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ANDERSON, TANDY

INTERVIEW

#12059

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ANDERSON, TANDY

INTERVIEW. 12059

FIELD WORKER JOHNSON H. HAMPTON  
Indian-Pioneer History S-149  
November 3rd, 1937.

INTERVIEW WITH TANDY ANDERSON  
Antlers, Oklahoma  
Born September, 1875.  
Sardis, Oklahoma.

Father's name Arlington Anderson  
Born Sardis, Oklahoma.  
Mother's name Louisa Impson  
Born Sardis, Oklahoma.

I was born in September, 1875, near what is now Sardis. My father's name was Arlington Anderson, and my mother's name was Louisa Impson and my grandfather's name was Hotubbee Moore and my grandmother's name was Hattie Anderson, I do not know whether my father or my grandfather came from Mississippi or not, but I do not think they did and I don't know whether they were raised near Sardis or not. I do not think that either one of them was in the Civil War.

This little place Sardis is a small village; it was once called Bunchtown and years ago when I was a boy there was no Sardis nor Bunchtown either.

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The country was wild; no one lived in there but a few Indians and they were pretty well scattered over the hills there.

These Indians lived several miles apart and then, the first thing we knew there were some white people who came in there prospecting and located some asphalt where Sardis is now. They built a little store and gave it the name of Buchtown. They began to dig for asphalt and found a good quantity of it and they hauled it to Tuskahoma, put it into a car and shipped it off; they got lots of asphalt out of this mine, but they finally stopped mining here and never opened the mine again. I don't know what the trouble was.

Antlers is in a valley and some of the country around it is prairie and most of it hills and mountains and there is a pretty good sized creek that runs through this valley which is called Anderson Creek.

When I was a boy, the grass out on the hills

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and prairies were as high as the head of a man on a horse and the grazing for cattle was fine; the cane on the creek was fine so the stock wintered in the bottom and in the mountains and stayed fat all the year around.

There were small farms in the country; the Choctaws had small patches of about five acres. They did not need big farms then for they had all the game that they needed to live on so all they needed was some bread corn, which they raised on their five acres for at that time we could raise all the corn we needed on five acres. The Choctaw women would have to take this corn and put it in a bowl on the end of a block of wood and beat it until they made corn meal. This meal is different from the corn meal we get out of the stores or what they call bolted meal. The Indian women made hominy in the same way they made their meal.

We had about five acres for our farm and we raised corn, potatoes, beans, peas and other vegetables

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and Mother had a good many chickens and we had good many cattle, hogs and ponies.

The stock ran out on the range; there were no wire fences then so the stock was not molested by any one, so they just grew and went wild there. Boys would gather them up once a year for branding; they then were turned loose again to roam where they pleased until another round-up in the Spring.

I never heard of an Indian agency before the enrollment; we might have had one but we Choctaws did not know of it and when the Dawes Commission came down to treat with the Choctaw Indians looking toward dividing the land in severalty instead of holding it in common and then talked about our giving up our laws and giving our tribal affairs over to the Federal Government; then we found out that we had an agency at Muskogee and after the treaty or agreement was made by the Choctaw Nation and the Dawes Commission June 28th, 1898. We had to enroll as Choctaws which we did, thinking that we would take up our land as the Atoka Agreement provided.

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Later on, the Curtis Act was passed wherein we were to take our land in dollars and cents so we took our land in dollars and cents and each Choctaw was allowed \$1,028.41 worth of land. Some got a hundred and sixty acres according to the value placed thereon by the surveyors. Under the Atoka Agreement we were to divide the land equally, let it be what it might, but the Curtis Act superseded the Atoka Agreement and in 1903 they opened up a land office at Atoka, where we had to go to select our land, which we did, and after that we got our land patent from the Muskogee Indian Office.

The first payment the Choctaws got was some time in 1893; they got \$103.00 per head and did not get any more until Woodrow Wilson was elected President and then they got several payments and the biggest payment was about \$300.00 to each person and the least payment was \$10.00 and that

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\$10.00 payment was the last one the Choctaws got. I guess the Choctaws do not have any more money to their credit; the timber land has been sold out and the land that was reserved has been sold; everything has been sold that can be sold except our coal has been sold.

My mother had a spinning wheel which she used to run and in the winter season she would card up some cotton or wool and then she would put these cotton or wool threads on the wheel and spin them into threads; then she would get some knitting needles and knit some socks and mittens for us children. Some of these threads Mother would make into cloth and then she would dye this cloth with some roots and herbs. She would dye this cotton in white, red and black stripes.

My father used to trade at several places; he would go to McAlester, Atoka, Fort Smith, and some times he would go to Demison, Texas; he would



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take a yoke or oxen to make the trip; he bought our groceries from these places until after the Frisco Railroad was built and the little town of Tuskahoma was put up and then he did his trading at this place.

I went to school for about ten years altogether to neighborhood schools. I learned some things but not much; I can speak both languages, Choctaw and English, and can write in English but only a little in Choctaw,

I served in the Choctaw Council at Tuskahoma in 1904 and 1905 when Governor Green McCurtain was the Chief of the Choctaw; that was about the last council we ever held before we lost our tribal government.

I then was appointed Lighthorseman and served until statehood under Chief McCurtain and that was about the only office I ever held under our tribal government.

I am Choctaw Indian; all of my people were Choctaws.

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I have lived among my own tribe all of my life  
and I never was anywhere else except in our  
nation.