

Mary Maude "Grandma" Supernaw
Interviewed by: Bill Supernaw, Jr.
Interview Date: 1965
Transcribed by: Rise Supernaw Proctor and Billy Supernaw Proctor
Subject: Stick Dance & Stomp Dance (1965 Interview)

Stick Dance & Stomp Dance (1965 Interview)

Bill: Did you ever have any dances out to the farm¹ a long time ago?

Grandma: Huh?

Bill: Did you ever have any dances out there a long time ago?

Grandma: Huh uh! They don't have dance over there.

Bill: They don't?

Grandma: Used, they used to want, uh, when I was girl, dance down at, uh, where the bridge cross there (Quapaw Creek).

Bill: Quapaw?

Grandma: Long time ago. Yeah, when I was a girl.

Bill: Oh!

Grandma: That's where they have dance, the Stick Dance, down there. They call Stick Dance.

Bill: That's, that's a kind of a sa sacred dance isn't it, a Stick Dance?

Grandma: Uh huh! special dance, a Stick Dance.

Bill: How'd they do that?

Grandma: Oh, they just had somebody sick something they told give them a dance, so special dance so, they have special dance. Corn, dried corn, like that, you know. Eight leader, uh, four leaders and

Bill: Four leaders.

Grandma: All rest of them dance if they want to. So, Grandpa (Tall Chief) sing and he, somebody helping, three men, there four singer. So he said they sing, so they're special leaders, so, John Beaver take a lead lot, lots of time. Whenever they have a dance. So, they dance four round, four time, you know, rest and then they dance, uh, rest a while and then give everybody a smoke and when they get through with this, and start over again. They do that four time and then, quit and they take that stick away so, they give, they give singers, uh, uh, dried corn, and grandpa, give him a little bowl to eat and then all rest of them about, oh, eight dancer over there, give a bowl there, and a bowl there. Any corn left so, everybody come get corn, if they want to.

Bill: And that's for that person that's sick, huh?

Grandma: Yeah, Uh huh!

Bill: That's the sick corn they had, ain't it?

Grandma: Uh huh!

Bill: Sick Corn. They used to they ain't no more of that are they?

Grandma: Uh huh!

Bill: Are there some more corn?

Grandma: Uh, dried corn, they eat.

Bill: Oh!

Grandma: They use dried corn.

Bill: Is there anything like a cook dance?

Grandma: Stick dance, they carry the stick

Bill: I mean did they ever have a cook dance up yonder too

Grandma: Huh uh!

Bill: They never did?

Grandma: Huh uh!

Icky: Ask her if they had shells in those days?

Bill: Did they have turtle shells them days, when they used to stomp?

Grandma: Huh?

Bill: Turtle shells?

Grandma: Huh uh! No!

Bill: Never did?

Grandma: 'Till they get through, next day, uh, after they get through in that regular stomp dance then.

Bill: Oh, well they, they had, but they had turtle shells?

Grandma: Un huh! Yeah!

Bill: Yeah! Oh!

Grandma: Bill Bruner (Creek Indian) always come and another, another, woman, couple on horseback, come over the hill. That's only one they come.

Bill: Had a lot of fun, huh?

Grandma: Uh huh! That's a long time ago. So they, nobody ain't going dance anymore cause my father singing and he gone, so, there ain't no song, nobody going learn, all people help singing they die too, so, that's all there is to it.

Bill: There's not anybody that knows that stick dance song? Huh?

Grandma: Huh uh!

Icky: Ask her how old she was?

Bill: How old were you then?

Grandma: Oh! I was about, I was about, that three years old when I saw, we always, telling you about Quapaw Creek, and then down there in, uh, I was dancing about, uh, ten, fifteen years.

Bill: Do you know the song now (Stick Dance)?

Grandma: Huh uh!

Bill: You don't.

Bill: You know a lot of songs though, huh?

Grandma: Huh uh!

Bill: You know any song

Grandma: Special songs, so I guess nobody going learn, just lost it, that's all.

Bill: Oh!

Grandma: I supposed just follow that, uh, st uh lead, uh, Stick Dance and another woman she helped me, and it's, uh, Chief daughter and they, she had, she danced and so she, I danced with her ever since I was small and that's how, uh, they always help me, lead me, to dance, 'till, 'till I got big, 'till they quit.

Bill: You was, you was the youngest one, huh?

Grandma: Uh huh! Yeah! Stick Dance. I supposed to, follow leader, that's all.

Bill: Just eight, eight of them dance, four men, four women.

Grandma: Huh?

Bill: Four men and four women.

Grandma: Uh huh! All rest of them, they're, any kind of ol' order, they dance four, four lead, uh, four dancers. This one a special dance like me, follow him, Stick Dance, and is Chief daughter have to dance.

Bill: You said they have four leaders. Then one of them lead and the rest of leaders follow him?

Grandma: Yeah!

Bill: Then the women follow them?

Grandma: Yeah! Woman follow them ever, whoever they got him to dance. They, they dance in there.

Bill: Just eight people?

Grandma: Uh huh! Four.

Bill: Did they dance between the leaders or go along behind?

Grandma: Here's leader and here's four. Special leader get any woman dance with him.

Bill: Oh! Between them?

Grandma: Besides me.

Bill: I mean they dance between the men?

Grandma: Uh huh! Yeah!

¹ Mary Maude “Grandma” Supernaw’s Osage Allotment, west of Skiatook.