

WILLISON, MARY JOSEPHINE. BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH. FORM A-(S-149)  
BIOGRAPHY FORM

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WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION #7179  
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Mary D. Forward

This report made on (date) August 13 1937

1. Name Mary Josephine Willison

2. Post Office Address Tulsa, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) 515 N. Santa Fe Ave

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month September Day 17 Year 1881

5. Place of birth Fort Gibson, Oklahoma

6. Name of Father William T. Mackey Place of birth Oklahoma

Other information about father part Cherokee

7. Name of Mother Fancy Drew Mackey Place of birth Oklahoma

Other information about mother part Cherokee

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.



the Cherokee were ...  
tlers, her father John ...

She does not recall ...  
amount was.

after her husband ...  
\$200.00. ...  
her children together ...  
payment.

AGRICULTURAL FAIRS

Agricultural fairs ...  
They were quite similar to fairs of the present day.  
There were displays of fruits, vegetables, stock, and hand-  
work, with prizes offered for the best specimens. Mrs.  
Willison entered a piece of her own hand work, an embroidered  
baby's cape, in the first Cherokee Indian fair and received  
a prize consisting of a small amount of money.

GENEALOGY

Mrs. Willison's maternal grandmother, Maria Goodley Drew,  
came from Georgia over the Trail of Tears. Her maternal  
grandfather, John Drew, served in the Confederate Army.

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~~had the rank of Colonel in command of the fullblood Cherokees.~~  
During the War he was stationed in the northern part of the Choctaw Nation.

Mrs. Willison's father, William Thompson Mackey, also served in the Civil War. He was a captain under General Stand Watie, served in the Commissary department and did not leave the state during the War.

#### INTER-TRIBAL COUNCILS

Inter-tribal councils were called to straighten out business transactions or dissatisfactions between the different tribes. There were no laws governing inter-tribal relations and the only means of adjusting differences was to summon a council of the tribes.

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#### TOLL BRIDGES

Before the coming of the railroads there was a toll bridge over Elk Creek about one mile northeast of Checotah. It was operated by Delilah Drew (Mrs. William) sister-in-law of Mrs. Willison's father. It did not survive much more than a year after the coming of the M.K. & T. Railway.

## HEirlooms

A family Bible containing a record of the Willison family from about 1700 is in the possession of Mrs. Willison's son who keeps it in a bank at Wagoner. The Bible came from England and was a gift from someone there to an early member of the Willison family. It was published ~~in~~ 1500 or 1600. (More of this book may be learned of Daisy Shannon of Wagoner.)

Mrs. Willison's son James has a ring bearing the seal of the Willison family. The age of the ring is not known.

## CRAZY SNAKE REBELLION

The Crazy Snake uprising was regarded more as the depredations of a band of outlaws than a real uprising. Crazy Snake and his followers were a gang of fullbloods who spent their time committing robberies, holding up trains and the like. They had all served prison terms for their thefts. They opposed allotment of the land just to make trouble. After the passage of the Curtis Act in the nineties they were no longer under tribal laws but were placed under the jurisdiction of the Indian agency at Muskogee. President Gould

of the N.K. & T. pushed the pursuit and prosecution of the Crazy Snake gang because of the many times his trains had suffered at their hands.

Mrs. Willison's children belonged to the Coweta Clan of the Creeks.

The McIntaws, a clan of full-blood Cherokeees keep up the old tribal customs, guard the ever-burning fire, etc. Their ceremonial grounds are near Gore, Oklahoma. Certain of their ceremonies are secret, which none not of full Cherokee blood is permitted to know.

Mrs. Willison never attended any of the tribal ceremonies.

Her husband sometimes attended ceremonials in the Creek Nation.

JOHN R. ...

Mrs. Sue ... daughter of Mrs. Willison, worked on the Dawes Commission. She had a wide acquaintance and was able to certify as to who should or should not be on the rolls in many cases.