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BUTLER, W. A.

INTERVIEW.

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Choctaw Nation  
Antlers-1885

BUTLER, W. A. INTERVIEW.

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Interview with W. A. Butler.  
Born March 1, 1862.

I was born in Sebastian County, Arkansas, on March 1, 1862.

I passed through Antlers, Oklahoma, in 1885, but did not stay but a few days. I looked over the town, and liked the looks of it, so in 1889, at the age of 27 years, I moved to Antlers with my family. It was a very small place when I moved here. It was then Choctaw Nation, Indian Territory. I have been here ever since and have seen the town grow, and of course I contributed my part in making the town what it is now.

When I first moved here I rented a small box house from an Indian by the name of Shub Locke. He was not a full-blood Indian, however; he must have been a half-breed. In fact the land surrounding the town belonged to the Locke family.

As for the furniture I had when I moved here, it was just what I could get in the wagon. In fact I had no furniture to speak of. I had a bedstead, and some dishes, and a rolling pin, and a few quilts—that was about all I had in the way of furniture.

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I moved here because I saw better opportunities here to make a good living for my family, and possibly to make some money. At that time it was a good place to live. There was lots of wild game such as deer, turkey, and plenty of fish in the creeks. A man did not have to work very hard to make a good living here then. Our fuel was right at our door. All we had to do was to get out and cut all the wood we wanted to burn and it did not cost us anything. We had a dug well on the place I rented so we had plenty of water.

When I landed here I had a good mule team and two good milk cows. I rented a farm and made crops here where the town is now. There were no houses much when I moved here, so I farmed the land just north of the town, which is a part of the town now, and made a good crop on the land.

I did not hunt very much for I bought all the venison meat we wanted. I could buy the meat-that is the hams-for 50¢ per pair. and all the wild turkeys I wanted at a very low price, and also fish which I bought from the Indians, who would bring them into town to sell. There were three or four little stores here when I came

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so I bought all of my food stuff here in Antlers-that is at home.

Antlers, Indian Territory, Choctaw Nation, was just a small town, and it is still here. All of my dealings with the Indians were satisfactory. I never lived among a better class of <sup>people</sup> /in my life. I have lived here practically all of my life and have dealt with them in my stores. Nearly all of the Indians who knew me traded with me. They were honest; they never did beat me at any time in our dealings; if anyone got anything on a credit and told me when he would pay it, he was there on that date and paid off. I never dealt with a better people than the Indians.

I have lots of Indian friends among them. In fact all that know me are my friends. Never did have any trouble with any of them as long as I have lived here among them.

I still have some dishes, and one rolling pin and a pitcher that I brought with me when I moved here is about seventy-five years or hundred years old. I still have some things that I brought here with me.

I ran a harness shop and a shoe shop for several years I now am running a hardware store right here in Antlers, where I moved to when I left Arkansas.