indians until 1929.
I belong to the Deer Clan. My father had many horses,
just great herds of them. He inherited them, a few
at a time, when different relatives died. He never
farmed. Cattle and horses were his interests.

What little education I have was obtained at
Mekusukey Academy. It is located five miles south
and west of Seminole. It was condemned about five
years ago and at this time ^{they} are tearing it down. I
was enrolled as a Creek Indian and received my land
allotments from them, as the Seminole allotments were
less.

My father is buried in an Indian burial ground
near Earlsboro, Oklahoma. It is on the south side
of Retta Kernal's allotment. The markers have entirely

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disappeared. There is just one family left that knew where it is. A family by the name of Coker, living six miles south and east of Earlsboro. . . Only large rocks and sticks were used as markers and these have entirely disappeared. The Seminoles bury their dead in six foot square holes, with small log houses surrounding the body. There is an Indian burial ground about four miles northeast of Konowa, on the Ida Harje allotment. I do not know the exact location. I remember hearing my mother talk about the trouble the law was having with "Crazy Snake". That happened eight miles out of Henryetta, Oklahoma. I do not know in what year it was.

We lived in log cabins daubed with mud. The floors were made of split logs. The furniture was made from logs and the chairs were then covered with cow hides. We cooked in a fireplace in winter and in the summer we cooked out of doors. We placed two large green logs together and made our fire between them.

Our tribe was never afraid of any disease. When one felt stiff in his joints, a squaw would take her children to the woods, by a small branch, and gather herbs to brew. She would take the bark from a cotton

weed tree and boil it in spring water. Then she would take a hollow reed about thirty inches long and blow in the liquid. This she would do for four mornings. All the time she was blowing in the liquid she faced the east. That is an old custom to always face the east. Our dead are always buried facing the east. While preparing this medicine the squaw would drink "sofka", a drink made from corn, similar to hominy. She felt that would teach her a medicine song, for the particular disease she was preparing the medicine for. When the four mornings had passed she would bring it back to the one who was sick and pour it in a large container, placing a stool in the center of it and then the person wrapped himself in a blanket and sat down while he steamed. The squaw meanwhile, kept chanting her medicine song. An undernourished child was bathed in this solution and also drank it, while the mother chanted her song.

An herb called "Heyaneecha" and spring water was our favorite medicine. It was used to clean out our system. By that I mean in your

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language "Erp it up".

I have an aunt whose husband, Alex Harp, at Hazel, Oklahoma, has an old deed that was given his father by the Mexican Government. It is an agreement of settlement of a war between them, granting a certain tract of land to the Seminoles. It was given so the Seminole Indians would always have a place to live. Lewis Brown, son of Governor Brown, Chief of the Seminoles, went to this place in Mexico with a group of Indians not long ago to see if this proposition still stands. They have returned, but I do not know the outcome of it. I am sure Lewis Brown or his father would give that information.

Indian children, especially boys, were taught that to be able to stand pain was to be brave. Any one who couldn't wasn't wanted around. To punish a small boy, he was scratched on the legs with a very sharp bone. This was done until the blood came. To see that was to put the child in disgrace and the other children laughed at him.

An Indian ball game is a terrible thing. It appeared like an ordinary gang fight. It is played

with clubs and they would just as soon hit some one of the opposite team in the head as they would the ball. The ball is made from the heart of a certain species of bird, wrapped in twine and covered with squirrel skin. It is about the size of the white man's golf ball. The team or the person winning the game is allowed to "gobbie". That is a cry of the brave.

Clan kin are no blood relation, although no two persons of the same clan marry. I belong to the Eufaula Stomp Ground. Each clan has his stomp grounds.

There was no ceremony or license necessary for a wedding. An agreement was made between the parents.

Indian paint was valued very highly. I do not remember how it was made, but I do know it was mixed differently for different things.

I have always wondered why, and have asked several Indians the meaning of the War Dance. I can never get a satisfactory answer. My belief is that it is a form of worship. This old Indian woman by the name of Coker, that lives six miles southeast of Earlsboro, could tell you many things, but

you would have to take an interpreter along as she cannot speak English. She is very, very old and does not know her age. She was brought here when a very small child as a slave from Florida. She also can tell about the "Trail of Tears".
