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Choctaw Nation
Antlers
Negro
Living Conditions

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

Field Worker's name Johnson H. Hampton

This report made on (date) July 29, 1937

1. Name Grant Fowls

2. Post Office Address Antlers, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month September Day 7 Year 1867

5. Place of birth Hempstead County, Arkansas.

6. Name of Father _____ Place of birth Arkansas

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother _____ Place of birth Arkansas

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 _____.

Johnson H. Hampton,
Field Worker,
July 29, 1937.

Interview with Grant Fowlks (Negro)
Antlers, Oklahoma

I was born in Hempstead County, Arkansas, on the 7th day of September, 1867. I was about twenty-three years old when my father and mother moved to the Choctaw Nation.

I moved over here with my father and mother, and we came over in a covered wagon with an ox team pulling the wagon. We came to Antlers which was a small railroad town on the Frisco Railroad, where we leased some land from an Indian about one and one-half miles east of Antlers; moved on it, put up a box house, dug a well on the land, then started to clearing up the land that we had leased. We put about twenty-five acres in cultivation, and we raised lots of corn on this land as it was bottom-land. We raised some cotton but we did not try to raise much for there was no market for cotton in Antlers, and we had to take our cotton to Paris, Texas to sell.

We did all of our trading at Antlers. It was a small place then with about two stores and a Post office but we could get what we wanted in those stores, so we did not trade anywhere else. One of these stores was owned and managed by an Indian. Several years after

wards, he sold out and quit managing the store and the other store was operated by ^awhite man by the name of Julius Almond. There were about one hundred people in the town at that time. At the time we moved here the country was open; there were no houses to speak of from where we lived to town. There were no houses at all; it was all in the woods, no farms could be seen, and most of the Indians lived away from the town across the river several miles away. None of them lived in town, but on Saturdays they would all come to town, and it would be full of Indians. There were but few white people in town, and none in the country at that time.

We had no furniture to speak of when we arrived here, only what we could bring in our wagon, mainly just a camping outfit. After the first year we made enough to buy our furniture and get our cattle, hogs and other things we needed on the farm. We sold corn for from one dollar per bushel to two dollars per bushel. We did not get much for our cotton for we had to haul it so far to sell. We did not feed our stock any corn or any roughness for there was plenty of grass on the hills and plenty of cane in the creek bottoms that they could feed on and keep fat. Every winter we would kill our meat. We had plenty of meat to

eat all the time and it did not cost us anything for the hogs ran out on the range where they got fat ready to be killed for the winter.

We moved to this country for we had been told that it was a good country, and that it offered an opportunity for people who wanted to come, and live among the Indians. I have lived here since I came and have made money, and have made a good living for my family, but now the country is filled up with people and it is not like it once was. I have lived here long enough to see the town grow from nothing to what it is now; and the wilderness turn to farms and no schools to fine schools. The negroes did not have school for several years after I came here, but now they have a good school, and from few white people to ^{where} the country is full of them. When I moved here the country was full of wild games, deer, turkeys and plenty of fish on the creeks, where I lived. When I wanted a deer to eat I would take my gun and go out a few steps from the house and kill a deer, or a turkey at any time. We could go down to the river and catch all the fish we wanted in a little while, in fact this country was God's Country then.

We never had any trouble with the Indians here. We had lots of dealings with them, trading or selling them any thing

they wanted. If they had money it was all right, if they didn't it was all right for they would pay when they got the money. They were honest, and you could depend on their word for anything. In fact I never lived among better people than the Indians. Of course, they would have trouble among themselves and maybe kill one another but they did not bother any one else. If you would let them alone and attend to your own business you would never have trouble with them.

My father and mother both died here and are buried in the Antlers Cemetery. I own some town lots here in town and some farming land which I have made since I came here. I am sure that I will live here until I die.