

MOFFATT, D. H. (Mrs.)

INTERVIEW

#7673

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

Field Worker's name Mr. D. Forward

This report made on (date) Sept 2, 1937

1. Name Mrs. D.H. Moffatt

2. Post Office Address Wagon, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) 1711 South Gary Avenue

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month _____ Day _____ Year 1900

5. Place of birth Winita, Oklahoma

6. Name of Father Thomas Duffington Place of birth Estville

Other information about father part owner of the Cherokee

7. Name of Mother _____ Place of birth _____

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 1

Mary D. Dorward, Field Worker

Indian-Pioneer History S-149

September 24, 1937

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MRS. D.H. MOFFATT

A biographic sketch

From a personal interview with the subject

(1711 South Gary Avenue, Tulsa, Oklahoma)

Mrs. D. H. Moffatt is the daughter of Thomas Mitchell Buffington of Vinita, Oklahoma, last chief of the Cherokees.

Thomas Mitchell Buffington was born near Westville, Adair County, in the old Going Snake district, October 19, 1855. The log cabin in which he was born is still standing but Mrs. Moffatt has never seen it and was unable to give its location. He is the son of Ezekiel Buffington who came to Indian Territory from Georgia and was, to the best of Mrs. Moffatt's knowledge, one of the Old Settler Cherokees.

Before his election as chief in 1899 Mr. Buffington was president of the Cherokee senate. He was elected judge of the Delaware district in 1891, serving two years. He then was elected to the Cherokee senate in '93 where he served two years. He represented the Cherokee Nation at Washington, D.C., for one year, about '95 or '96, then was elected circuit judge of the northern district of the Cherokee Nation for four years. Then in '99 he was elected chief and served until the tribal organization was abandoned preparatory to statehood.

CEREMONIAL GROUNDS

Indian ceremonials are still held at Whiteoak, about eighteen miles west of Vinita. Shawnees, Osages, Pawnees, and various other tribes participate. A space about a quarter of a block in extent is cleared and it is in this enclosure that the dancing takes place. Turtle shells containing articles that will rattle are tied to the ankles of the dancing Indians. Within the cleared space is a huge iron kettle containing corn meal mush from which as they dance they frequently take up a handful and eat it, all the while singing their weird chants. Such a ceremonial usually lasts about four days.

ALLOTMENTS

Chief Buffington and two of his children received allotments. His two younger children, "too late," received none. That of Chief Buffington and Mrs. Moffatt were along Mustang Creek in Craig County, about ten or fifteen miles southeast of Vinita. The other daughter's allotment was along Bird Creek in Rogers County and is still in her possession.