

WESLEY, VERINA

INTERVIEW #12308

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BIOGRAPHY FORM  
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION  
Indian Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

WESLEY, . . . VERINA.

INTERVIEW.

12308.

Field Worker's name Johnson H. Hampton.

This report made on (date) December 1, 1937. 1937

1. Name Mrs. Verina Wesley, a full blood.

2. Post Office Address Antlers, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location)

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month August. Day x Year 1890.

5. Place of birth Near Talihina, Oklahoma.

6. Name of Father Thomas Frazier. Place of birth Near Talihina, Oklahoma.

Other information about father

7. Name of Mother Hannah Frazier. Place of birth Talihina, Oklahoma.

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.

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Johnson H. Hampton,  
Investigator,  
December 1, 1937.

An Interview With Mrs. Verina  
Wesley, Antlers, Oklahoma.

I was born some time in August, 1890, in what was then Wade County and near Whitesboro, about twelve miles east of Talihina.

My father's name was Thomas Frazier and my mother's name was Hannah Frazier. They were both raised in Wade County and lived there until they both died in this county and were buried at the old home place.

My father was part Chickasaw Indian but my mother was a full blood Choctaw Indian.

In the community where I was raised there were but very few Choctaws and no white people lived there at all. We lived at the foot of a big mountain in the valley. There were mountains on both sides of the Kiamichi River and we lived on the west side of the river. There was another community on the east side of the river in another valley, and on farther north of us was another community on both sides of the river. The country was wild, there being no people in it much. Those who were there lived from three to four miles apart.

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Our best trading point was at Fort Smith, Arkansas. My father would hitch up his team to a wagon, and go to Fort Smith for our groceries about twice a year. We did most of our trading at Talihina, but father would go to Fort Smith for some things as he said that he could get things cheaper there than at Talihina.

We had a small farm, about ten acres, where we raised corn for our bread, which was about all we needed.

We had cattle and hogs but we did not have any ponies. We did not have many cattle nor hogs, but enough to live on out on the farm. At that time the Choctaws did very little work on the farm, I guess they did not have to at that time, for there was lots of wild game in the country that they lived on. Father would go out and kill a deer or a turkey any time he wanted to, and there were lots of fish in the Liamichi River. Some of the Choctaws would go out and kill a bear once and a while. They used to say that there were a good many bears on the mountains east of where we lived.

We did not have much flour to eat those days. We ate mostly corn bread that we made by beating corn into meal in a block of wood which had a bowl on the end of it. We also ate hominy. They could make several kinds of food out of corn in that way.

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I was enrolled by the Dawes Commission at Talihina in 1898 or thereabouts, and then we made our filings on land in about 1903. We had to go to Atoka to file on our land, the land office being located there for the Choctaws. It took us several days to make the trip there and back.

The first payment the Choctaws had was in 1893, when they got \$103.00 each. After that they did not get any more payments for several years, then they got several payments.

We used to attend the Indian camp meeting; in fact, we used to camp at the church to help feed the people that came to attend the church. My father was an elder of the church during his life time, and we would go and camp with the other Choctaws every three months. This church is still in existence and is being used as the church yet. It was a Presbyterian church and named Wadesville Presbyterian church. Then we would attend another church which was called Post Oak Presbyterian church. This church was across the river from where we lived, about three miles from us. This church is an old church but it also is still there and being used by those Choctaws who are left.

I have attended the Indian cries. Some times they would have their cries at the church but most of the time they would

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have them at the homes where the grave was located.

Everyone there took part in the services and they would all get around the grave and cry, kinfolks or not. It is very sad thing to attend one of those cries.

I never saw an Indian dance nor a ball game. My mother and father were very devout Christians so they would not let us girls go to dances nor to a ball game, so I never did learn how to dance at all.

I went to neighborhood school for several terms. The school I attended has been out of existence for a long time. I then went to Wheelock Academy for several terms, which school is still running. I then went to Haskell Institute in Kansas for three terms. Although going to all of these schools, I did not learn much English, on account of being a full blood. I can speak some English and can read and write pretty well in English but in the years that I went to school I should have learned more than I did. I can speak Choctaw better than I can English but I can't read nor write in Choctaw.

I am full blood Choctaw Indians. My parents were full bloods and we lived among our tribe all of our life. My

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father was a part Chickasaw but he lived with the Choctaws  
all of his life and died at our old home place and my mother  
died there and is buried there with my father.