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BLOSSOM, R. J.

INTERVIEW #6870

502

LEGEND & STORY FORM  
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION  
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

503

BLOSSOM, E. J.

INTERVIEW.

6570.

Field worker's name Joe Southern

This report made on (date) July 9, 1937

1. This legend was secured from (name) E. J. Blossom

Address Atoka, Oklahoma.

This person is (male or female) White, Negro, Indian,

If Indian, give tribe NO

2. Origin and history of legend or story First Telephone Exchange  
in Atoka, Atoka County, Indian Territory.

3. Write out the legend or story as completely as possible. Use blank sheets and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached 1.

The Southern,  
Interviewer.  
July 9, 1937.

Interview with E. J. Blossom  
Atoka, Oklahoma.

The first telephone exchange established in Atoka, Indian Territory, and Atoka County was known as the Choctaw Telephone Company. John M. Hodges was sponsor and president. Contract and labor for the exchange was let to B. F. Adams. Poles were cut of native cedar from Blue County, now Bryan County, Jack Fork and Atoka Counties. This phone line was built from Atoka to Durant, and from Atoka to McAlester in the year 1896, thence to Coalgate. It branched out from Atoka to Boggy Depot, thence to Farris, Bentley, and to Daisy; from there to Wesley. All of these inland towns are located in what is now Atoka County.

John M. Hodges was one-eighth Choctaw Indian, very prominent among the Choctaws. He was enrolled on the Choctaw Roll as No. 12060. When this country was first opened up he was the first man to build and operate an opera house in Atoka, and was the second man to build and operate a drug store in Atoka, in the year 1901. Later, he sold his interest in the Choctaw Telephone Company to the Bell Telephone Company.