

JONES, WALTER V.

INTERVIEW

13270

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

JONES, WALTER V.

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Field Worker's name Johnson H. Hampton

This report made on (date) March 18, 1932

1. Name Walter V. Jones.

2. Post Office Address Antlers, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) \_\_\_\_\_

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month October Day 12 Year 1879

5. Place of birth Missouri.

6. Name of Father \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth Missouri

Other information about father \_\_\_\_\_

7. Name of Mother \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth Missouri

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 5.

Johnson H. Hampton  
Investigator  
March 18, 1938.

Interview with Walter V. Jones,  
Antlers, Oklahoma  
Born October 12, 1879.

I was born October 12, 1879, in Missouri and came to Purcell when I was a boy about six years old, I think it was about in 1886. My father wanted to take a look at a new country so we moved from our old home to Purcell. I came with my father and mother in a covered wagon drawn by a team of horses and it took us several days to get over to this country. When we arrived in Purcell we rented a farm from a man of the name of Dave Murray and lived there for about two years. When we came to the Indian Territory we had no furniture except what we had in our wagon, just a camping outfit. When we rented this farm, we lived in a box house that was on the farm when we rented it, a pretty good box house. We bought a little furniture which we put in the house. We did not buy much for we did not know whether we would live there long or not. We raised corn and cotton, not much cotton but lots of corn; we fed the corn to our hogs that we bought and fattened for our meat for winter use. We did not raise any cattle and not many hogs, just enough for our meat.

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We left this farm and went to Joplin, Missouri, where we lived for about a year, then moved from there to Grove, Indian Territory, and lived there for about two years, and while we were living at Grove my father went to Old Oklahoma to make the run for land. This run was made at noon and when the signal was fired they all made the run; there were all kinds of vehicles used in this run which was made by men and women. My father made his run with a two-horse wagon and staked his claim about six miles northeast of Guthrie; he filed on it then came home and we moved on this claim. We built a small house and cleared up some land and lived on this claim for about a year, then sold out on account of so many shyster lawyers who would bring lawsuits against men who had filed on the claims, claiming that they were Sooners. These lawyers caused several people to be put off their claims; they attacked the legality of the claim on the grounds that the people on the claims had been there before the run signal was given. We knew that our claim was legitimate and fair but we did not have the means to put our fight in the courts in case they did file suit against us so when a man came and offered to buy our claim

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my father sold out to him for \$550.00. We had tried to improve our claim but we sure had a hard time trying to get water; there was no water that we could get to drink without paying for it. We also had a hard time getting any food for ourselves, there were plenty of grass for the teams but no food for us. After we sold out we moved to Seneca, Missouri, and while we were living there my father died and was buried at this place. We then moved from there to Claremore, and lived with my uncle for about two years and while we were living with him my mother married a Methodist Elder, the Methodist conference had sent down to the Choctaw Nation to be Presiding Elder for this district, so we moved from Claremore to Talihina; he went all over the Nation looking after the churches and visiting all the Choctaw Churches, he had charge of them all. It was a little too far for him to ride horseback or in a buggy, so we moved from Talihina to Antlers which place was more centrally located for his work. He used to make all his trips on a horse or in a buggy; he held that office in the church for <sup>8</sup> good many years and finally died here at Antlers; he was getting pretty old when he died.

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At the time we moved to this town on the Frisco there were not many white people in the town and there were none out in the country and at that time there were no farms to be seen and no fences. The Choctaws had small farms on which they raised their corn for their bread, but they did not have big farms. Most of the Choctaws had cattle, hogs and ponies but they did not work very much, I guess that they did not have to for there was lots of wild game in the country and they would get out and kill what deer and turkeys they wanted; there were also lots of fish in the creeks. If the Choctaws had enough corn to make their bread they were satisfied; the whole country was open, no houses <sup>to</sup> amount to anything. The Choctaws lived in settlements which were several miles apart, so it was a fine country to hunt in and plenty <sup>of</sup> game to hunt at that time. Now there are few deer or turkeys but there are some deer to be found in the mountains yet.

I was married about thirty years ago to Blanch Reed and that same year I opened up a grocery store and since then I have been in this business. I have seen this town grow from a village to a pretty good sized town and from a few white people to many and we have good churches and good schools. I have

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lived among the Choctaw tribe of Indians ever since I came here and have sold them goods and traded with them and I have found them to be truthful, honest and law-abiding; they never give anybody trouble for they attend to their own business if let alone. Of course, they fight among themselves and may kill one <sup>another</sup> / once in a while but they sure do not bother any of the white people. My experiences with them have been satisfactory in every way and I can speak well for them from my actual experience.

My mother is still living, she is about seventy-eight or seventy-nine years old now and is still able to get about pretty well, I, of course, am doing fine and will still live in Antlers, until my death.