

TIMS, JAMES BROWN

INTERVIEW

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Field Worker, Hazel B. Greene,  
September 2, 1937:

Interview with James Brown Tims.  $\frac{1}{2}$  Choctaw  
Fort Towson, Oklahoma,

Born January 25, 1863,  
At old Captain Nonnemontubbe place.

Parents Vinson Tims.  $\frac{1}{2}$  Choctaw Indian,  
Doaksville, I. T. Choctaw Nation.

Emaline Steadman Tims.  $\frac{1}{2}$  Choctaw,  
Close to Doaksville, I. T.

Father is buried at old home place now known as  
Charlie Blankenship place, about 6 or 7 miles north and a  
little west of Doaksville.

Mother is buried at High Hill in Choctaw Cemetery.

I was born and lived, until I was about four years old,  
at the Captain Nonnemontubbee place. Then we moved to what  
is now known as the Charlie Blankenship place, about six or  
seven miles north and a little west of Fort Towson,  
Oklahoma.

I attended school at Spencer Academy one year when  
Mr. J. J. Reed was Superintendent. Then they moved it,  
about 1886, to Nelson, on the west side of the new railroad  
that had been put through the country. It might have been  
earlier than 1886, though I am not sure. I attended over  
there three years. Mr. Stark was Superintendent there

until he died. He was buried there in the Academy burial plot.

He was succeeded by Mr. Skimmerhorn. It was nice to go to Spencer Academy, I liked it, but sometimes some of the boys would take a notion to run away. They would send officers after them and bring them back and give them a good whipping.

My mother was Emaline Steadman Tims. She attended school at Pine Ridge Academy, a Presbyterian Mission school for girls. It was located one mile north of Doaksville, Indian Territory, Choctaw Nation. That school was abandoned some time during the Civil War. The buildings may have fallen down. I never heard mother say what became of the buildings. Some of the buildings were there as late as about 1875, and they had preaching there, but no Mission School then but maybe a neighborhood school.

I am now living in what was then called Cedar County. It and Towson County line was about 1-2 mile south of this place. Cedar County extended west to the Kiamichi River, east to Little River, and north to Nashoba. North of Nashoba was Cedar County, which extended north to the LeFlore county line.

What we called Old Cedar Church is now Findley, or Finley. About 1892, we had a Methodist meeting under a brush arbor, close to my house. We had the Methodist Conference

down in Towson County, about where Fennell School is now or maybe a little east of there. We told the Presiding Elder we wanted to organize a church there close to my house. They talked about a name for it. I say, myself, "Wouldn't High Hill be best name for it? It is on High Hill close to mountain on north." So they just call it High Hill Church.

My father was Vinson Tims, son of Vinson Brown Tims, an Irishman. His wife, Elizabeth, or Betsy, was a fullblood Choctaw Indian, and probably had a Choctaw name. I never knew it. They were married in Mississippi, but my father said he was born at Doaksville. Grandfather Vinson Brown Tims was a merchant and had a partner named Doaks. Doaksville was named for him. Grandfather Tims was the first postmaster at Doaksville, and his son, Edward Ward Tims, was the second. He resigned in favor of Thomas Fennell, an Irishman from Colorado.

A way back before I was born, Doaksville was the capital of the Choctaw Nation. The Council House of the Choctaws was there. One can find some of the old rock foundation yet. The old rock jail was right back of my grandfather's store. My father was born in Doaksville.

My mother was Emaline Steadman. Her father was a white man, and her mother was a fullblood Choctaw Indian named Winnie, with very likely an Indian surname. All Indians did not have surnames.

When my mother, Emaline, was a little baby her father, whose first name I don't know, deserted them. When he deserted them he went down the Red River on a steamboat. He had started to return to Louisiana from whence he had come, but my mother said she was told that he died in the water before he got there as the steam boat sank. Then Winnie married Charlie Mc Gee, a Chickasaw Indian. They had one daughter, Sophia.

I have been married twice. My first wife was Mary Jane Willis, no kin to the Britt Willis family, though my wife's folks were Choctaws, and lived up about where Rufe is now on Little River at what is known as the Willis Crossing. My present wife was Viney Davis and was reared right around High Hill. She is one half Choctaw Indian and was reared by Captain Nonnemontubbee, about one and one half mile southeast of this place of mine which is about nine miles north and a little west of Fort Towson. I mean the old

Fort. That makes the Nonnemontubbee place about six and a half miles due north of Doaksville.

When Doaksville was the Capitol of the Choctaw Nation, the Constitution of the Choctaw Nation was written there. Then the Capitol was moved to Naniwaia, near Tuskahoma. Council was held in a little log cabin at Naniwaia, near Tuskahoma. Some people kept protesting that that log cabin was too small for Council to meet in. The Choctaws who came here in 1832 had established the Capital at Doaksville. The later ones thought it too far away from the center of the Choctaw Nation so they tried to get it at Skulleyville and maybe did have it there for a while, but finally moved the Capitol to Armstrong Academy because the building was a brick building and adequate to hold the Council members. A white Presbyterian Missionary had founded the town of Armstrong or rather a Missionary Post, and it was named for him.