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

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Field Worker's name Bradley BolingerThis report made on (date) June 10 19341. Name Ada V. Hall2. Post Office Address Wilburton, Oklahoma General Delivery3. Residence address (or location) Edge of rural settlement4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month January Day 1 Year 18805. Place of birth Fort Smith, Arkansas6. Name of Father William J. Mickie Place of birth TennesseeOther information about father Died at age of 75-buried at Wilburton.7. Name of Mother Lizzie Mickie Place of birth Near Ft. SmithOther information about mother Died and buried in Wilburton cemetery.

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 ADA V. HALL
Living in small rural settlement on the
outskirts of Wilburton.
Field Worker, Bradley Bolinger

EARLY DAY SETTLER

I am now seventy-seven years of age. I was born at Fort Smith, Arkansas, January 6, 1860. My father and mother lived then near what is now Wister, Okla. My father and his uncle operated a trading post near what is now Wister, Oklahoma in the year of 1860. My father spoke both the Choctaw and the Chickasaw Indian language and did lots of trading with the Choctaw tribe.

My father was enlisted in the Confederate Army during the Civil War and I believe in 1862 he was enlisted under Colonel Carroll in a mounted brigade. He was injured by a falling horse that he had mounted on near Fort Smith and was mustered out of the service on account of this injury. He returned home and got better and enlisted again in Colonel Jack McCurtain's Brigade. This Colonel McCurtain was a brother of the Green McCurtain, Governor of the Choctaw tribe. He traveled all over the Choctaw Nation he tells me trying to rid the Nation of the Federal Yankees as they called them in those days. This was also a Choctaw regiment commanded by Colonel McCurtain. When my father came out of this regiment

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he returned to his father's place which was called in the Choctaw language Ho-Buch³Oe. This was about one and one-half miles south of what is now Wister, Oklahoma.

Colonel McCurtain of the brigade that my father belonged to owned and controlled a lot of land in the Choctaw Nation about two miles south of what is now Wilburton, Oklahoma. Mr. McCurtain had lots of cattle ranging on this land and my father went to work for him in the operation of this ranch.

I was moved back to Fort Smith when I became of school age. I went to school there for six years. Then my father moved me back to the Territory. I guess I received all the schooling possible in those days.

I remember the first railroad to be built through this immediate country; it was built to McAlester in 1876. There was nothing to McAlester in those days; it was little more than a settlement of a few wooden shacks. My father was still taking care of the McCurtain land and stock.

J. J. McAlester operated a trading post along where North McAlester is now situated and we had to go up there quite often, traveling about forty miles. This trip was

made by wagon and team and would take about four days to make there and back; there were hardly any roads in this country then and you had to cross the creeks and high banks. There was one that came through this country going from Fort Smith to Mountain Station about nine miles southwest of what is now Wilburton and on to what was called Boggy Depot, and is still called by this name, in Atoka County. This road went to the Texas border.

It was my experience with the fullblood Choctaw tribe in this country in the early day that they did make very good neighbors to the white settlers. They very seldom visited with the whites. They seemed to just stay around their own cabin. Only when there was some kind of Indian gathering such as a big Indian meeting and Indian Cry. They would gather at these places in large numbers, cook and eat out on the ground. Sometimes these meetings would last several days. My experience with the Choctaw tribe was that they were against the white settlers marrying the Choctaw women, especially the fullblood women marrying the white man. This was permitted on some occasions.

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Jack McCurtain a brother of Green McCurtain got a law approved that no white man could marry a fullblood Indian woman until he had placed fifty dollars with the Indian Department entitling him to what they called in those days intermarried citizenship. This of course would entitle the white man to the same privileges as the fullblood Choctaw Indian.

At different times of the year you could not travel any distance on account of high water in the creeks and streams of this country and our small trading posts that were scattered around in this country would be out of anything to make bread out of so when a time like this came up and you were unable to obtain material to make bread out of, the white settlers would build what we called the ash hopper. A large log about eight feet long was fixed and laid on two rocks and a large groove was cut in the top of the log; great heavy boards were split from timber and placed in this large groove in the log where the lower ends of the boards fit together in this groove. These boards were slanted outward and were about six feet tall and braced on a frame to hold them up on the sides and the ends. All the ashes of the wood that was burned around the house and everywhere were placed in this.

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When the hopper was about half full of ashes the white settlers would pour water in the large hopper. When enough water was poured in the hopper to seep through the ashes there was a container placed at the lower end of the hopper, which was built with the back end higher than the front in order that it would have a drainage. When this water seeped through all these ashes it would slowly drop out in this container at the lower end and would be of a red color. This was called ash hopper lye. This home made lye was used on the corn raised to make whole grain hominy. It would cut the husk off the grain very clean and when the grains of corn were through soaking in this lye mixture they had swelled and were clean. No husks or any other substances were left on them. This was used in many instances in the place of bread and made a very good food within itself.

I have seen many wild turkeys in the Choctaw Nation.

I have seen the wild ones come up to the neighborhood of your farm cabin home and if you were raising tame turkeys they would have great fights and many times I have had to go out in the edge of the woods and timber and separate my tame drove from the fighting of the wild drove of turkeys.

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When the Choctaw man or woman lost their husband or wife through death they would never think of marrying again until after the next big Indian Cry and meeting, when all the funeral services and crys were held which happened about two or three times a year. After this celebration was over the widowed Choctaw, man or woman was permitted to marry again to someone else. This, as best of my knowledge, was not a Choctaw law but only a tradition closely lived up to by the Indian tribe.

There were several Choctaw Indians that had quite a bit of education before they left the south. These were the ones that were selected to run the Choctaw Government in this country in those days; many of them were sent to Washington to intercede for the welfare of the Indian tribe.