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

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Field Worker's name Johnson H. HamptonThis report made on (date) July 30 1937

1. Name L. C. Kennedy
2. Post Office Address Antlers, Oklahoma
3. Residence address (or location) _____
4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month September Day 20 Year 1874
5. Place of birth Titus County, Texas

6. Name of Father _____ Place of birth Texas

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother _____ Place of birth Texas

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 _____.

INTERVIEW WITH L. C. KENNEDY
Antlers, Oklahoma
Johnson H. Hampton, Field Worker

I was born in Titus County, Texas, on the 20th day of September, 1874. I moved with my father and my step-mother to the Indian Territory, Choctaw Nation, and located at Davenport which is a switch yard on the Frisco Railroad. I was about fourteen years old when we moved to this country. When we moved here we located in the cedar brakes near the Kiamichi River. We lived in a tent for some time, then we built a log house out of cedar. It was chinked and daubed with mud; we had a lumber floor.

When we moved here the Frisco Railroad had not been built long, maybe a year before we came. We came over here with an ox team and a covered wagon, and we came over by ourselves. When we came we went to work cutting cedar posts for a man by the name of John Riley. I don't remember what we got for them, but anyway we lived on what we made. We would cut and split the posts and haul them to the switch on the railroad. There were lots of cedars where we were camped, and we worked in other timber besides cedar. We had a hard time getting started after we moved here.

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After the first year we were here we leased some land from an Indian by the name of Coleman Nelson. We cleared and put in cultivation about twenty-five acres in the bottom where we raised corn. We did not raise any cotton for at that time there were no gins where we could gin our cotton, and no market for cotton. The closest market was at Paris, Texas, and it was too far to market the cotton. We did not have to work very hard to make all the corn we wanted, and have some to sell.

We came to this country for it afforded better opportunities for new settlers; and it was an ideal country where a man could make money and raise what he wanted. We did make money here, but of course spent it. We had plenty to eat, much more than we had in Texas. We got good money for our work, it was not much, but everything else was cheap so with what we made we could buy lots of stuff for a little money. What we sold we got good money for; it was not much but it didn't cost us anything to raise food. We had cattle, hogs to sell every fall and maybe a yearling. We could not raise many cattle for under the Choctaw law a non-citizen could not have more than ten

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head of cattle and then he paid a five dollar permit. If he did pay he could have as many as ten head, and a work team to farm with. A single hand would have to pay two dollars and a half per year for his permit to work for anyone. This permit went to the county from which it was collected. We could buy a county script for very little so it did not cost us much to live here.

We did not have any furniture to speak of, just what we brought in our ox wagon. One day this man Coleman Nelson, the man we were working for, came over and saw what furniture we had. The next day the local train brought us two bedsteads, and he did not charge anything for them. He was a fine Indian, and was running a store at the time. At that time there were not but two or three stores in Antlers.

When we first landed in this country it was full of wild game, such as deer, turkeys, and lots of fish in the river. All we had to do was to put our gun on our shoulder and get out in the hills and kill a deer in a few hours. If we wanted a turkey we would go down to the

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bottom and kill all the turkeys we wanted. The people at that time did not kill more than they wanted, they were saving with the game. If we felt like eating fish we would go down to the river and kill all the fish we wanted in just a little while. Time has changed now and there are no fish in the river, and very few deer and no turkeys at all.

When we first located here there were not many white people in this country. There were none in the country, and just a few in the town and some around the sawmills. The pine timber was fine in the country then and some of the biggest pine I ever saw grew in the mountains. There were white oaks and cedar but now those trees are all gone and the pine timber is about all gone.

My father and step-mother both died here and are buried in the Antlers Cemetery. I think that my father was among the first to be buried in this cemetery after it was laid out for a cemetery.

I have traded and worked with Indians ever since I have lived here, and have mixed and mingled with them ever since I was a boy. I never did have any trouble

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with any of them. If you treated them right they would treat you right. They are all fine people and just as honest as they can be. I never lived among better people than the Indians and they are all friends of mine. At that time there used to be lots of fullblood Indians but now there are ~~many~~ but a few living. They have all died out except a few fullbloods living around Antlers. Of course I have never lived among any other tribe than the Choctaw and they are the only ones I know about.

I never went to school so I am not able to write or read, just barely can write my name.