



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

LOCKE, COLONEL VICTOR M.

INTERVIEW.

Field Worker's name Amelia F. Harris

This report made on (date) October 25, 1937.

1. Name Colonel Victor M. Locke.
2. Post Office Address Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.
3. Residence address (or location) 902 Ramsey Tower Building
4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month March Day 23 Year 1876
5. Place of birth Doaksville, Indian Territory.

6. Name of Father V. M. Locke Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Other information about father Came to Oklahoma in 1866

7. Name of Mother Susan Priscilla Mc<sup>Kinney</sup> Place of birth Alabama

Other information about mother Came to Oklahoma in 1840

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 9.

LOCKE, COLONEL VICTOR M. INTERVIEW.

9003

An Interview with Colonel Victor M. Locke.  
Choctaw Indian - Oklahoma City.  
By - Amelia F. Harris - Journalist.  
October 25, 1937.

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Colonel Locke's father, V. M. Locke, was a white man. He was a native of Tennessee and served under General Joe Wheeler in the Confederate Army.

He came to Fort Towson at the close of the Civil War and here he met Susan Priscilla McKinney and after a brief courtship they were married and moved to Doaksville.

V. M. Locke became a Choctaw citizen by inter-marriage and became very active in all Indian affairs serving as tribal Superintendent of Schools.

Mr. and Mrs. Locke lived at Doaksville for four years, then moved to "Lockstown". The Choctaw Council had named this town after V. M. Locke, as it was one of the precincts at Choctaw elections. The town was also called "White Church" or "Itissa - Busha".

Mr. Locke was owner and manager of a general merchandise store, a saw mill, grist mill and a gin, all

located on White Creek. He was engaged in the cattle business also, as there was plenty of good open range free to Indians.

Mr. Locke had a foreman named Bill Flinchum, a white man who ran these mills for him. The grist mill took a toll of one-fourth of the corn after it was ground. The saw mill sold lumber green for 50 and 75 cents per hundred feet and the gin took cotton seed as pay for ginning.

There was a full-blood Creek Indian, Jim Lohman, who ran a blacksmith shop at Antlers and he also made coffins for the community, as there was nobody who carried coffins. These coffins were made out of pine, covered on the outside with black calico and lined with bleached domestic.

Jim Lohman had an order for a coffin from a full-blood Indian and when Lohman went to line the coffin he found that there was no bleached domestic so he lined the coffin with turkey red calico. This was all right with the Indians for after that they asked for coffins to be red on the inside. This was in 1875.

In 1875 Mr. Locke moved from Lockstown to Beaver, (later called Antlers). He sold his gin and his mills but moved his stock of merchandise overland by ox teams and wagons to Antlers where he entered more extensively into the cattle business.

Antlers is a very historical place and got its name in this manner.

Several years before the railroads were surveyed through this section of the country, there were several natural springs which made this place ideal for camping and hunting. A hunter camped at one of these springs early in the fall; he killed a buck of extraordinary size and as a challenge to other hunters he nailed the deer's antlers to a big tree. Naturally other hunters did likewise and soon the trees around the springs had these horns nailed all over them and soon the springs became known as Antlers Springs. The railroad officials were impressed by this and decided to call the little station Antlers; this was the St. Louis and San Francisco railroad which was completed through from Wister Junction

to Paris in 1887.

In 1883 Victor Locke went to the Indian schools, supervised by his father, until 1888, then entered private school; for two years he went to Jones Institute at Paris, Texas, then for two years he attended Austin College at Sherman, Texas, then for two years at Drury College, Springfield. While at Drury College his mother wrote him to return home immediately as his father was in need of him.

In 1893 there was a feud between the Locke clan and the Jones clan and it culminated in bloodshed because of a dispute over the election of a chief. The Locke clan wanted to elect Jacob Jackson, Choctaw, as Tribal Chief; the other clan wanted to elect Wilson Jones, so a battle ensued near the old Locke homestead at Fort Towson. This was the reason that Victor M. Locke's mother called him home.

The opposing faction sent for the Choctaw Light Horsemen to arrest Mr. Locke, the white leader of one group. The troop came in to settle the uprising be-

LOCKE, COLONEL VICTOR M. INTERVIEW.

9003

5

tween the two factions and each side surrendered and made peace but there was an ill feeling followed by an armed neutrality that threatened fighting at the drop of a hat.

Victor Jr. spent several months campaigning with his father's clan for their nominee. Before the final election of the chief troops were called out again. Locke and the members of the Choctaw Council barricaded the Council House at Tuskahoma in order to resist the attempt of the Government to over-ride their choice for chief but when the troops let it be known that they were in power the insurgent Council disbanded without further trouble.

The Locke faction lost (they were Republicans) and Wilson Jones, full blood Choctaw Democrat, was elected Principal Chief and Governor of the Choctaws.

Governor Jones mansion remains in a good state of preservation today; it is located ten miles east of Caddo in Bryan County.

This feud was the beginning of Colonel Locke's

political career; he enlisted in the Spanish American War, serving in the 4th Texas Infantry in various camps in America and at the close of this war he returned to his home at Antlers and entered the Government service as Choctaw interpreter and was elected at the same time to the Tribal Council for one year and later he succeeded Chief McCurtain as Principal Chief of the Choctaws.

When the World War began he again entered the service and was a private after spending three months in the training camp at Oglethorpe, Georgia. During the two years of war he served as a soldier from private to major and during these two years he was participating in Indian skirmishes during various tribal outbursts.

After the war he was a delegate from his tribe before Congress in Washington.

He was Principal Chief of the Choctaws and served in that capacity from 1911 to 1918.

Most of his life has been spent with the Indians. During his term as Chief of the Choctaws there was big Indian politics played in the Choctaw Council which



ousted every Democrat who was in power. These Democrats were all replaced by Republicans.

Pat Hurley, a Republican, was soon afterward appointed as National Attorney for the Choctaws.

On his mother's side Colonel Locke's grandfather, Red Pine, was in Chief Pushmataha's band of Choctaws with the American forces at the Battle of New Orleans in 1814. "Red Pine" took the name of Thompson McKinney; he served as Choctaw Delegate to Washington for many years.

Colonel Locke spends a great deal of time on his farm in Pushmataha County but his greatest pleasure is in assisting his Indian friends, aiding them in getting work to do and in many other ways.

Colonel Locke had a photostat of a graduation certificate, given to Robert M. Jones, three-quarters Choctaw from Georgetown, Kentucky, dated June, 1830. Richard M. Johnson, whose name is attached to this certificate, was a former Vice-President of the United States.

Robert M. Jones became one of the most prominent,

progressive and useful men of the Choctaw Nation; he was reputed to be the largest slave holder of the five Civilized Tribes. During the Civil War he represented the Choctaw Nation in Confederate Congress at Richmond.

Colonel Locke edited the first newspaper in Antlers, on the present site of the "Antlers American".

A Mr. Almond, a Choctaw citizen of Antlers, was engaged in the mercantile business for about two years when his store burned down; he saved some of his merchandise and decided to move everything to Sulphur overland. While driving along he struck an object in the road which turned out to be a sack containing \$10,000 in gold. He had heard of gold being transported from the banks of Fort Smith to Sulphur and thought the carrier must have lost it; he picked the bag up and started again on his journey, when he met the custodian in search of the money.

This money was being transferred to Sulphur to be used in purchasing Indian claims, such as Net Proceeds

LOCKE, COLONEL VICTOR M.

INTERVIEW.

9003

9

and others that the Indians had against the Government.

There is an old graveyard at White Church near Doaksville, where, according to Colonel Locke, the bodies of some of the earliest settlers in the Choctaw Nation are buried.