

JACKSON, WILLIAM C.

INTERVIEW

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Jas. S. Buchanan,
Investigator,
December 28, 1937.

an Interview with Mr. William C. Jackson,
407 North K Street, Muskogee.

I was born August 8, 1894, on what was known as the J. O. Cobb place two miles east of Muskogee. My father was William S. Jackson who came to the Indian Territory in 1887. He returned to Illinois, his native home, and later came back to the territory, eventually settling near Muskogee. Shortly after I was born the family moved from the Cobb place to the Clint Hardishell place, one and one half miles south of the Cobb place, where they resided until father bought from Jim Conley four Cherokee claims consisting of three hundred and twenty acres, the land being a part of the old Conley ranch which was situated just east of the Reed ranch across Coody Creek south of Muskogee.

Father retained possession of the lease on the Conley land and engaged in farming and stock raising until his death in 1909. In the later years of his life he also engaged in the contracting business with C. N. Naskell. In this connection he had the contract and

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built the grade for the Ozark and Cherokee Central Railroad, (which is now the Frisco) from Muskogee to the Arkansas River. He was also associated with Mr. Haskell in the development of additions to Muskogee and the construction of paving.

In his farming activities, he was the first farmer to bring a steam thrashing machine into this part of the country.

In 1900 there was quite an area between Frozen Rock and Brushy Mountain schools in which there was no school. Father, with the cooperation and assistance of neighbors, namely; Lige Kelly, John Kelly, George Crittendon, George Price, Morg Compton, Sam Montgomery and Bill Moth built the little school house known as the Sally Brown School located on the old Texas Trail about $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles east of York Street and one half mile south of Coody Creek. This school was built by personal donations from citizens of the community and started as a subscription school, my sister, Etta Jackson, being the first teacher. The Cherokee children of the community attended the school and their

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tuition and the cost of books were paid by the Government. My first term of school was at this little school. The school was situated on the opposite side of the Texas Trail from our home and one quarter of a mile north. I remember one evening about time for school to be dismissed a herd of cattle started to pass the school, being driven from the Nip Blackstone ranch to Muskogee for shipment and all we children were compelled to remain in the school house until long after dark before the last of the herd had passed and we could go home. That was the last large herd of cattle I remember being brought into Muskogee over the old trail for shipment.

There has been much discussion of late as to the exact location of the old Texas Trail past Muskogee. The old trail leaving the junction of the roads from the Nevins and Sullivan ferries ran mostly south through the valley east of Bacons and the Blind School and crossed Coody near where I was born. That was for years the only ford on Coody Creek in that community nearly one mile east of York Street. The old stage

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line between Muskogee and Fort Smith, leaving Muskogee ran in a southeast direction and passed just north of where the old iron post stands on the Wade place and came into the Texas Trail at the ford on Coody Creek, then followed the Texas Trail about three miles to a point where it branched off the trail in a southeast direction on its way by McClain and on to Webbers Falls where it crossed the Arkansas River. I remember there was an old sign that stood in the south junction of these roads when I was a boy directing travelers on the Texas road and the stage line road and it had a large pile of rocks around the base of it to support it and to keep the prairie fires from burning it down. At the south junction of the Texas Trail and the stage line, the Texas Trail bore a little to the west and passed the town of Oktaha about one half mile to the east. The reason I remember this road so well we traveled it in hauling cotton to the gin at Oktaha because we received more there for the cotton than we would paid in Muskogee.

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In 1900 I was married to Edna Adams of Buffalo, Missouri. Two girls, twins, were born to us. My wife died in 1932. In 1934 I married Elsie Roff, daughter of John and Marmie Roff of El Reno.

My mother died in 1936. She and father are both buried in Greenhill Cemetery, Muskogee.