

JOHNSON, JENNIE

INTERVIEW

#12006

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Hummingbird and Bigby
Investigators
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An interview with Jennie Johnson
3 miles southeast of Lyons, Okla.

Jennie Johnson, a full blood Cherokee, was born in the state of Georgia March 18, 1857. She was the oldest daughter of John Johnson and Anna Johnson, both Cherokees, who remained in Georgia when the emigrants came to their new home in 1838.

The family of Johnsons started with the emigrants when they started to their new home. After travelling several days with the rest of the Cherokees they went back to their homes in Georgia. They remained in that state for twenty-five years. After the Civil War started these Cherokees came to the new Cherokee Nation west of the Mississippi.

There were about fifty families in this group. Unlike the emigrants their transportation was paid to the Indian Territory. They landed at Vinita in the Cherokee Nation. Their people who came here twenty-five years earlier came to Vinita with their wagons to meet them. They scattered all over the Cherokee Nation.

The Cherokees were already a well settled people when they came here. They had to build homes on the claim of their folks. The family of Johnsons settled about five

miles south of the present town of Stilwell. There were only four members of the family who came over to this country. They have all died but Jennie. She now lives about three miles southwest of the town of Lyons.

EDUCATION

Mrs. Johnson did not receive any education in the poor schools of the Cherokee Nation. Her father was one of those Cherokees who did not believe in the education of Cherokees. At that time there were several who believed that education was a wrong thing for a Cherokee to receive; that it taught them to be crooked with their tribe. The things which the Cherokee children had been taught were what caused the removal.

CHURCH

There were not any churches in this part of the Flint District at that time. The services were held at people's homes. The nearest church was at Big Shed. When Jennie came to this country the court house at Flint was a small building about 14 X 16 feet. At this place the Cherokees held their court. There was not even a store near this place. The nearest trading point was at Evansville, Arkansas. The other place

was at Dutch Mills, farther north. This was also their milling point.

The Johnson family came here during the Civil War. They only remained in the Cherokee Nation a few months and went away to the state of Kansas. They remained in that state until the close of the war. Her father served in the Northern army.

For a long time they were not allowed to stake a claim* in the Cherokee Nation. But finally they were allowed to do so.

* The writer, Gus Hummingbird, probably means that they were denied their citizenship in the Cherokee Nation.