

FELIKATUBBEE, LEWIE.

INTERVIEW

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

7067

Field Worker's name Johnson H. HamptonThis report made on (date) August 5 193 7

1. Name Lewie Felihkatubbee
2. Post Office Address Antlers, Oklahoma, Finley Route
3. Residence address (or location) _____
4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month September Day 25 Year 1892
5. Place of birth Near Finley, Oklahoma
6. Name of Father Gilbert Felihkatubbee Place of birth Finley, Okla.
Other information about father _____
7. Name of Mother Salian Felihkatubbee Place of birth Finley, Okla.
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 _____.

An Interview with Lewie Felihkatubbe
Antlers, Oklahoma, Finley Route.
Johnsen H. Hampton, Field Worker
August 5th, 1937.

I was born near what is now Finley, Oklahoma, it was then Cedar County, Chectaw Nation, on September 25, 1892. My father's name was Gilbert Felihkatubbee and my mother's name was Salian Felihkatubbee. They lived near Finley. I don't think that they came from Mississippi for I never heard them say anything about it. I think that they were raised in this country, they lived near Finley until their death.

I did not know the name of my grandfather nor my grandmother. They both died before I was born so I don't know anything about them. I don't know whether they came from Mississippi or not; if they did I never heard of it. From what I can hear of them they were located near the place where my father lived, and I don't know if Grandfather was in the Civil War or not.

My father was in the Civil War and served all during the war. He joined the Southern army like all other Chectaws. He said that they had a battle with some Indian soldiers somewhere. He didn't know who they were but he thought that it

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must have been the Cherekees for they had joined the Northern army in the Civil War. They fought a good fight, he said. I don't know under what command he was nor under what officers. All the soldiers he was with were Choctaw Indians.

He said that they had a hard time while in the army. They had to ride without anything to eat nor any water to drink. They would find water in a puddle hole and drink that, on the road. Some of the Indians froze to death in the winter, and some of them would get sick and die for the want of attention. They were not fixed to take care of the sick so if one got sick he just died. Smallpox got among the soldiers and killed a good many of them; others came home and spread the smallpox among the Choctaws at home and a good many of them died. They did not know what to do with the disease when it spread among them so the only thing to do was to die, and of course they were afraid of the smallpox so they would not help with those who were sick so the family had to do all the work. After one would die, they rolled him up in a sheet and put him in the grave without a ceremony of any kind.

We had a little farm. It was about five or six acres. The Choctaws didn't have large farms. They did not work much either so the five or six acres was about all they needed; just enough to raise their corn for their corn bread. They raised

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corn, beans and potatoes to eat, but not much of anything else. They did not have much flour to eat for they did not have the money with which to buy their flour, coffee and sugar. On Sundays they would have flour, bread and coffee and sugar. They parched corn for coffee during the week days to save the coffee and the flour too. They beat their corn to make the meal for use in the week days, they would beat this corn in a mortar to make meal. They made hominy the same way, all the Indians made meal the same way.

We had a few cattle and hogs but we had only work ponies which we farmed with and used to pull the wagon when we went to meetings.

There were some Chectaws that had lots of wild ponies and cattle in our community. The country was open so it did not cost them anything to raise the stock and they did not have to feed them during the winter for the grass was green all through the winter, and lots of cane on the creeks for them to eat. They would go down into the bottoms during the winter and in the spring they would come out on the hills for the summer. They were wild. We had some wild cattle on the mountains.

We did not know who they belonged to so we would go out and kill one and then would distribute the meat among the Indians. There were lots of wild ponies in the mountains. After the Whites began to settle the country they disappeared; I think that they were all killed out.

I don't know of any Ghost Town nor cow trails nor ceremonial ground in this country. They might have had these things in the western part of the state but in this part, we had one trail through this country and that was the Military Trail which ran from Fort Smith to Fort Towsen, on to old Doaksville.

The Choctaw Indians I don't think knew of the Indian Agency at all until the Dawes Commissioners came down and made an agreement with the Choctaws to take their land in severalty, which they did. After the land was taken up in severalty then the commissioners were located at Muskogee, and they might have had an agency but I did not know of it.

Some time in 1893 the Choctaws got a payment. I have been told but I don't know of it myself for I did not get it but I guess some of the folks got it for me and spent it. It was several years after that they began to get pay-

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ments and they got several; then the last payment they got was the ten dollar one. They have not gotten any more payments since then.

I know of only one ferry boat that was in this part of the country. It was run by one V. M. Locke on the Kiamichi River. He ran it until the state built a bridge across the river. He ran this boat for a long time. Whether he had a charter or not I don't know. It was the only one that crossed the river that I know of.

I don't know anything about spinning wheels. I never saw one run. I did see one hanging up against the wall at a neighbor's house; what they did with it I don't know. And I never played an Indian Ball game. I saw a game played by the neighbor boys but it was too rough for me to attempt to play.

I have been to the Indian camp meetings and I have been to the cries as the white people call them. They would announce the cry several days ahead of time; then they would camp at the place the night before. The next day about eleven o'clock, the preacher would preach the memorial and then they would get around the grave and all cry, and after the cry was over they would eat dinner. After dinner they would all go home.

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I went to school at Goodland for two terms. This school I attended was run by the Presbyterian Church. I am sorry that I did not get to go any longer, for I am not able to read nor write in English at all, nor can I speak English at all.

I am a fullblood Choctaw Indian and all of my parents were fullblood. I have lived among them all of my life, and will live with them as long as I live. I am now living about thirteen miles north of Antlers, Oklahoma.