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INDEX CARDS

Cherokee Nation
Tribe-Cherokee
School-Clearwater
Churches
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Ferries
Courthouse
U. S. Marshals.

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

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6/63Field Worker's name W. J. B. BIGBYThis report made on (date) June 10, 1937

1. Name James Sherman Brown
2. Post Office Address Watts, Oklahoma, Route 1.
3. Residence address (or location) Section 28, Township 19, Range 24.
4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month October Day 12 Year 1865
5. Place of birth Cherokee County, North Carolina.

6. Name of Father James Brown (white) Place of birth Georgia
- Other information about father _____
- Name of Mother Eliza Raper (Cherokee) Place of birth Georgia
- Other information about mother _____

Notes or complete narrative by the field worker dealing with the life and history 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 11.

James Sherman Brown, a part Cherokee, was born in Cherokee County, North Carolina, October 12, 1865. He was the son of James Brown, a white man, and Miss Eliza Raper, a Cherokee lady. They moved to the Cherokee Nation in 1875, settled at July Springs, about nine miles west of the present town of Stilwell, Oklahoma.

Adair County was at that time divided into two districts named Goingsnake and Flint Districts, Cherokee Nation. They moved in Flint District. Mr. Brown was ten years old when they came to the Indian Territory.

EARLY LIFE

Mr. Brown's early life was spent in the Cherokee Nation. The family moved to several communities before statehood. Therefore, Mr. Brown is well acquainted with many Cherokees in this part of the state. He attended an Indian School at Clearwater, which was located about four miles from his home when they first came to the Cherokee Nation. A few years afterwards the family moved to the Piney community. Here Mr. Brown attended school until he finished the seventh grade. He was considered to possess a fair education at that time. The old teacher he recalls at Clearwater

was a Mr. Lloyd, and at Piney Mr. Jim Goodin, a white man from Evansville.

There were no school boards at that time. The teachers were appointed by the Cherokee Board of Education. This Board consisted of three members.

They owned a farm on Piney containing about thirty acres. The Browns were wealthy or well-to-do family at that time.

They owned plenty of stock and always had ready cash. Young Brown never had witnessed poverty as many other boys did of his time. Therefore, he had a good chance to go to school and he took advantage of the opportunity. The Browns usually raised plenty of stuff on their farm to have surplus to sell.

CHURCHES

There were no churches at July Springs neighborhood when the Browns first came to the Cherokee Nation. The only church that he knows anything about was the Cherokee Church of Double Springs, which was located about six miles above July Springs. This old time Indian Church was located at the mouth of Mulberry Hollow on the south side of the Caney Creek.

At last there was a meeting place established at our home near July Springs. W. C. Rogers, later the Principal Chief of the Cherokees, was our preacher. The services were held at peoples' homes in the community.

At Piney, Church was already well organized when they moved to that community. Several years later the family moved to Eu-Nee-Skook Prairie, now the northern part of Adair County. Mr. Brown was a young man when they moved to this prairie.

New Hope Baptist Church was already well organized when they came to the prairie; this was the church that the Browns attended. This church was located on Tyners Creek, about twelve miles northwest of the present town of Westville, Oklahoma. This was the earliest church in this part of the country. Mr. Brown has been told that the first man that was ordained to the ministry was a Mr. Hand.

The land was given to the Baptist people by Mr. Raper, who lived in the community. This good man lived to be one hundred-two years old and is buried at the New Hope Cemetery, which joins the church yard.

TRADING AND MILLING POINTS

While living at July Springs, the nearest trading point was Evansville. This was about twenty miles

away. The early day trader at Evansville was a Mr. McClure and Mr. Flynn.

Flynn also operated a mill at this place. Tahlequah was also another trading point for the Browns. This was a small place at that time. The Male and Female Seminaries were located at this place. The two schools mentioned were the largest schools in the Cherokee Nation.

While living at Caney Mr. Brown's father used to sell meat to the two Seminaries. Brown was a stockman and made a good living. The meat was hauled in a wagon. The road crossed the Illinois River just below the present highway bridge. The place at that time was called the Bill Boudinot place. Mr. Boudinot was a well known Cherokee.

CATTLE AND CATTLEMEN

Mr. Brown did not get acquainted with any cattlemen while they lived at Caney. His father usually sold cattle to buyers that would pass through the country. After moving to Piney he remembers one Vol English, a white man. English was also a merchant at Dutchtown.

The Browns, traded with the said English while living at Piney.

Mr. Brown, after he grew to manhood, worked for English for a while. He received eighteen dollars per month and board. English usually drove his cattle to some railroad to ship them to market. Fort Smith was the nearest shipping point. Brown has helped English several times to drive cattle through to Fort Smith.

GRIST MILL

There was a grist mill located on Caney Creek where the Browns had their corn ground. This mill was owned by a permitted white man, named Stephens. Stephens did a very good business for a long time. He was liked by all of the Cherokee people. Stephens at last lost out at this place. Whiskey was bootlegged into the community on Saturdays and there were many drunk Indians at this mill. It was on such days when a Cherokee girl was killed (that had been to this mill) about two miles east of this mill. This girl belonged to a prominent Cherokee family of that time. She was a sister of Dave Hitcher, an early day politician. A

full-blood boy by the name of Leach and a Creek Indian committed the crime. Leach was hung for his part of the crime. This one murder ruined the trade of Mr. Stephens among the Cherokees. When his permit expired he had to leave the Cherokee Nation.

CAMP MEETINGS

The camp meetings were held each fall after the crops were all gathered. The only camp meeting that the Browns attended was when they lived at Piney. They attended the White Rock meetings that was just across the line in Arkansas. Near this old historic church house was where Major Ridge was killed.

FINANCING FARMERS

People that needed money were financed by their neighbors. In the neighborhoods that Mr. Brown lived in, almost everybody had money. Money was not scarce, everybody had enough to get by. In case that they had to have more than what they had themselves they would borrow from their neighbors without security. When notes and chattel mortgages were first introduced into the Cherokee country the real old full-bloods

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thought that they were made for the crooks. That was what they thought of a man that had to mortgage in order to get by. They would not deal with a man that had to do such to get by. He remembers his father loaning to several, many years later. These loans were, of course, to neighbors and he never lost a dime and there were no papers signed at all.

FERRIES

Mr. Brown remembers only two ferries that he ever crossed on, in the Cherokee Nation. One was the Boling Ferry on the Grand River near the present town of Choteau, Oklahoma. This ferry was operated by a Mr. Boling, a Cherokee. Another was located at Boudinot Ford near Tahlequah on the Illinois River. When Mr. Brown crossed on the ferry near Tahlequah he was going to court at Tahlequah. When he crossed the ferry at Choteau he was going to the Salt Springs, which was on the Mayes' place. The Mayes started a business at these Salt Springs. People coming there to get salt furnished the fuel to boil the water. The proprietors furnished the pots, then charged so much for the labor. These were the only Salt Springs in the northern part of the Cherokee Nation.

FURS AND HIDES

There was plenty of fur in the Indian country. Buyers would come from St. Louis in the fall of the year to buy fur from the Cherokees. Such animals as otter, beaver, mink, and many other valuable fur were found along the Illinois River. This was the main stream in this part of the Cherokee Nation. Fish were plentiful in said river. Poisonings was a great sport among the Cherokees, who used this method in catching the fish.

MUSIC

The Cherokees were great singers in the early days. Among the early day singers were Jack Batt, John Shell, and John Batt. These boys lived at a place called the old Double Springs Church. They travelled all over the Cherokee country singing at funerals, revivals, churches, celebrations, and many other occasions. They were also great dancers, they danced what they called the old reel dance.

COURT HOUSE

The Goingsnake Court House was located at the old Getty Whitmire place when they came to the Indian

Territory. It was later moved to the Whitmire plantation, which was about two miles west of the old site. When the great Proctor fight took place at that place it was again moved, to the Peacheater Creek in the northern part of the district. Here it remained until statehood.

The Browns moved near the court house when they moved to the Eu-Nee-Skook Prairie. Among the old timers that were neighbors to the Browns were the following: Mose Crittenden, Bill Winton, Roam Green, Dave Wilkie, and T. C. Chance.

SAW MILLS

The only saw-mill that Mr. Brown knew anything about was the Eli Wright saw-mill on the Dutch Mills Creek, about four miles east of the present Baron, Oklahoma, Post Office.

WEDDINGS

The law for marriages was to secure a license from the judge of the district. This license cost one dollar and the marrying charge was fifty cents, if married by the judge..

The Clerk of the District Court also could marry in the Cherokee Nation. Many Cherokees at that time did not marry.

U. S. MARSHAL

The U. S. Marshals were appointed to keep whiskey out of the Indian Territory. They were usually men from Arkansas.

Among those he is personally acquainted with were Tom Johnson of Siloam, Paden Tolbert, and several others whose names he has forgotten.

An Indian by the name of Grant Holland was convicted for bootlegging and sent to the Federal Penitentiary at Detroit, Michigan, about 1884.