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

Field worker's name Grace Kelley

This report made on 3-22-37

1. Name Wallace Cook

2. Post Office address Okemah, Okla.,

3. Residence address Seven miles south of Okemah and
another one block north of Okfuskae court house.

4. Date of birth 1880

5. Place of birth Across the road from country home.

6. Name of father Zack Cook

7. Name of mother --- Harjo Same birthplace.

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Indian-Pioneer History Project S-149

Interview of Wallace Cook
by Grace Kelley, Field Worker
March 17, 1937

Thomas F. Meagher, Super
109 South Main
Tulsa, Okla.

When my grandfather, Emeithle Harjo, was twenty-five or thirty years old he was removed to the Indian Territory, from Alabama. The boat that he was to cross the Mississippi in was a delapitated affair and sank in the Mississippi River. He swam pretty near all night saving the women and children. They were all brought here and turned loose like something wild. He had to walk from here to the ^{Gibson} Fort/to get the axe and gun that the Government promised and gave to him. He built his home across the highway from here. There are some houses there but they are not the ones he built, they burned, and rotted down.

I was born in 1880 in the house across the road. Went to the Wetumka Mission and then to the Eufaula High School. If I ran off from the Mission once I ran off a thousand times but it didn't do me any good. My folks would take me back the very next day and I'd get a whipping besides. I don't think there ever passed a day that I didn't get punished for something. I ought to be an authority on punishment. >

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Every morning the Principal would come in the dormitory and if any of us had been mean during the night, he'd give us a whipping with some switches he brought with him for that purpose. ~~It~~-we That was after breakfast, then we'd go work till nine O'clock when we'd go to study our lessons. We had to learn English and we'd never hear it except at school. It's a wonder we ever learned anything. I don't remember any of the teachers, and don't want to.* Why I stayed in the first reader till I was twenty years old, and then just got to the center of it. The first half of the book was as dirty as could be and the last half was just like new.

Wetumka had two stores and was one mile east of where it is now. When the railroad came through it missed Wetumka so Wetumka had to move to the railroad. Tom Scale owned one and Jack Duncy owned the other. The Wewoka District Creek Council was there. They had regular laws, a Judge, Light Horsemen, and would pick the jury and have a trial. Then they would whip or kill the guilty person according to the verdict.

* You can use your own judgement in beleiving this. I

he's a "kidder" or "Joker"

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Ispahecha War

When I was two years old they had a battle down here on a creek, which later was named Battle Creek, it was on Christmas Day, 1882. I guess it was the biggest battle that they had, there wasn't much fighting but it lasted a long time.

My uncle, San Jonie Harjo was killed in that battle and he and six others are buried in my grandmother's burial ground. Sec. 24, Township 10, Range 9. I don't know their names but my brother, who is four years older, can tell you.

After the Civil War the Indians came back and they were devided, they wanted separate laws. They hadn't gotten over the division when they were removed to this country, either. Part of them had fought on the North side and part on the Confederate side. That war was just like a civil war between the Indians of the Creek Nation.

Ispahecha was Northern, Porter was Captain of the Southern side.

I don't know how many of Ispahecha's men were killed for they took them with them, the ones left here were the ones on Porter's side.

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Porters side whipped Ispahecha's side and drove them up in the Sac and Fox country or Nation. The chief of the Sac and Fox didn't want any fighting on their ground, so he ~~they~~ sent to the Government and the Government sent soldiers to get them back where they belong. The Sac and Fox chief and a white man came and told Cap. Porter that no fighting was wanted there.

LIGHT HORSEMEN LIVING

Sardi Cowa (Kóá)-----Wetumka, Okla.

Jim Spaniard***-----Wetumka, Okla.

Tolwa Thlocco is east of Henryetta

There are forty- four Tolwas or Towns in the Creek Nation. No other Town can rule a Town, Buss, Square or Stomp, whichever you want to call it. They all mean the same thing. They are like our counties, one can't rule the other. The King is like the King of England, born to be a King. Not elected at all.

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INDIAN BALL GAME
1920

(The one described by Bun Ryal)

Yes, I remember about that Ball Game, I was there. We camped all night in Little Fish's yard so we would be there early in the morning. The game is supposed to start just about sun-up. We waited and waited and the Arbeca's didn't show up till way late. The longer we waited the madder we got. We went there to play ball and not to fight, but a game is always rough. That game was between the Oddessy's and Arbeca's but my brother and I were Thlob Thlocco's. If you had played for one Town and married in to another Town, you could play on the first Town team if they needed you to make the right number of players. That's how we were there. They have to have a certain number of good, strong, tough men who know how to play the game. There are guards, center, forwards, like in basketball. The goals are two poles at each end of the field. The goals are 150 feet apart. The side getting 20 score wins the game. The ball is about the size of a guinea egg, two bats about two feet long with a loop on the end to catch the ball in. One is to guard with and one is to fight with, catch the ball and throw it with both.

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After the corn is laid by and there is nothing to do for pastime, it is time to play ball. And it is a great game, thrilling. I don't know why but you never heard of anyone getting hurt real bad nor getting killed. It was so exciting during the game that you didn't know you were hurt till after the game and then in two or three days you were as good as new. When you'd see the ball coming your way you were to get it and throw it to your goal. Well the man on the other side would be there to throw it to his goal. You were to get it one way or another so you'd hit him anywhere you could, head, back or anywhere. And he'd do likewise. Mabe you'd get the ball and mabe while you two were busy someone else would get the ball. You'd get so excited that you wouldn't know you were hit till after the game and then you would notice a skinned or brused place and say, "I beleive I have been in a ball game. They aren't as dangerous as a football game. Not as many get hurt as in a ~~pa~~ football game. They are great fun and that is all they are for.

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CLAN KIN

Clan Kin is easy to understand. When two persons get married, they have to be of different clans, their children belong to the clan of the mother. The father doesn't count at all. The clan kin has been handed down through the mother as far back as anybody knows, but they don't pay so much attention to it now as they use to.

SALT SPRING

There was a salt spring where they made the Wetumka lake, it covers the salt spring. There was a large community boiling pot there. We would go there and fill this pot (the largest I ever saw) with water and when it was boiled down there would be nothing but salt in the bottom. We got our salt there all the time.

Newspaper

I guess the Indian Journal at Eufaula is the oldest newspaper in Oklahoma. It may be 100 years old.

Weleetka started in 1899 when the railroad came through.
Okemah started in 1900

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SAWMILL

Years and years ago there was a mill three or four miles west of the present Weleetka, on the old Canard farm. Sefuchie owned it. Henry Duncney run it. Later Jackson Duncney, his son, was partner to Dimi Barnett at Wetumka. He started to move the boiler but couldn't. When I was a boy it was on the hill on the old road and I expect, if it hasn't been picked up for junk, it is still there. The road has been changed since then. The old mill started for a griss mill, then they made shingles.

Medicine Man

Feelis Canard was a medicine man but he is dead.

Food

Most of the Indian food was corn in one form or another. Hominy was called Soogah, then there was the fine grits like rice which was called ^uOfkey. We called rice Ofkey too.

I don't like to think about the past. People now don't know what hard times are. Little children went barefooted in the snow. I don't know why the Indians sent their children to school unless it was because they would be better taken care of. They were Mission Schools and the Government didn't make them sent them, so that must have been the reason.

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Prospective Interviews

Dan Cook, my brother, lives North West of Yeager, straight south of Slick, eight or nine miles. He knows the names of all seven who were killed in that battle.

Sarty Cowe of Wetumka, is eighty years old and should be able to tell you a lot of things.

John Berryhill, ten miles south of Okemah, is also eighty years old and you can beleive anything he tells you. The trouble with most of these old people is you can't beleive everything they tell you, but just about half of it.

Jim Bullet might tell you some things too, he gets his mail at Okemah.