

WOODS, JULIA.

INTERVIEW

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BIOGRAPHIC WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History ~~Project for Oklahoma~~

WOODS, JULIA.

INTERVIEW.

13600.

Field Worker's name Grace Kelley,

This report made on (date) April 13, 1933.

1. Name Julia Woods

2. Post Office Address Henryetta, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) South of Henryetta.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month _____ Day _____ Year 1888

5. Place of birth Texas

6. Name of Father L. D. Harris Place of birth Tennessee

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Willie V. Perryman Place of birth Texas

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 16.

Grace Kelley,
Investigator.
April 13, 1938.

Interview with Julia Woods.
Henryetta, Oklahoma.
Born 1888.
Father-L. D. Harris
Mother-Willie V. Perryman

Most of our relations were living near Hickory Ground and Eufaula and had proved their rights and were enrolled as Creek Indians. My mother's father was a Creek but her mother and her husband were white. Mother was born in Texas and lived there until her people persuaded her to bring us up here and get our land as they were doing.

There were three stores in Henryetta in 1900, owned by C. J. Harrison, Wesley Nelson and Price Reynolds. The livery stable was owned by Slim Graham. The post office was on the alley on Fifth street between Main and Broadway. There was no hotel when we came but later Mrs. ³Curtis and Mrs. Barnes put in one.

We were met by a rig and were taken out to my aunt's home near Bun Ryal Crossing. She was Mrs. Bill Morey. Her husband was a white man but she was Creek. He was a Deputy United States Marshal. We children kept trying to go to sleep but the rocks were as large as elephants and every time

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we would doze off to sleep the buggy would hit a big rock and wake us up. Mother kept looking for a public road such as she had been used to in Texas. We were on a horse trail that had been made by Indians and cowboys who were riding horseback and no vehicles were supposed to travel over it. We passed that way many times though while we lived out there.

The Indians would come to visit and they and my aunt could talk in the Creek language. We couldn't understand a word that was said but we were always right there to watch them and listen to them talk. We were part Creek but had never been around the Creeks so they were as different to us as to any white child who had never seen an Indian.

We always passed Jackson Barnett's place when we came to Henryette and we children were as afraid of him as of a wild vermint. He was tall and looked as if he had been cregged in ashes and he didn't like to wear clothes. He might have had on a breech clout but he certainly looked naked to us. He wore clothes when he came to town but one leg was torn off of the trousers.

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Each Indian had his own hogs which they claimed had been tame ones when they were turned loose. Each Indian had his hogs marked by different cuts on their ears. I would call them wild hogs for they were vicious and would chase a person. My cousin sent my older brother out to kill a hog and showed him the one to kill. He ran after the hog and it ran under a house and he "took after" it when it came out on the other side and killed it. An old Indian saw him as the hog came out from under the house and ran after him hollering at him in the Creek language but he didn't know what was the matter and was very busy trying to kill the hog. He dragged it home and saw that the Indian was following him.

My cousin went out to meet the Indian, gave him a plug of

tobacco and paid him \$1.00 for the full grown hog. Brother

and I killed the Indian's hog instead of my cousin's.

One of my cousins and I were riding some mares and their two colts were following us. It was after dark so we were nervous anyway. A panther screamed and it seemed to be right over our heads. Our horses didn't wait to see where it was but started to running and ran until they got

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home. The poor little colts were left clear behind, their mothers didn't wait for them to keep up but ran off and left them. None of us were hurt but it was a thrill I'll never forget.

Mrs. Caldonia Perryman Morey was a good Indian doctor. When anyone was sick he sent a horse and saddle for her to ride back to see the patient. All women rode horses and it was more comfortable than riding in a hack or in a wagon on account of the rocks. Most of the men rode bareback.

My sister and I went to an Indian home after they had sent for her to come to assist a young woman who was having her first confinement. This young woman had suffered a long while and had pains in her head and she was about to die. Rosanna Brown was the only woman there but there were a lot of men. There was a jug of something under the bed and a kettle of bad smelling water by the fireplace. Every ~~so often one of the men would sprinkle that water~~ all about the room. When I asked Caldonia what he was doing that for she told me not to talk until we got home, then she told me it was to keep the witches driven away. There was snow on

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the ground; I thought 'twould kill her. A pair of twins were born. Each was wrapped in a man's coat and laid on the floor by the fireplace, one on each side of the fireplace. They weren't bathed nor taken care of in any way. The men said that if they were any good they would live and if they weren't they didn't want them to live. They whined like little dogs. I couldn't stand it so I went home. The next morning one was living but the other was dead.

One day when I was twelve years old, we children had been away from home and came back as hungry as could be and there was nobody at home. Aunt Caldonia had killed a skunk and had rendered the grease out of it for croup. That is a strangling sickness that children have in the winter time. The skunk was in the oven, brown and nice looking. We supposed it was squirrel or rabbit that she had left for us to eat when we came home. It didn't smell good but it did taste good. Quite a few Indians did eat skunk but we didn't make a habit of it.

I never thought of locking the house when I left and

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I have come home to find a half of a hog or beef that had been killed and cleaned lying on the table.

They had everything you could think of to eat placed on three long tables in the front yard when they had a funeral. All the dead person's personal belongings were put into the casket, besides a lot of food and tobacco.

They also had a great deal to eat at the churches for they didn't just go to church for Sunday morning but for the week-end. That was where I ate my first squirrel; I had never seen one before I came here. There was Sofka that was pounded in mortars instead of being ground as they do now. We went to the Hickory Ground Church that was held under an arbor, I don't remember there being a building there until later. That was a Methodist Church and the way they preached was different to our way of having one pastor. The Indian men did the preaching and first one would talk for a while and then another would get up and talk. There might be a half dozen or more who would talk before church was over.

Very few of the Indians believed in having the preacher

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to marry them. When they got married the girl just went home with the man and stayed and it was made known that they belonged together. My cousin had an Indian boy friend who wanted her to go home with him that way for he loved her but she had a white father and knew there should be a wedding first.

There was an Indian who had two children who were almost grown. He was told that he should marry his wife as they were only living together and had never been married. He married another woman who was much younger than his first wife and they both lived with him in the same house. His name was Billie Richman.

The girls would ride a horse when it was running like lightning and shoot at a blaze on a tree with a sixshooter. Everyone was good at riding and shooting in those days for we practised both for pastime.

My aunt died before she got us enrolled; she was the one who had gotten all the others' claims approved and the rest of us were too ignorant of those laws to know what to do. After I was married my husband had me enrolled but for some reason I never received any land.

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Our relatives were farmers, with plenty of hogs, cattle and horses. We picked cotton for 50 cents a hundred pounds. Later I got my first job working at the hotel in Henryetta at \$1.50 a week and thought that was very good wages. When they raised my wages to \$2.00 a week I thought I was getting rich in no time. Money went farther then than it does now. We would get enough meat for a quarter to last us all week. Hog heads, livers, hearts and the backbones were given away. People never thought of selling those.

We moved to the Central mines in 1902. It was a strip pit at that time but later was a shaft mine. There were no houses there, only tents.

I was about as green as a woman could be. The mines paid in round paper tickets that everyone called "toe dieds". They were scrip. I was told that I could exchange these at the store for money. I went to town, Henryetts, instead of going to the commissary or company store. I asked the clerk if I could exchange those "toe dieds" for money. He laughed at me and said that I could. I knew that I had said some-

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thing wrong but didn't know what it was so I asked him what he had laughed at. He said that the tickets were scrip. I never called them "toe dieds" again.

That scrip would be traded anywhere around Henryetta just like money and the merchants took what they had to the company every month and the company redeemed them. The boys gambled with them just the same as if they were money.

In 1902 a bunch of wild longhorn cattle were shipped in from Texas. One of the pastures around Henryetta was between the Central mines and Henryetta. There was a road that went around the pasture but it was such a long way around that people who walked took to cutting through. We knew it was dangerous but nobody had been hurt so we kept cutting across. One day the Reynolds boy, who was about eleven or twelve years old, started across this pasture on his bicycle. When he was found he had been gored to death and the bicycle had been torn to pieces. He had shot seven of the steers before they had killed him. After that we went around the road.