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Mr. Waterkiller was born in the Cookson Hills of Eastern Oklahoma, White Oak School, in Cherokee County Oklahoma and now lives six miles East of Ft. Gibson, Oklahoma near the present Perkins School in LeFlore County, Oklahoma on highway 62.

He is a full-blood Cherokee Indian and 73 years old.

All of his known relatives, were buried in the Cookson Hills of Eastern Oklahoma near the White Oak School. No markers, mark their

FATHER- Waterkiller- Born North Carolina (Year unknown) died 1870.

MOTHER- Nancy Parsons-Waterkiller, born Cookson Hills 1839 and died 1890.

GRANDFATHER- (First name unknown) last name, Parsons. Born North Carolina (date unknown) died 1840.

GRANDMOTHER- Sallie Parsons, born North Carolina (date unknown) died 1885.

MIGRATION

Don't know much about father's people. Grandma (Parsons) tell me like I tell you.

Grandpa and grandma leave North Carolina, in old country, come to Oklahoma, that old country too, stay there year. Ugh 1837, soldiers drive out. Ugh 1838. Grandpa and grandma no want come. Soldiers say go with you. Stick bayonet in you. They get things one night, skillet, dishes, clothes, yuh, bedclothes too. Ugh got dish grandma bring. Beans out em, I boy. (It was an old piece of pottery, highly valued. Bowl was fashioned with handles, handles broken off, but designs on it were beautiful) See bowl, em over hundred years old. Next soldiers drive em out. Easy first day. Guess soldiers feel good. Next day worse. Just drive em like cattle. Grandma say she walk, grandpa too or soldiers run bayonets through em. They walk, wade creeks to get lots mud some places. Cross rivers in canoes. Soldiers have canoes, make hollow logs, made em boats, go cross river.

soldiers have wagons. Feed um two times some days, sometimes feed
 e time. Soldiers eat all time, take care horses better than my
 ma-grandpa. Yuh-they bring skillet some things grandma had. Yuh-
 die, lots sick, lots die, two week walk, they die, bury em where
 die, any place. Yuh-clothes bad, tore em, dirty too, clothes all
 when get here. Throw lot way on road, no good.

They get here, lots timber, land no good in hills, all right in
 y. Yuh-grandma hate white man. Give all land, good land, in old
 ry (meaning North Carolina and Georgia). Ugh- white man say "trail
 ", she say, "trail death". Ugh-grandpa die next year, mother born.
 ing his grandfather died one year after the birth of his mother)

LIFE AND CUSTOMS
AFTER MIGRATION

Grandma say, her and grandpa come in hills. Soldiers say live, work,

Soldiers give em, ax, saw, big eye hoe, flint make fire, corn, cotton
 , mellow seed. Some soldiers give em nothin! (He had in his mind
 some of the emigrants received nothing after their arrival but was
 sed they would get theirs later) My folks lucky. Others never get
 n. Long years go, children get something. I get somethin too. No-
 use, no tent. Dig hole with hoe in hill. Make place stay. Take ax
 while cut logs, make cabin. Make fire-place, rock. (He explained
 s way that the rocks were laid up in what I would term a mortar made
 d and clay) Have no windows, no floor. Walls, fill em cracks full mud
 Roof - make out poles, split em with ax. Some make out poles lay
 down put leaves, grass on em. (Presume it was similar or was what
 old term a thatched roof) .

Crops - ugh - plant corn, beans, seeds with hoe. Dig hole cover up.
 em same way.

Ugh - lot wild berries. Wild fruit too. Blackberries, dewberries,

berries, strawberries, grapes, plums. Lots fruit sometime.

is meaning that there were plenty berries and fruit during their
380
ular season)

Yeh-lots nuts. Hickory nuts, walnuts. Lots hickory nuts then.

Yeh-lots game, fish too. Squirrel, rabbits, turkeys, coon, possum,

Wild cows sometimes in cane break. Yeh-muskrat, mink. No- no

o. They be west farther. None in hills. Yeh-

Yeh-make cabins better after while. Logs, fire-place like I say

. Fill cracks with mud, too. Split logs, make floor. Call em punchin

Make shingles. Split em with ax. Tie em on with bark. Lay rock on

, hold em on. Ugh-windows make em out limbs. Tie em with bark. Tie

l with bark, too.

Bread-Ugh- beans bread too. Corn, no grind em. Beat em, twist em,

own tree, cut off butt, four feet long, stand em up on end. Cut em

Make mortar. (Meaning a kind of a mall) Beat em, twist em on end

hit em hard. Grandma have meal now, use water, canuchi, too, bake em.

beans the shelled corn was placed on the big stump that was dished

and was beat up as fine as possible with a wood mall)

Canuchi - ugh- hickory nuts dry em good. Get shuck's off first. Dry

hick or ax crack em, pick all out. Push em through riddle. Canuchi

Good lard, butter, milk too. Good in coffee.

Little-ugh-make em out cane from cane on river. Little cane. Split

like chair bottom. Closer-uh huh-you call em now sieve. (He means he

peel off the outer side of small tender cane secured in the cane

and weave them into sieve form.)

Yeh- I see grandma make canuchi. I go Tahlequah. Get green coffee.

em home beat em make em fine. Grandma want coffee with canuchi.

Bean bread-ugh- cook beans good. Yeh-dry beans. Put in bread like bread. (He means add beans to other formula as he stated before) ³⁸¹

How cook bread-ugh-make oven rock. Cook em there. Cook everything else, no, cook em outside.

Salt-yeh-put salt in bread, too. Get water salt in em. After while men come bring big kettles cook water. Make em salt. Dirt have salt wild horses, cows too, Lick em. Yeh-white men come in hills, by (Oklahoma) now make em salt.

Game-ugh-kill em. Make bow, sometimes hickory sometime hedge. (Mean- is De Arc) Squirrel skin make bow string. Make arrow out swamp dog Sharp end so kill em. Sometime stop em so catch em.

Fish-ugh-Shoot em with bow and arrow. Sometime sharp stick, stick in the motioned as if the sharp stick was used as our present day gig).

Villages-no-Tahlequah, grandma say walk there sometime. Ft. Gibson, there. soldiers there. she fraid soldiers. Hate em.

Yeh-she say times better fore war. Lots horses, cows, hogs, oxen. The all gone soldiers get em.

Clothes fore war-ugh-use lots fur, skins, make moccassins you say wrap up in skins, too. Grandma make em spin wheel. Dry cotton fore pick out seeds with hand, make thread, make looms too, make cloth.

(Meaning that they had no cotton gins in those days)

Wool-ugh-no sheep in hills wild animals eat em.

Gin after while. Horse run em. Grist mill too. (Meaning in his life that gins and grist mills were operated by horse power.) Hand grater turn em make meal. I help mother, grandma too.

Logons-ugh-ox carts. Wheels saw em out of log. Make em round burn em. (Meaning they cut about four or six inches thick from a log taken off and make as round as possible and that a hole was in the center to fit the axle).

Axle-ugh-good hickory pole, fix em to fit wheel and burn hole in
 and put stick in hole, hold wheel on. (Meaning the pole was shaped
 the bed and a certain distance from each of the ends a ³⁸² shoulder was
 and then rounded up to fit hole in the wheel. Near each end of the
 a hole was burned through and this hole was inserted a pin with
 to hold on the wheel.) Rest cart made out poles, too. Wagons make
 way. Greased cart-ugh-sometimes water, sometimes canuchi, after
 e used lard.

Hoe all time-no- after while bull-tongue. Make em out of poles,
 r while get metal tongue Tahlequah, iron rod too. Brace em. Like
 le-stock now. Harrows-ugh-drag brush level em up after used bull-
 ue sometime.

Fires-start em. Soldiers leave grandma flints. She get flints too
 ills. No use em much. Keep fire burn all time.

school-ugh-cabin school house. Like cabins live in. Teach English.
 er no go school. Grandma mad. Jay Cherokee good enough.

Churches-missionaries have em. Sometimes arbors. Summer-time
 rs. Winter-time, like now, in school house. Missionaries come from
 country. (Means North Carolina and Georgia.) Arbors, you see em.
 out poles cover with limbs, leaves. People sit on ground. Sometimes
 up logs sit on em. Now different you see em.

Doctors-ugh-soldiers have em no care for Indians. Call em medicine
 Medicine-man dig up roots take leaves, vines, cook em. If get well
 take em, alright, die alright. Later grandma get medicine Tahlequah.

see-wild-horse prairie start here my house, run that way. (Pointed
 east) Go now Jallisaw, on ten miles to mountains. Horse come down
 prairie eat, chase em, go to mountains hide. Yeh-catch em sometime
 em. Some work some no good turn em loose. Yeh-like ponies no big
 Va le prairie and mountains cause horses wild on em.

Yeh-all do good fore war. Cherokees no want fight. Make em fight.
 war everything gone. Grandma, father, mother start all over.
 ma no how help em. 383

CIVIL WAR

Father he fight. Company G-Third Regiment-Captain Phillips.
 em. Indian Home Guard.
 Spies-ugh-spy some too.
 Fort-ugh-down that way father go. (Pointing southeast from Ft.
 on, Oklahoma,) Fort Coffee-ugh- don't know em.
 Father killed-ugh-no-not war. Man kill em. Friend kill em. Give
 powder, balls, hide by tree, next day father come, kill em. (He means
 -called friend of his father borrowed the powder and the rifle balls
 his father the previous day and that the next day shot him from an-
) was five years after war. I see tree lots times, he hide, kill em.
 Yeh-Cookson Hills, bury him there. No-no head stone.
 No-no-none my folks go Kansas, none Red River. Go no place stay in
 s. stay hills, hide. Father come back find em.
 All folks dead now. Sister die last year.
 Yeh-some call me Daylight. Mother marry Cherokee, Daylight, after
 er killed. He raised me. He step-father. He good to me. He show me
 work. He dead now too.

LIFE AND CUSTOMS AFTER THE CIVIL WAR

No-soldiers take all. Some cabins left, some school house, some
 h, too. Fix em up. Some no fix. Make em spin wheel. See grandma mad.
 he tell me so much. Mother tell me, too.
 Grandma, mother too, show me how make thread, weave make cloth, plant
 kill meat keep em, hunt, fish, Mother she make candles. Take cane,

em, hold string in em. Pour tallow in cane. (He explained the of cane, one joint long was split, then with a thread or piece of same was tied together and that as one held string as near as ble in the center of the hole in the candle they would pour in the w. When cool separate the split cane and there would be the com-candle.) Sometimes put string in grease burn em.

Matches-ugh-I get matches Tahlequah. Not like matches now. Take time get burn. Have black head, stuff on stick make em burn. (I these matches were the old time phosphorus matches)

Game-ugh-I kill em sometimes bow and arrow, sometimes rifle. -yeh-cap-get em Tahlequah, powder too, bar lead too. Make em mold lf. I sell em bout ten years ago. (He means that he sold his rifle ears ago)

No-no care for dances, horse races, ball, no-I like fish-hunt- make fish hooks- sometimes shoot em bow and arrow, rifle too, ies.

Fruits-ugh-lot fruit berries too like I tell grandma had.

Game-ugh-all kinds like grandma I tell you. Fox too.

Flow-ugh-I first see was at Ft. Gibson, (Oklahoma). Call em r. People all go see em. Ha-ha.

Guns-ugh-I had all kind, pistols all kind. I use good too. Boy see me shoot.

FORDS AND FERRIS

Yeh-Rabbit Ford down river two miles from Nevins. I no cross em. (ng Nevins Ferry). Lots Fords cross creek, sometimes Illinois

Nevins Ferry-ugh-down mouth Grand River. West Ft. Gibson, (Oklahoma) em. No cross em. Don't know who own em.

Tom French Ferry up by Fort. I know em. Soldiers run em for Tom.

ning he personally knew Tom French that ran the ferry which
 sed the Grand River near the present Missouri Pacific R. 385
 ge, northwest of the town of Ft. Gibson.)

ROADS AND TRAILS

Roads cross river-I never go cross river then-I no, know Texas,
 , no, know Arbuckle road. Grandma no like Arbuckle.

Never live cross Arkansas river. I stay in hills. (I asked of
 to Tahlequah in old days from Ft. Gibson, he knew, pointed, but
 d give nothing definite that could be of value here.)

SCHOOLS

Go school-yeh-go to Green school-no there now-two miles that way.
 pointed and explained that it was two miles east on highway No. 62
 where he now lives which would be about eight miles of Ft. Gibson,
 oma.) Teacher-ugh-man-name made-lady name Lucy Campbell. Got books
 Use em then. (He had an old speller and an arithmetic, backs were
 off and no legible names written thereon.) Yeh-I go school 1884-
 yeh-school house log like I tell you fore.

BURIAL GROUNDS

Graves-yeh-lot of em. One over there. (He pointed southeast. I
 see it.) Amos Anderson's place. He there. He older me. He tell
 more.

Lewis Rogers, Mrs. Sleeper, live Ft. Gibson have farms graves there
 They tell you. I know lots em. Some I find, some I forget.

Bridges

BRIDGES

Bridges-ugh-none in hills some built on Illinois, Arkansas. I get
 (Meaning that in his older days the present bridges were built
 s the Arkansas and Illinois rivers.)

FORTS-POSTS-CAMPS

Fort Gibson-no all my life-all I know.

ugh- Indian camp lots places white man live

ould not make him understand exactly what I termed camps and
posts.) 386

Sometimes trade-Park Hill-sometimes Cookson-sometimes Tahlequah,
on, too.

STEAMBOATS

I see steamboats - ugh- on river Ft. Gibson don't know names don't
gain.

RAILROADS

Railroads-yeh-I see em build, "Iron Mountain" I see see men work.
1887. Built em Ft. Smith white man tell me.

Miscellaneous

trip-yeh-I hear it talk 1887 take em 1889. I know see em-white
take em. Osage have em. Take land from Cherokee long time go.
e em. white man take Osage.

Army Officers-ugh-I know none. Grandma know Arbuckle. Hate him.
ers. (He could not remember when Ft. Gibson was abandoned the
after the Civil War. He recalled it after he went to school in

He also recalled that white settlers had to have a permit and
ollar a month for awhile and then fifty-cents and finally noth-
e also recalled at one time as having used paper script for
could not remember the year.

COMMENTS

Mr. Waterkiller, a full-blood Cherokee with little schooling,
nd reared in the rugged hill country between the Arkansas and
ivers, known as the Cookson Hills of eastern Oklahoma through out
as the hide out and homes of bandits, outlaws and criminals of
ind in recent years.

Mr. Waterkiller's associates and daily contact was with
se people in his early days. Environments were many. He was one ³⁸⁷
the few of the good folks of the hills. He had to exercise his
-wise judgement in his humble way to protect himself and his
perty.

He was always considered honest and thrifty and in late
rs he has quit the use of tobacco and licuor in its entirety.
oes not swear and is a devoted christian, a lover of home and
that is good.

He has accumulated worldly goods as well as those Divine
r failing to be square in all his transactions.

He is loved, honered and cheryished by all of his old
ociates, friends, neighbors and fellow citizens.

He could tell, if he would many many things happening in
e hills as to outlaws and etc. in old days but he reiterated
says ; "Its all been done".

L.W. Wilson
Field worker.