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

Field Worker's name Jerome M. Emmons

This report made on (date) July 27, 1937

1. Name Robert Kelly

2. Post Office Address R. R., Hoffman, Okla.

3. Residence address (or location) 3 1/2 Miles East of Cole Corner School, which is 5 mi's. South of Morris.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month October Day 15 Year 1850

5. Place of birth 3/4 Mile West of Bon Switch, Near Eufaula

6. Name of Father Tecumseh Kelly Place of birth Alabama

Other information about father Full-blood Town: Arbeka

7. Name of Mother Lucenda Scott Place of birth Alabama

Other information about mother Full-blood Creek Indian

Note 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 nine.

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7-26-37

INTERVIEW WITH ROBERT KELLY
By Jerome M. Emmons, Field Worker

Mr. Kelly, a full-blood Creek Indian, lives $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles East of Cole Corner School, which is five miles South of Morris, Okmulgee County.

I am listed as one-half Creek on the rolls, but I am a full blood. I gave this information incorrectly during the Green Peach War. The half bloods were to be the first to go fight against Esparhecher and I wanted to go.

My clan or town is Hillaby.

I have lived with my tribe, except for about ten years spent in Texas.

SCHOOLING

The extent of my school days is three months attendance, at a school near Arbeka, before the Civil War. It was a one room log hut, with a clapboard roof. The teacher was a white man, named George Washington Elliott. I would have finished there and gone on to High School, but for the fact that some of my relatives died in Texas. At their death, I went there to live.

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FARMING

My parents had only about an acre planted to corn and beans, before the Civil War. Of course, there was lots of wild game for meat. After the war, people planted larger crops and had more livestock on the range.

I farmed for seven years in Texas and then worked as a cowboy for three years in West Texas, around Atocosa, Southwest of San Antonio.

OTHER EMPLOYMENT

When I returned to the Territory in 1882, I was a carpenter, blacksmith and cook. I cooked in hotels here in the Indian Territory.

HORSES

We had 56 head of good horses at the beginning of the Civil War. When my father heard that some soldiers were coming near our home, my father had me drive them down near the Red River. Some jayhawkers must have stolen them; at any rate, we lost them.

INDIAN AGENCY

Major Hoe used to ride around in a buggy

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and bring money for the Creeks in need. He carried this currency in a wooden box, something that couldn't be done today. Major Hoe had long hair, which came nearly to his waist, and his station, I believe, was Fort Gibson, as there weren't any towns here when he was the agent.

FOOD

There was a commissary at Fort Gibson, which issued a few groceries, corn, some meat to the Indians, up to the time of the Civil War. John Crewl was the man who issued commodities in the Territory. Charlie Smith, John Smith, Jim Boy, my brother Tobe and myself used to haul groceries up to the Red River for him. I had two yoke and my brother three yoke of steers hitched to large, deep wagons.

Besides the foods made from corn by the Creeks, a kind of hominy was made, sometimes, out of the growth from a hickory stump.

Slippery Elm roots were dried and beaten

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in a mortar to make bread, by the Creeks, during a two year drought here. This bread doesn't entirely dry out in the middle, but the crust, when the bread is baked thin, is very palatable.

TRADING POSTS

I knew about a store ran by Charlie Shield's father and the place called Shieldsville, but I was never there.

Bill Fisher had a general store, between Checotah and Eufaula as they are called now, before the Civil war. This place was called North Fork town and Stringtown, south of Eufaula.

R. R.

When the M.K.T. came in, North Fork Town was moved to where Eufaula now is. It was a fair sized town when I returned from Texas.

I used to work on this railroad, before I went to Texas.

CHURCHES

There weren't any churches at Hillaby. A pastor named Bookner came to North Fork Town.

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I believe he was a 'hardshell' Baptist. He preached here before the Civil War.

CIVIL WAR

General Brunt, who lead forces of the Federal army and General Cooper, of the Confederates, had a skirmish on Little Elk creek. One of my brothers, in the Confederate army, was in this battle. General Cooper had some small cannon made of brass. These didn't stand up for very long.

Gen. Cobar was the recruiting officer for the South in this territory. I signed up and was to be paid, get to keep any supplies issued me and get a suit of clothes when I got out, but was never called to fight. I would have, perhaps, fought under General Cooper.

COUNCIL HOUSE

McDermott was the contractor, Mr. Lindsey was the stone cutter and W. G. Fryer and his son the Carpenters on the stone Council House.

FOOD FOR CREEK SOLDIERS

Capt. C. C. Belcher, of the Quartermaster

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Corps, used to buy commodities in Texas and have them hauled up here, for use by Creek Indian soldiers during the Civil War.

He had about an eight inch, specially built, saddle horn to write on in the field.

LIGHTHORSEMAN

I was a Lighthorseman for about eight years. One year of this time I acted as captain. The Capt. of my squad got into trouble and the marshals were after him. He asked ^{me} to act in his place. Later, another man was appointed and I became Lighthorse again.

COUNCILS

At one time my father, Tecumseh Kelly, was a member of the House of Warriors. He represented the Arbeka Town. Tom Adams was the last member. Scianza, was a member of the House of Kings and represented my Town. When I left my work, as a member of the House of Warriors, I turned my place over to Joe Grayson.

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STOMP DANCES

I am still Hillaby Mecco, Town King. Hillaby, however, has quit having Stomp dances since so many of the members have joined the Church.

We used Kingroot (Mecco Anesia) and Black Drink. The Black drink is made from the black ball on top of certain kinds of Bear grass.

I still use the Kingroot at times to clean out my stomach.

ESPARHECHER WAR

During the trouble between Chief Checote and Esparhecher in 1883, I was on Checote's side. I didn't go with Checote's men over into the Sac-Fox Reservation, because of a trip I made after Burnie Scott, who went was down on Horse Creek.

Burnie Scott and Simmor Tarpalechee were scouts sent over from Esparhecher's camp to talk to the men under Pleasant Porter. Scott drew his gun and killed another Creek Indian, named Scott Gentry. When he escaped, Pleas-

ant Porter gave me \$30., a pistol and a cartridge belt to make this trip.

When I got back with the prisoner, the men had all gone out west of Okmulgee, so I turned the prisoner loose.

CLOTHING

Old Creek Indian men, when I was a boy, used to wear leggings of buckskin, which were tied to a belt around the waist. These had a pitched crotch, that is they were open. This space was covered with a breech cloth. For shoes most of them wore moccasins. Some of them wore a long coat of calico.

The Creek women, in early days, wore a skirt of calico and moccasins. This skirt was made by wrapping the cloth several times around the waist and tying or pinning it. Many wore nothing above the waist and some wore a jacket or bolero.

The children wore a shirt, which came to the knees.

CUSTOMS

I have seen colored men with their ears

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in shreds, during slavery days. Each new master would cut some more until the slaves ears would be hanging below his shoulders.

I knew a Natchez Indian, named Hoskee, who wore a gold ring in his nose. He used to live a little this side of Eufaula.

I have seen old Creek Indian women whose feet would be thick soled and their heels cracking open, they had gone barefooted so long.

ALLOTMENT

In 1898 and '99, I worked for the Dawes Commission during enrollment and preparation for allotment of land to the Creek tribe. I worked under Thomas Bixby.