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BAGGETT, J. L.

INTERVIEW

6491

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Form A-(S-149)

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

Field Worker's name Lawrence A. Williams

This report made on (date) July 7, 1937

1. Name J. L. Baggett,

2. Post Office Address Talihina, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) One mile north of Talihina.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month September Day 7 Year 1861.

5. Place of birth Vandilun, Illinois.

Name of Father H. B. Baggett, Place of birth Ireland.

Other information about father None.

Name of Mother Died when he was a very young boy.

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 4.

L. A. Williams,
Interviewer.

An Interview With J. L. Baggett,
Talihina, Oklahoma.

I was born in Illinois in 1861, and moved to Indian Territory when I was twenty-two years old. I met and married a half-breed Indian girl named Mattie King. The Governor allotted us a ten acre tract of land on which to make a living. I was married by the tribal laws; so had the same privileges as any other tribesman.

There was an abundance of game and fish. It was easy to make a living. Deer were as plentiful then as cattle are now. I saw a man make one drag with a net; he caught twenty-six fish, weighing from one and one-half pounds to twenty-six pounds. There were so many squirrels we had to watch our corn fields to keep them from eating our corn. The Indians would not eat fox squirrels because their bones were red like an Indian's skin.

The ten acres of land I was allotted is now the town-site of Tuskahoma. Those days were very different from our modern times. Every one was friendly. There was no worry about clothes or food. All one had to do to have plenty of meat was to go hunting about once a month. There were few clothes worn in the summer, and in the winter there were plenty of hides and furs to keep us warm.

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My wife and I were married twelve years. During that time we had two sons and one daughter. My wife died at the birth of my daughter. She would be sixty-nine years old now.

I hope I've done my bit toward making this a better place in which to live.

I was a member of the Wade County Council that one the would call/Supreme Court now. It was there all our tribal laws were made. We held a one month session each year. All our elections/^{for}governor were held at the Council House. The Council House was made of brick which the Indians made. No, I don't know how they made them.

POLITICS.

In those days there were two political parties called the Eagles and the Buzzards. I remember two elections very distinctly. We had to call out the army. The first time was during the race between Jacob Jackson and Henry H. Jones, for Governor. Jackson was a Buzzard and Jones was an Eagle. Mr. Jackson was elected but the people raised such a row that we had to call out the soldiers to settle it. After it was over, Jones took the Governor's job. Four years later we had another election. This

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race was between Tom Hunter and Bill McCurtain. Mr. Hunter was elected but we had the worst rebellion we ever had. The Indians fought among themselves. We called for soldiers, which enraged the fighters. There were several killed on both sides.

BURIAL GROUNDS.

I know of lots of cemeteries, but can not give their exact location. I can tell you enough for you to find them. There are fifteen on the old stage road from Tusahoma to the Arkansas line. Almost every family had a private cemetery.

MISSIONARIES.

In 1884 there was a Presbyterian preacher by the name of Charlie Keems, who built a mission house at old Bennington, that is now known as Shady Point. Mr. Keems donated the mission to the people for school purposes. There was a girl by the name of Fannie Oliver who taught three terms of school, of three months each, during the year 1896.

WORDS AND THEIR MEANING.

Noshabia

WOLF COUNTY.

Tuskahoma

Red Soldier

Pushmataha

War Chief

Talihina

Hard Road.

RAILROADS.

I helped build the Frisco Railroad in 1886 and 1887.