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

Field Worker's name Johnson H. Hampton

This report made on (date) June 16th, 1937

1. Name Noel Baker

2. Post Office Address Nashoba, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month September Day _____ Year 1886

5. Place of birth Near Nashoba, Oklahoma.

6. Name of Father Sam McFarland Place of birth Nashoba, Oklahoma

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Anna Baker Place of birth Nashoba, Oklahoma

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 _____.

BAKER, NOEL

INTERVIEW

6366

Interview with Noel Baker
Nashoba, Oklahoma.

I was born sometime in September, 1886, near what is now Nashoba, Oklahoma. At that time there was no post office or store at this place.

My father's name was Sam McFarland, and my mother's name was Anna. After my father died my mother married a man named Baker, so I go by the name of Baker. My father was not in the Civil War, and I don't think that he came from Mississippi and my grandparents did not come from Mississippi either. If they did I never heard them say anything about the move. I don't know what my grandparents' name was for they died before I was born. Father did not tell me who they were nor their names; they lived near Nashoba, where they both died, and my father and mother died there also.

I don't know anything about the war. I heard that they had a war and what the Indians did during the war,

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and about the dances they had during the war, but I don't know about that. You can see that I was born several years after the war, and, of course, would not know anything about it any way.

At the time my father and mother died we had no cemetery where they could be buried, so we just buried them near the house, and there are no markers, so I don't think that I can find their graves. We have a cemetery now where we bury our dead.

Our Indian people here in this country never had much of anything nor did they make beads or anything like that. They did make some pottery, and they made some cloth, which they sold, but after I got to where I could understand I never saw them making anything of this kind.

We bought most of our clothes from the store which had been opened up along the Frisco railroad. We traded at Tushkahoma. Before the railroad went through we traded at Fort Smith. It took several days to make the trip,

but that was the best we could do for there were no stores near by. After several years had passed some one put up a store at Nashoba, and a post office was established there, so we traded at home and got our mail at this place.

We had a little farm on the banks of a creek, a bottom farm, where we raised all the corn we wanted for our bread. All the farms were small, there were no big farms out there. The Indians did not need a big farm, just enough for their corn and the garden stuff they wanted. At that time we did not feed our stock any corn. The country had plenty of grass on the hills and mountains and plenty of cane in the bottom where the stock could get what they wanted, and the stock were fat all the year. In the winter the stock would go to the bottoms for protection from the cold weather, and in the summer they would get out on the hills and mountains.

Nearly every Indian had some cattle, hogs and ponies. Where we lived was in a valley; it was between two mountains. The creek run between these mountains which emptied into Little River, which is a big stream that runs through the

eastern part of the state. In these mountains were lots of wild game of every description. The creeks were full of fish. Most of the Indians had rifles. I don't know where they got them before the payment. After the first payment they got, they bought rifles and some of them bought shot-guns and nearly every man had a pistol of some kind. They were long on buying guns.

When I was a boy the country where I still live was a good country; it was a wild country at that time. There were not many Indians living there. It was away from any place and no roads, only trails; most of the Indian got out of there on horse back. The Indian used oxen at that time to pull wagons over the mountains, and it sure was a rough road then.

We lived in a log house made out of pine logs; in fact all of the Indians lived in log houses. A good many of them had split logs for flooring and some of them had dirt floor. The church houses were built of logs and seated with split logs, and split log flooring. My

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father used to camp at the big meeting we had at our church and after he and my mother died I kept it up for several years. I still camp at the meeting and help feed the people that come to the meeting. Our church is an old church; it is named Big-Lick Church and is a Methodist church. We have a lumber house now instead of log house. I never went to school much. I went to a neighborhood school at Nashobá, but did not learn much books. I can talk a little English but not much, read a little and can write a little in English, I can read and write in my own language pretty well. It looks like that we ought to be able to learn English. The country is full of white people now and I believe that our children will learn the English language without much trouble.

I am a full blood Indian, Choctaw. My father and mother were both full blood Indians. I have lived among them all of my life, and right here where I was raised.

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I live about 30 miles from Antlers, Oklahoma, north-east.

Note: This interviewer is an Indian and his interviews are expressed exactly as his talk. No effort is made to change his manuscripts to correct English.--ED

