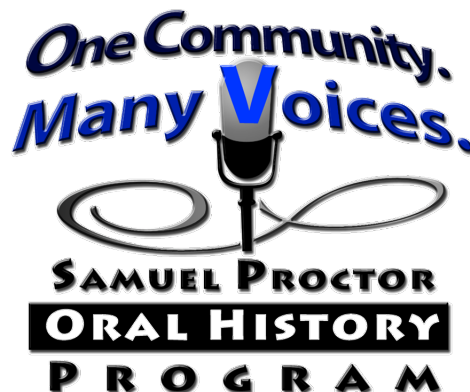


# **Irvin Williams, John Chapman, and Barcom King**

**Southeastern Indian Oral History Project  
MISS CHOC-013**

**Interview by:**

**Members of the Board of Editors of Nanih Waiya  
June 21, 1973**



University of Florida • Samuel Proctor Oral History Program • Paul Ortiz, Director  
P.O. Box 115215, 241 Pugh Hall, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-5215  
(352) 392-7168 [www.clas.ufl.edu/history/oral](http://www.clas.ufl.edu/history/oral)

**Samuel Proctor Oral History Program**  
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
Program Director: Dr. Paul Ortiz

241 Pugh Hall  
PO Box 115215  
Gainesville, FL 32611  
(352) 392-7168  
<https://oral.history.ufl.edu>

**MISS CHOC 013 Irvin Williams, John Chapman, and Barcom King**  
**Southeastern Indian Oral History Project (SIOHP)**  
**Interviewed by Members of Board of Editors of Nanih Waiya on June 21, 1973**  
**42 minutes | 7 pages**

**Abstract:** Members of Board of Editors of Nanih Waiya conduct interviews mostly in Choctaw with Irvin Williams, John Chapman, and Barcom King about stickball. The interview discusses the process of making sticks for stickball as well as the history and rules of stickball.

**Keywords:** [Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians; Mississippi; Indigenous languages; Singing]

**SAMUEL PROCTOR**  
**ORAL HISTORY**  
**PROGRAM**  
**University of Florida**

MISS CHOC 013

Interviewees: Irvin Williams, John Chapman, Barcom King

Interviewers: Members of Board of Editors of Nanih Waiya

Date of Interview: June 21, 1973

[Scraping noises]

[Speaking in Choctaw 00:00-05:38]

I1: Ask him if it matters how long it is.

[Speaking Choctaw 05:42-12:33]

I2: How many men do you know of that still make sticks?

U1: Make it?

I2: That still make 'em. Very many?

[Speaking Choctaw 12:43-13:03]

I2: Well, they're all together.

[Speaking Choctaw 13:03-13:07]

I2: Anybody make them in Bogue Chitto?

[Speaking Choctaw 13:08-13:16]

I1: Well, how do you take the bark off of it when you first start?

[Speaking Choctaw 13:22-13:36]

I2: He used a small hatchet, and those are easy to do if it gets kind of dry. Then you just get a small hatchet and—

I1: Would you let the wood season and dry some? Maybe they cut it and then let it set for a while, then take the bark off.

[Speaking Choctaw 13:52-14:00]

I2: When you stop sanding, you just, you know, get the bark off, too.

I3: And then you go right at it?

I2: Mmhm.

I1: And then you just—after you take the bark off, you just shave it down, then square it off. It's all formed by then.

I2: **What do you suppose it is that** really, you know, take the leaves off?

I1: And then he's got that—

[Speaking Choctaw 14:36-19:50]

W: Irvin.

I2: Irvin?

W: Williams.

I2: Williams?

I2: I-R-V-I-N.

I2: I-R-V-I-N W-I-L—

[Speaking in Choctaw 20:17-20:26]

[Interruption in tape]

I1: This is grease, huh?

C: Hog grease.

I1: Hog grease?

I2: Why do you use grease, John?

C: To moisture the sand, to make it bendy.

I1: It moisturizes it? It makes it bend well? Keeps it from splitting? After you get the grease on it, then what do you do with it?

C: Heat it.

I1: You heat it?

C: Yeah.

[Break in recording]

I1: Now, do you just tie it or leave it tied, or do you nail it or glue it or what?

C: You got to tie it down before you open this part right here. Use it...

I1: So, you've got to tie it before you flare open the end, huh?

C: Mmhm.

I2: What are you doing now?

I1: I'm not sure. [Laughter] Once you tie it and the end opens up, when it's finished and you're ready to use it, how is this fastened?

C: You use leather.

I1: Leather, tie it with leather?

C: **Right here, you use some stuff, you...**

I1: He knows how to do it.

I2: Mmhm.

[Interruption in tape]

[Speaking Choctaw 23:14-23:19]

I2: We're gonna use the tape recording to record your voice, so. [Laughter] Is it okay if you **come in?**

C: [Laughter] I don't know.

[Speaking Choctaw 23:25-23:52]

I1: Did you used to play stickball?

K: Yeah.

I1: I hear it's a pretty rough game, did you like it or was it—

K: Yeah, I used to like it.

I2: Do you still play?

K: Yeah.

I1: Could you tell us how you play the game so we could have it down? You know, tell us the rules and how you play and some tips and stuff for the magazine?

K: [Laughter] I might have forgot all of it.

I1: Could you tell us what you remember?

K: I might tell a little bit.

I1: Oh, that would be good, whatever you know.

K: The object is to score to by twelve. Wear a mitt and have a runner score twelve goals with a mitt.

[Speaking in Choctaw 24:54-26:20]

I1: Well, has the game changed very much from like when you were a kid?

K: Not too much. Still play like this, just like that [Choctaw word 26:30].

I1: What's [Choctaw word 26:31]?

K: Like score. Have to make twelve score if you want to have a win.

I1: Twelve on the team?

K: No. Score.

I1: Now it's how many?

K: Score.

I1: Oh, score.

K: Yeah.

[Speaking Choctaw 26:50-29:17]

I1: Do you remember how the game first started? I mean originally, a long time ago?

K: That's what I was talking about.

I1: That's what you were talking about?

K: Yeah.

[Speaking Choctaw 29:31-30:07]

I1: Some people told me that they used to play a long time ago to settle arguments and to settle land disputes. Is that true? Like winner would, you know take— like if someone was arguing over a boundary, well, one little group of people said it was theirs and the other group said it was theirs, would they play stickball, and the winner would take it? Really? Was that true or—

K: Yeah.

[Speaking Choctaw 30:26-34:00]

K: Barcom King.

I1: Barcom?

K: Uh-huh.

I: B?

K: B-A-R-C-O-M.

I1: King?

K: K-I-N-G.

[Break in recording]

[Speaking Choctaw 34:27-35:04]

K: Hickory, huh?

I2: Uh-huh.

I1: Ask him where.

[Speaking Choctaw 35:08-37:50]

[Scraping and hitting noises, Singing 36:25-36:34]

[Interruption in tape]

I3: Laura, how fast can they make stickball sticks?

[Speaking Choctaw 37:49-37:54]

I3: How long does it take?

I2: He says that if he does them regular, it probably—

[Break in recording]

I2: How long?

C: I guess it's two pairs per day.

I2: Two per day? God. That's fantastic.

[Speaking Choctaw 38:20-38:34]

I2: Two sticks. Mmhm.

[Speaking Choctaw 38:34-38:47]

I2: Could you translate it in English?

C: Oh, uh— [Laughter] Smooth out this part and the rest of this.

I3: What takes the most time?

C: This does. [Laughter] This is supposed to be the most.

[Speaking Choctaw 39:10-40:29]

[Interruption in tape]

I1: Did you father or anybody ever tell you about the game being different? Over the years, maybe when your father's father played it, did he still play it for the same reasons, or just for fun?



C: Since that time, we played for fun.

I1: **Did he play that way?**

C: I don't know. The way I heard it, they used to play for some celebrations.

I1: Instead of fighting, you'd play stickball or whatever?

C: [Inaudible 41:20]

[End of interview]

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