

SEATON, B. F.

INTERVIEW

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

SEATON, B.F.

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Field Worker's name Johnson H. Hampton,

This report made on (date) April 27, 1938

1. Name Mr. B. F. Seaton,

2. Post Office Address Antlers, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month October Day 11, Year 1859

5. Place of birth Wetspring, 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 6.

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Johnson H. Hampton,
Investigator,
April 27, 1938.

Interview with B. F. Seaton,
Antlers, Oklahoma.

I was born October 11, 1859, in Wetspring, Arkansas, and came to the Indian Territory in 1905. I came over in a covered wagon with another man and his family. One of the reasons we came to this country was that we had heard that it offered good opportunities for young men who wanted to work and make money and a living for their families. We were not making anything where we were living so we just loaded up our wagons and started to this country.

We had a pretty hard time in getting here for there were no roads in the country at that time so it took us several weeks to make the trip and we stopped along the road to hunt and kill whatever we wanted to eat. We finally got here in Antlers and we went out about eight miles northwest of Antlers, where we located on a small creek called Ten Mile Creek. We did not have any furniture except what we brought in our wagon and we did not have a

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house to live in when we got located, we had to build a house. We then leased some land and put it in cultivation, built some out houses on the land and bought what furniture we needed. The first house we built was a log house floored with lumber and then after we got to where we could afford it we built a box house out of lumber.

After we lived on this place for about two years we sold out our lease and moved from there and took up another lease from another Indian. I got a five year lease on this place. I built another house, this one was the same as the other one, a log house. I then built a box house out of lumber, and put the land in cultivation for the five years, then after my time was out on this lease, I moved to another place belonging to an inter-married white man. I lived on his place for about two years, then left there and moved into what was called Cedar County where I rented a farm and lived there for two years, then moved from there back to Pushmataha County and lived there for three years after which I moved into Atoka County. Here I rented land and farmed there for about three years, then moved back to this

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county where I have lived ever since. In all my rounds and different places that I have lived we made some good crops. At that time we could make crops and did not have to work very hard to make them. But it is not so now, I don't know what the trouble is now but the land just don't produce like it did then.

At that time the county was all open and there was not much farming done and there were very few houses to be seen; the houses were very scattered. There were houses that belonged to the Indians but they lived in settlements and several miles apart. At that time nearly all of the Indians had some stock; cattle, hogs and wild ponies out on the range and they sold them very cheap for there was no market for them at any price. We used to work for the Indians and they would pay us with a cow or a hog. We would make rails for them and they would pay us \$1.00 per hundred for the rails and they would pay us \$5.00 per acre for clearing the land. They would also pay us \$1.50 per day for the work we would do for them around the house. They were very liberal in their pay.

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The Indians only had very small farms that they called Tom Fuller patches, about five acres was the limit as to size. Of course, they did not have to farm much for there were lots of game in the country then and they lived on this most of the time anyway, so they did not need a big farm, just enough to make their corn for bread. They would make just enough corn to run them from one year to another for they did not have to feed any stock at any time. The grass was good and lots of range and there were no fences to bother the stock then.

This country was a fine country at that time, lots of good pine timber and oak, cedar and other commercial timber but the sawmills soon cut the timber out and the farmers came in and broke up the land and put it in cultivation, ruined the grass land and killed out the game so the country is not what it used to be and it has gotten to where it won't produce anything hardly.

I used to attend the Indian camp meetings and I have heard their cries but I never did go to see one of them. The Indians have quit their cries since the white people

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came into the country, but they still have their camp meetings. Years ago when they had one of their camp meetings there used to be lots of full blood Choctaws come to the meeting. They would come from everywhere to be at the meeting, but now not many full blood Indians attend the meetings like they used to do. The white people have taken their places and they are the ones that attend the meetings now. The Choctaws have nearly died out. There are very few of them living now to attend their meetings.

I have lived among the Choctaw Indians ever since I have been living in this country and want to say that I have found them to be honest and trustworthy in every way and they are law-abiding and very truthful in all of their dealings. They are good neighbors and are willing to assist anybody in every way possible. They do not bother anybody and especially the white people. They sometimes have a fight occasionally among themselves and may kill one another, still they don't bother any other class of people and to my way of thinking they are

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about the best people that can be found anywhere among any other class of people. I have raised my children among the Choctaws, they have attended school with them and they have associated with them all their lives but they never did have any trouble in any way with them so I can praise the Choctaws for what they are worth.

My parents have both died and are buried in Arkansas at our old home. I am the only one living in my family.