

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

JACKSON, TECUMSAH.

INTERVIEW.

#13413.

Field Worker's name Johnson H. Hampton,

This report made on (date) March 23, 1938

1. Name Tecumseh Jackson, Mississippi Choctaw Full Blood.

2. Post Office Address Soper, Oklahoma. Route #1.

3. Residence address (or location) Ten miles south of Antlers.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month February Day 1 Year 1867.

5. Place of birth Mississippi.

6. Name of Father Sam Jackson Place of birth Mississippi.

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother _____ Place of birth Mississippi.

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 Six.

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Johnson H. Hampton,
Investigator.
March 23, 1938.

Interview with Tecumseh Jackson,
Route #1, Soper, Oklahoma.

I was born February 1, 1867, in Mississippi; I came to the Indian Territory with my family in 1903. My father's name was Sam Jackson and he died when I was a small boy back in Mississippi; Mother came to the Choctaw Nation and died in Bryan County.

There were about four hundred of us who came over together; the Government sent a special train for us and we came over on it. We were living in Mississippi at the time and they just loaded us like a bunch of cattle; loaded us on the train and brought us over to the Choctaw Nation. We came to Atoka to file on our land and we were put off there while some of them went to Ardmore to file on land there in the Chickasaw Nation. We came to the Choctaw Nation some time in October, 1903. After we selected our land we then were sent to places where the land was located and that was some time in November, 1903; the best land had been taken by the native Choctaws so we had to take what they gave us. The Dawes Commissioners selected the land for

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us and then we moved onto these pieces of land; there was a good bunch of us who came to Kent which is a little place on the highway now and took up our abode out about eight or nine miles south of Antlers. After we got located we went to work building our houses and putting the land in cultivation. Of course, we had a hard time for a while for we were new to the country and the country was new to us; we did not know anybody to whom we could go for help; the Government helped us for a while when we first got located and we did very well though. We made our first crop and then we got along pretty well for newcomers to this country.

We got our patent to our land from the Muskogee Indian Agency, then we knew that the land was ours and it was the first time we did own our own land. Of course, we were proud to own land and to call it our home. We were enrolled back in Mississippi as Mississippi Choctaws for we were living there when they came over and enrolled us; after we came over to this country and began to live here we got our payments just the same as the native Choctaw,

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which we were proud to get.

We had no land back in Mississippi; we rented the land that we farmed back there. We raised corn and cotton there; we had to work there to get to rent land to raise enough to live on and after paying our rents we made enough to live on every year. The Choctaws used to be good workers back there but after they came over here and got settled they got to where they were lazy; they had to work back there to get by; they used to make good crops every year back there. We did not have any stock of any kind for we had no place to put them; the only stock we had was our work stock and of course, we had to keep them in the lots all the time but after we came here we raised a few cows and hogs. We raised enough hogs for our meat and had enough milk for our use.

The country was very different to what we were used to and when we got here to our land the country was open; there were no farms to speak of, the land was mostly out and no fences were to be seen where we got located but

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there was some pretty good timber of red oak and post oak. There were no pine trees there but the timber that was on the land was good timber. We soon sold all our timber to the sawmillers and, of course, we have no timber on our land. There were few deer and turkey left yet when we got here and some of the men killed a few of them before they all got away.

After we got located here we built us a church and named it Big Spring Baptist Church; we named it after the one we had back in the old country. At the time we built this church there were a good many Mississippi Choctaws in the neighborhood and we used to have pretty good camp meetings but they are all about dead so there are but few of us living now and the church is about out of the question although the house is still there but the Choctaws who used to attend it have gone to their reward. The white people use it sometimes; I was a member of the Baptist Church back in the old country and some of the others were members of the same church there so when we

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got here we built this church for us to worship in.

Back in Mississippi, north of us several miles, there were some Choctaws who belonged to the Catholic Church; they had a church and a school for the younger Choctaws who could go to school. There were a good many who belonged to this church; nearly all of the Mississippi Choctaws spoke fair English; they learned it for they were among the white people there and it was up to them to learn and most of them did learn to speak the English language.

The four hundred who came over when I did have been scattered over several counties and some of them went to the other nation, that is the Chickasaw Nation, while the bulk of them stayed in the Choctaw Nation. I know of some who went back; they did not like this country so they sold out all the land that they could and went back to live at the old home.

When I was growing up I did not have the opportunity to attend school so I am an uneducated Choctaw but I can

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speak pretty good English which I learned back in the old country.

I have lived pretty well ever since I moved here to this country; I have not made a lot of money but I have made enough to live on and I am glad that I moved to this country. I have made a lot of friends among the native Choctaws and also the white people of the country. I am getting along as good as any other Choctaw, native or Mississippi, and I am going to live here until I am called to get my reward.

My family consists of four boys and two girls and they are getting along just fine; they are going to school every day; they were born and raised here so they are acclimated to this country. I still have some of my land and I am farming it. I have a white man for a son-in-law so I figure I am getting along just fine. I am living about ten miles south of Antlers.