

LABOR, ELLISTON

INTERVIEW

5920

13

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

Field Worker's name Johnson H. Hampton

This report made on (date) May 20th, 1937. 1937

1. Name Elliston Labor

2. Post Office Address Belzoni, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month Don't know Day _____ Year 1881

5. Place of birth Near Eagle Fork, Choctaw Nation.

6. Name of Father Houston Labor Place of birth Louisiana

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Parmden Labor, Place of birth Mississippi

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 _____.

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Interview with Elliston Labor

Belzoni, Oklahoma.

I was born near Eagle Fork, Nashoba County, Indian Territory, Choctaw Nation, some time in the year 1881.

My father's name was Houston Labor; my mother's name was Parmden Labor. My father was of Spanish descent. He came from Louisiana and settled near Smithville, Indian Territory, Choctaw Nation. My mother came from Mississippi when she was small girl and she and my Father married. She was a full blood Choctaw Indian.

Father was about seventy six years old when he died.

Father moved from Nashoba County and located in Blue County, which is now Bryan County.

We used to do our trading at Smithville and sometimes went to Arkansas for our groceries.

When I was a boy we had plenty to eat. My father had lots of hogs, cattle and ponies. We had a small farm that we worked and we made enough corn to do us for bread.

2

My mother made corn meal by putting the corn in a mortar, and beating it with a pestle; she would make sour bread, hominy, sour hominy and the like.

We lived in the mountain, Eagle-Fork is the name of a river that flows south and runs into Little River. It is not a big river but it is very treacherous. It heads back in the mountain. We lived not far from this river. There were lots of deer, turkeys and squirrels and some bear, and the creeks had lots of fish in them. We used to see some big fish floating on top of the water. We used to catch all the fish we wanted in a little while and if we wanted some venison all we had to do was to get out away from the house and get what we wanted. We did not want for any fresh meat at any time. The only things we ever run out would be bread stuff, coffee and sugar. We did not use white sugar, it was all brown sugar.

My Father killed two bears that I can remember of. Of course he killed all other games at any time he wanted

but he went out and killed these bears close to our house. The bears sometimes would come up to the house and catch a hog or a pig from us; they were hard to find when we went out looking for them.

One day another boy and I went out fishing. I had a rifle; it was one of those old timers which had to be loaded every time it fired. It was a good shooting gun. That day I did not figure on seeing anything but squirrels so I had it loaded for squirrels. Before we got down to the creek where we were going to fish, I saw a bear coming down the mountain. He got pretty close before I fired at him. I don't know whether I hit him or not for I was scared when I saw him and knowing that he would fight if I wounded him, I took pretty good aim at him. When I fired he ran back up the mountain but I did not follow him for I was afraid to, so we just turned and went back home without fishing.

4

My father was appointed Deputy Sheriff by Tom Watson, who was the last Sheriff under the Choctaw Government. He was Sheriff when the last man was executed at the District Court at Alikchi. The United State Government tried to interfere but the Choctaws had already tried him and found him guilty of murder and sentence had been pronounced and the day set for his execution, so when the day came for his execution, they took him to the court ground and executed him. My father did not hold any official position except this one term as a Deputy Sheriff.

The Indians were not bad people; there were no outlaws among them; of course they would fight and kill one another once in a while, but so far as stealing they did not do much of this. They knew that if they got caught they would get thirty nine lashes on their bare back, which was the penalty for minor offenses under the Choctaw laws.

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5

My father was a part Choctaw Indian, and also had some white blood in him but most of his blood was Spanish. He could speak English, Choctaw and Spanish. He was just like one of those full-blood Indians in his ways and actions. He was considered a leader among the Choctaws where he lived, they came to him for advice on anything they wanted to know.

I am part Choctaw Indian part white and a part Spanish. I have been reared among the Choctaws and have lived among them. I have been to their big meetings and have been to their criés and have seen them play Indian ball. I am now living twelve miles east of Antlers, Oklahoma.