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BOHANNAN, GREEN

INTERVIEW

13658-

165

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

166

BOHANAN, GREEN

INTERVIEW

13658

Field Worker's name Johnson H. Hampton,

This report made on (date) April 19th, 1938 193 8

1. Name Green Bohanan, A Choctaw

2. Post Office Address Sardis,

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month February Day 22 Year 1882

5. Place of birth Sardis

6. Name of Father Kilia Bohanan Place of birth Sardis

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Patsy Bohanan Place of birth Sardis

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.

BOHANAN, GREEN

INTERVIEW

13658

Johnson H. Hampton,
Investigator,
April 19, 1938.

An Interview with Green Bohanan,
Choctaw Indian,
Sardis, Oklahoma.

I was born February 22nd, 1882, near what is now Tuska-
homa, then it was Indian Territory, Choctaw Nation. My
father's name was Ellis Bohanan and Mother's name was
Patsy Bohanan. They were raised around where Sardis is
now in fact all of my kinsfolk were raised in that part of
the country but they are all dead and I am about the only
one living there now.

Mother used to tell us that the Choctaws had a pretty
hard time during the Civil War; they nearly starved to
death but they got by some way and after I was born and
grew up the Choctaws had plenty to eat such as it was.
Nearly all of them had cattle, hogs and ponies but at that
time there was no market for stock so they could not sell
them to live on. They sometimes sold some but they did not get
anything for them; the steers would grow wild and would be
too old to do anything with and some would die with old age
and the same way with hogs, but finally the market opened up

BOHANAN, GREEN

INTERVIEW

13658

-2-

where they could sell their stock for pretty good prices so they all sold out what they had, then they began to raise some more cattle, hogs and other things. At that time the Choctaws did not work very much; they all had small Tom Fuller patches of about five to ten acres in cultivation on which they raised their corn for their bread. That was about all they had to have back in those days; they would make their cornbread by putting the corn in a mortar and beating it until it was made into corn meal; it was fine meal and made good cornbread and they could make several kinds of meal that way and they could make hominy and make Banaha shuck-bread as we call it and other things. The Choctaw women were good cooks along that line; the men did not work much.

Sardis is in a valley with mountains all around this valley and there is some prairie there. At that time, when I was small, there were no fences and the land was not in cultivation much only small patches and there were not many Choctaws who lived in this valley which was called

BOHANAN, GREEN

INTERVIEW

13658

-3-

the Anderson Settlement. At that time the Choctaws used to live in settlements and there was another settlement north of us about ten miles and there was another settlement west of us about fifteen miles which was called the Carnes Settlement. It was named after Ellis Carnes who was the head of that settlement and we lived in the Anderson Settlement named after Weale Anderson and Reuben Anderson, who were the oldest men who lived in this settlement at that time. They have been dead for several years, in fact, the old settlers are all dead who used to live in this settlement. It was a fine country with grass that grew as high as the head of a man on horseback and on Anderson Creek there was fine cane for the stock to graze on; the stock did not have to be fed at that time, they just ran out on the range and got fat, in fact, they stayed fat all the year around.

Some white people came in there and located a mine, they called it an asphalt mine; they began to dig for the asphalt and they then put up a store there and called it Bunch Town; they mined the asphalt and hauled it to Muskogee, they then loaded it on cars and shipped it out when

BOHANNAN, ORREN

INTERVIEW

13658

-4-

the mine was opened, then there were several white families who came there and some were miners who dug the asphalt and some of them had teams that hauled the asphalt to town and shipped it out. They ran the mine for several years but they finally quit the mine and left it. The company that had this done just gave it up for some reason and left it, but the mine is still there and this little store went with it, but soon some other white man put up another store and called it Sardis so it has gone by that name for several years and is still running by that name. We have several stores there now; some of the white families who moved to this place when the mine was running are still there; they did not go back to where they came from but rented farms and are there yet and this country now is all owned by families and the whole country is under fence now.

Our trading point at that time was at Fort Smith, Arkansas, and we traded there for several years until after the Frisco Railroad went through the country then some white man put up a store at Tuskahoma on the railroad. We then went to trading there for it was close to home and when this store was put up at Bunch Town. We traded there

BOHANAN, GREEN

INTERVIEW

13658

-5-

and are still trading at this place. My mother had a spinning wheel and a weaver but I never saw her using the ^{weaver;} the only thing she used was the spinning wheel and she used to spin cotton and wool, make them into threads and then she would knit them into mittens and socks. She never made any clothes that I saw but she would knit socks for us to wear during the winter. These socks were heavy and they lasted all the winter. Mother would sell some of these socks to other Indians in the neighborhood and the spinning wheel and the weaver disappeared after her death. I don't know what became of them.

In 1898 I was enrolled with the other Choctaws and in 1903. I got my allotment of land. I am still living on the land that I selected for my allotment. I got my payments with the other Choctaws but we have not gotten any payments for several years; the first payment that we got was in 1893 and that payment was for \$103.00 each. The Choctaw Government made this payment; at that time they came around from place to place to make these payments and after that time, the payments came out of Muskogee. At

BOHANNAN, GREEN

INTERVIEW

13658

-6-

that time before the allotment, I did not know that we had an agency but after the allotment I learned that we had an agency at Muskogee. I don't guess that the Choctaws know the Union Agency existed before that time.

I have attended the Choctaw camp meetings at Sardis; there is a church there which was built by the Andersons; it was a Baptist Church. This church house has been there for a good many years and still is being used as a church. At one time we had a school in this church house. I went to this school when I was a boy for several years. I did not learn much for I never did attend any other school but this one at the old church, but I can read and write in English and can speak in English and can speak in my own language.

I am a Choctaw Indian but not a full blood; Father was not a full blood but my mother was a full blood; so I don't know just what degree of Choctaw I am but I think that I am on the rolls as about a quarter blood; all of my folks were Choctaws and we have lived among our tribe all of our lives.