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BUCHANAN, JASON

INTERVIEW

12579

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Hazel B. Greene,
Journalist,
December 30, 1937.

An Interview with Mr. Jason Buchanan,
Millerton, Oklahoma.

I was born in Arkansas, November 11, 1871; my father was Robert Jason Buchanan.

I was raised right on the line of Arkansas and the Indian Territory, at old Rocky Comfort. It was not very far from the State line. We moved over into the Indian Territory in 1899 and settled a place just south of the present town of Millerton and I have lived there and raised my family there. My parents lived over at Wheelock Academy for a year or two before moving south of Millerton, also. My father and mother are both buried at Wheelock in the old cemetery.

My father was a Confederate soldier in the Civil War. He was in the cavalry under Joe Shelby when they were going to the assistance of Stand Watie and his thousand Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Cherokee Indian troops at the battle of Pea Ridge. They got there too late to be of assistance.

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My father and three other privates and a lieutenant got separated from their company, so they came down across the Indian Territory on the way to their homes in Mississippi. They spent a night at the home of Governor Garland down three miles south of what is now Tom, two miles west of the Arkansas line. The lieutenant was sick and remained there the next day while the privates went on their way. He was riding a fine horse and had some money. They never heard of him again. They always thought he was "done away with" somewhere for his horse and money.

Father hid around home in the woods a lot, and scouted around for a year or two, then he got back with his command and went to Minden, Louisiana, and surrendered to the Federals.

I have heard of a fine log house that the Choctaws built for a Governor LeFlore somewhere not far west of Wheelock Academy.

Uncle Clayton was with Stand Watie and his thousand Indians at Marks Mill and Poison Spring in Arkansas. In

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that battle, a regiment of negroes were put up in front by the Yankees. The whites and Indians killed those negroes and the Indians scalped them over the protests of commanding officers. Our home was a little log cabin pretty near the line of Arkansas at Rocky Comfort. Father used to be gone a week or more at the time and once I remember he was gone three weeks. We were so lonely without him. Mother would gather us around her at night in our little log cabin and sing to us and tell us stories of the war. She used to sing us a song. I was a little fellow, but I remember a part of it. I think I remember most of it. A soldier who was in that battle composed it.

On March seventeenth eighteen and sixty-two,
We had a sword engagement with Abe Lincoln's crew.
We made the attack just at the break of day,
And being overpowered, were forced to run away.

Such another carnage I never yet did see,
As happened at Pea Ridge near the Indian Territory,
They killed old Ben McCullough and McIntosh likewise,
And the shouts of the horrid Federals, was sounding
through the skies.

At Carthage and Springfield, where many a hero fell,
Van Dorn was our Commander as may be remembered well.
Our lines had not long been broken
When Colonel Beaver fell.

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He cried "My boys I'm wounded,
Pray take me off the field."
He leaned his head against a tree
And there resigned his breath.
And like a valliant soldier
Sank in the arms of death.

Said General Slack "My boys
You must not be dismayed,
Ten thousand deaths I'd rather die
Than they should gain the field."
At this he got a fatal stroke
Which caused him to reel.

Said General Van Dorn "We can no longer stand,
We must reform in order and retreat the best we can."
The word "retreat" being passed around
Which caused a heathern cry,
Helter, skelter through the woods
Like lost men we did fly.

Our brave and noble General Price
Who was always in the right,
He sought of General Van Dorn,
Two hours more to fight.
But this much being denied him,
He begged with tears in his eyes,
"Grant me one half hour and see the white flag
rise."

The dead and wounded on the fields,
O Heaven, what a shame!
Some of their limbs were broken
Some of their brains were scattered,
But the Federal knives and bayonets
Soon eased them of their pain.
And the fiery flames of torment
Soon tortured them to death.

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Sometimes we would sit around the fire and pop corn, or study our lessons while Mother would knit or sew.

I have seen this country grow from a comparative wilderness. There were no good roads. Even after the railroad came through here there were no good roads. The automobiles caused the good roads to be built.

I used to serve on the jury a lot at Idabel and if the weather got bad and rainy I would just have to stay over there until the sun dried up the mud, even if I was dismissed from further service.