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

Field Worker's name Marvin G. Rowley

This report made on (date) April 30, 1937

1. Name Montie S. Page

2. Post Office Address Poteau, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) \_\_\_\_\_

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month July Day 22 Year 1869

5. Place of Birth Alabama, Lemar County.

6. Name of Father Buck Davis Place of birth Alabama

Other information about father \_\_\_\_\_

7. Name of Mother Hester Jane Noe Place of Birth Alabama

Other information about mother \_\_\_\_\_

Note: 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 Montie S. Page  
Poteau, Oklahoma.

My name is Montie Page and my maiden name was Montie Davis. I was born in Lemar County, Alabama, July 22, 1869. My father was Buck Davis and my mother was Hester Jane Noe, both born in Alabama.

My father and family moved from Alabama to Old Hartford in 1873; I was about four years old at this time. We lived at what was then known as the old Morsey farm, located about one mile west of Old Hartford. We lived about one year there. In 1874, we moved one mile west of the Indian Territory line or about three miles west of Old Hartford, on Sugar Loaf Creek, one mile east of the Monroe Griffy place. I went to school when we lived there. We lived in the Indian Territory but I walked two miles east into Arkansas, just across the line. I went about one month. My teacher was named Bill Harrel. This was a subscription school and it cost one dollar per month per student.

We next moved to the Monroe Griffy place. I went to school about one mile west of there. This was in the Indian Territory. This was also a subscription school, one dollar a head. I went there about a month and my teacher's name was J. Robbs.

In 1861 we left this place and moved up on the hill west of Traby Lake, now called Poteau City Lake. We lived also close to what is known at this time as Town Creek, near the south end of the lake. I went to school in an old house that had the floor taken up. We sat on the sills for seats. Jim Evans was the teacher. It cost us one dollar a month to go there. I went about one month.

When times got better every one went in together and built a church in the center of the Poteau Graveyard, the graveyard now used south of town. This church was built of big planks. There was no denomination, just everyone of any faith attended. School was held here, also. I went one day. It cost one dollar a month. The teacher was Captain Charley Scott.

When we moved from Sugar Loaf Creek to Tarby Lake, we moved with horses and wagons. When we got to Poteau River, it would be up sometimes, so my father just dumped the stuff on the bank until the water went down. When the water went down we forded it and came on to what is now known as the Slough. We crossed this at the present crossing where the City Dumping Ground is now. The name of the crossing on the river was then called Anderson Ford.

We lived at Tarby Lake in a one-room peeled log house. Had a log smoke house out back. In the house we had three beds and a fireplace.

After a short while after moving to Tarby Lake, my father, Buck Davis, would take a skiff-boat across the river, at the present site of the wagon bridge, just below where the Slough runs into the river. He would take this boat and carry people across and swim their horses to the side of it. Later, he decided to make a ferry boat to use. He cut pine logs and hewed his gunwales, then he went to Pace's Saw Mill, located above the McKenna Fruit

Farm on Cavenal Mountain, to get his lumber for the floors of his ferry boat.

The last load of flooring was being brought by my brother, Garret Davis, when about half way down the mountain the wagon turned over and killed him. He was nineteen years old. He was killed in 1884, and is buried in the Lewis graveyard. This is east of the Dowsey place where we lived before. We took him across the river in the skiff-boat and there was a wagon and team of horses waiting on the other side to take him on to the cemetery.

After my father got the ferry boat made, he took it to the river. On this boat the banisters were about as high as a man's waist, it had an apron at each end. When a team and wagon were on it there was room to walk around it all the way around, easily. When he started to taking people and wagons across, he charged fifty cents and more if the river was up. Later he cut the price because there were many more ways to cross the river.

When the Frisco Railroad started to build the bridge across the Potesu River, they got the stone for the masonry at a quarry on what is now

called Town Creek. They hauled it down to the ferry and father took all of it that they used for the east side, across.

The railroad camp was down below our house close to Town Creek. After the railroad was in and the camp was leaving, I missed my wash kettle, from where I used to wash down on the lake. About thirty years later, the pump station that furnished water for the city and the railroad, pumped the lake dry. I went down to look for my kettle in the lake bed. I saw the rim of it sticking out of the mud so I went down and pulled it out. It had a piece about eight inches wide broken out of the side, it even had some of the old soot on it yet. I took it up home and had it quite a while until some of the kids broke it into several small pieces.

After the railroad was in, my father built a two-story frame house, about one and one-half blocks west of the present Frisco and Kansas City Southern Railroad crossing, north of Poteau. He used a small house for the kitchen, building on to this with the

rest of the house. This small house that he used for the kitchen was used by the railroad camp to live in until they left.

We lived in this two-story house about six or seven years before my mother died. She is buried in the Lewis Graveyard. My father then sold out to Will Page, a fullblood Choctaw. I do not remember just what he got for his property.

My father, Buck Davis, married Mollie James. He married her about three months after my mother died and we did not like it either. Mollie James had the maiden name of Mollie McKenna. She married Davis James, a Choctaw Indian. Davis James shot and killed John Griffy, son of Monroe Griffy. This happened in Will Welch's store, located where the southeast corner of the County Court House laws is now. Davis James left and it is thought by some that he is buried over at Redoak, Oklahoma. Davis James had by Millie McKenna the following children: Esther, Walton, Davis Jr., and Dennis.

My father moved out on Tarby Prairie after his second marriage; his object in moving out there was



to help his step-children get their allotment of land at that place. He lived on the land where Pit Jenson now lives.

My father, Buck Davis, was shot and killed by Dave Mason at Tarby Prairie. He lived about five or six hours after the shooting. He is buried at the Maxey Hill Cemetery about two miles north of Poteau.

South of the present location of the Methodist Church, where the present Ben Harper residence is now, lived a man by the name of Jep Evans. This was when I lived on Tarby Lake. We could hear the Prairie wolves howl, you would think there were a hundred, from the noise they made. Now, Jep Evans had a lot of pigs and these wolves would get lots of his pigs sometimes at night. Game was very plentiful then. We had plenty of deer, turkey, squirrel, rabbits, and fish. When we first came to this part of the country, there was not much of the land cleared. I have made rails for fences, and cleared timber. I, also, have plowed and planted crops myself.

I, Montie Davis, married Robert P. Page, November 2, 1893. Robert had married Salina Willis but she had died. They were both Choctaw Indians. I am a white woman. Bob was a brother to Will Page. After our marriage, we moved over on Church Street in Poteau, we lived there about five years and then moved over at the foot of Cavanal Mountain on the old lady Tarby's place.

The family of Buck Davis and Hester Jane Noe, sons and daughters: (given verbally).

Ida Davis, born 1867, in Alabama. Lives at Redoak, Oklahoma, married Jess Noe.

Lonie Davis, 1871, born in Alabama. Died at Poteau and buried there.

Clayborn Davis, born on Sugar Loaf Creek. Lives at Antlers, Oklahoma.

Garret Davis, died when 19 years old in 1894. Buried in Lewis Cemetery.

Montie S. Davis, born July 22, 1889. Lives at Poteau, Oklahoma.

Gracie Davis, born at Poteau, married Isom Holstead. Lives one mile southwest of Shadypoint, Oklahoma.

Laura Anna Davis, born in the Indian Territory.

Buried in Lewis Graveyard.

Walter Davis, about two years old when he died.

Rufus Davis, about three years old when he died.

P. R. Davis, just a baby when he died.

TOM FULLER

Take a part of a tree trunk, hickory or oak, about two and one-half feet long. Burn a funnel shaped hole in one end of the block of wood, about one foot deep. Then get a piece of oak or hickory sapling, about three or four feet long, cut down to about the right size in diameter to fit the hand, cut all the way up, until about a foot from the end, let this act as the weight for it. Then take a hand full or two of Tom Fuller corn, and put in the hole in the block of wood that was burned out before. This Tom Fuller corn was raised especially for using this way. It had a flatter and more narrow grain than what is now raised.

Take the piece of sapling and put the small end in the hole and jab the corn in the hole, pouring

water in once in a while. Do this until the husk comes off. Then when a sufficient quantity is pounded, take the pounded corn and put it in what we called a "fanner and riddle." This is made of hickory bark and is woven like a basket. It curved on the bottom and sides and is shaped a little bit like a scoop shovel. It is about two and a half feet long. This is used to throw the beaten corn up in the air and let the wind blow out the husks. This leaves a white substance a little like rice only it is not even grained like it. The piece of sapling used to beat the corn with is called a "pestle." Cook with chicken, pork or beef ribs and it sure is good.

Montie Page has a "Choctaw Hymn Book" that belonged to her husband, Bob Page. It was printed in 1872, by the Presbyterian Committee of Publication, Richmond. This is printed in the Choctaw Indian Language. Robert Payne Page was a Thirty-Second Degree Mason. He received his thirty-second degree in Oklahoma City.

Mrs. Montie Page has framed his diploma of this degree. It was on farming and stockraising, die Octobris anno 1908.

Copied from their family Bible, the birth and death record of the family of Robert P. Page and Montie S. Davis: Clemanthy Page was born on the 22nd day of August, 1894. Edward E. Page was born on the 2nd day of August, 1896.

Robert N. Page was born on the 27th day of February, 1899.

Robert P. Page was born on the 6th day of October, 1857.

Montie S. Page was born on the 22nd day of July, 1869.

Clemanthy, daughter of Robert and Montie S. Page, departed this life on the 13th day of August, 1897, aged 2 years, 11 months and 22 days.

Robert Payne, father, departed this life on the 12th day of July, 1913. Age 56 years, 9 months, 6 days.