



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

McKINNEY, L. D.

INTERVIEW

12331

Field Worker's name Johnson H. Hampton

This report made on (date) December 3, 1937 1937

1. Name Mr. L. D. McKinney, a Pioneer

2. Post Office Address Antlers, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) \_\_\_\_\_

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month March Day 1 Year 1871

5. Place of birth State of Iowa

6. Name of Father E. L. McKinney Place of birth Iowa

Other information about father \_\_\_\_\_

7. Name of Mother Elizabeth McKinney Place of birth Iowa

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 \_\_\_\_\_.

Johnson H. Hampton  
Investigator  
December 3, 1937

Interview with  
Mr. L. D. McKinney  
Antlers, Oklahoma.

I was born March 1, 1871, in the state of Iowa; we moved from there to Wyoming, lived there for a while and then moved to the Indian Territory in December, 1887. I was about seventeen years old when we moved to this country.

My father's name was E. L. McKinney and my mother's name was Elizabeth McKinney. My father was in the Civil War and served through the War and after the War he and my mother and myself moved from there to Wyoming and from there we moved to this country. We made all this trip in a covered wagon.

When we landed in this country, we located on Red River, that is at the mouth of Blue Creek and Red River. We rented a place known as Lake West Farm, where we lived for about a year. We made one crop there. We lived in a log house at this place and had no furniture except what we brought in our

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wagon. We then moved to Jackfork County and located at a place called Rodney, a small sawmill town on the river. The sawmill was located on the bank of Kiamichi River. The first sawmill that was built there was built by a man named Moyer. This man came from Michigan; he had a water mill there which cut logs, making lumber. He built a dam across this river and the logs were floated down to the dam and were hoisted up to the saw by chains. Mr. Moyer sold this sawmill to two men, Mr. Ash and Mr. Ferguson, who ran the mill for several years, cutting the fine yellow pine that grew on the mountains. The timber was large and fine and there was lots of white oak timber also on the mountains. My father and I worked at this mill for several years; after they cut all the good timber they then moved their mill somewhere else. The lumber at that time was not worth much; it was worth about \$5.00 per thousand for number 1 lumber and they had no 2 lumber at

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all. They would burn all the # 2 lumber because they did not care to bother with the lower grade of lumber.

The sawmills did not get back out in the mountains at that time; they were along the Frisco Railroad where they could ship their lumber. These men had a planer at this mill where they would plane the lumber and load it on the cars and ship it to Kansas City, where they had several lumber yards. I worked for them until they moved away and I then went to work at another mill. I have worked at sawmills all of my life; I never did farm any, except a small garden.

When I first landed in this country very few white people lived here and they were mostly around the sawmill camps. None out in the country away from the sawmill camp. The sawmillers' children grew up wild; they had no schools for them nor did they have church for them to attend, so they just grew up wild around those sawmills at that time.

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There was plenty of wild game here then, deer, turkeys, bears, plenty of fish in the river and plenty of small game, ~~squirrels~~ and the like. The sawmillers lived on them, for at that time they had no hogs to eat so they would get out and kill game for their meat. They usually would get out on Sundays to get their meat when the whole camp would get out and kill what they needed for that week for they did not have time during the week days on account of having to work at the mill.

I remember one time there was a white man who had married an Indian woman who lived on the river and they accused him of stealing a hog that belonged to some widow. Of course he was under the jurisdiction of the Choctaw Court, so they arrested him and put him under bond for trial at the District Court which was held between the two Boggy's. Three of us white men went to hear his trial, so they got ready to try him for the hog stealing and they got their jurors all sworn and

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got ready. He had three Choctaw lawyers to defend him and there <sup>were</sup> ~~there~~ about that many to prosecute him. They went into trial after they got through with the arguments in the case and the jury went out and convicted him for stealing the hog and sentenced him to thirty-nine lashes on his bare back. That was the penalty for stealing, but before they got ready to administer the lashes on his bare back, during the night, he got rabbit in his feet and ran off and went to New Mexico and never did come back but his family finally went to him, so he beat his whipping by running off.

They whipped several Choctaw boys who stood their ground and did not run off. It did not look like they were whipping them very heavy but the blood flowed from their bare backs. That was the only time I ever saw whipping done by the courts.

I was at Rodney when the Locke and Jones war was on. I did not see the fight they pulled off

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at Locke's house at the time but I saw the house after that and it was shot all to pieces and looked like that the whole house had been shot. The Lockes had their men across the Kiamichi River all armed up to their teeth with pistols and rifles, and the town was full of them carrying their rifles in their hands and pistols buckled on them like they were meaning business. The Jones men were stationed at Goodland but before they got together a company of soldiers came down and put a stop to the fight so no one was hurt.

I have lived among the Choctaws ever since I came here and have sold them lumber, hogs and anything they wanted and have sold them lots of things on credit but never lost anything on them; they always came right up and paid me up what they owed me; they would come and pay me what they owed me without my asking them for it. I have made a good many coffins for them and have not charged them for making these coffins. Several died from sickness and some of them were



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killed by other Choctaws; they would fight and kill one another but they never did bother the white people at all. They were good people and are all my friends and I can speak a good word for them at any time.

I am now living at Antlers, working in a sawmill.