

~~MILLER, JOHN C.~~

INTERVIEW

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

Field Worker's name Johnson H. Hampton  
This report made on (date) March 24th, 1938

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1. Name John C. Miller  
2. Post Office Address Finley, Oklahoma  
3. Residence address (or location) \_\_\_\_\_  
4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month May Day 16 Year 1870  
5. Place of birth Kentucky

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6. Name of Father \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth Kentucky  
Other information about father \_\_\_\_\_  
7. Name of Mother \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth Kentucky  
Other information about mother \_\_\_\_\_

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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 24th 1938.

Interview with John C. Miller  
Intermarried white man.  
Finley, Oklahoma.

I was born May 16th, 1870, in Kentucky and I was about five years old when we came to the Indian Territory; I came to this country with my mother, my father having died at the old home back in Kentucky. My mother had some relative who had moved to this country who wrote to her to come out here as it was a fine country to work and make a living so Mother decided to come. We left our old home back in Kentucky in an ox wagon but before we got here we stopped in Texas and worked there for about a year, we then left there and came to this country. We landed at Canadian and located there on a farm which we rented from an Indian of the name of Kellogg. We lived on his farm for about three years and raised corn, cotton and other farm products and we raised hogs for our meat but we raised cattle only for milk and for home use and at that time there were no farms much around this place. The land was fine and a river ran near the town and this river had good bottom land on it, but there were but few farms there; the country was all open there was not much fencing anywhere and there were not many white people living

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in that country at that time, and I saw very few Indians there while I lived there. We then moved from there and came to Stringtown, Choctaw Nation, and I think that we were in and around Stringtown for about twenty years all told. The pine timber around this place was fine and not only pine timber but whiteoak, cedar and walnut timber and all this timber was cut out by the sawmill and the lumber was shipped out from this place. There must have been several millions of feet of lumber that went out of this small station until all the best timber was cut out in that part of the country by those sawmills which then were moved away.

Some time in 1884 we moved from Stringtown and went to Calaster; and we then moved from there to a sawmill which was located about seven or eight miles south of Hartshorne, we then moved from there to Clayton, on the Frisco railroad. We then moved from there to a little station which had a sawmill where my mother ran a boarding-house and we lived there for about two years. We then moved from there to another little station called Moscala, on the Frisco and we then moved back

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to Stanley. When we moved back to Stanley, my mother married a man of the name of Rutherford; we then moved back to Kosoma, and have lived there for about thirty years; my stepfather, Mr. Rutherford died there and is buried in the cemetery at Antlers.

When we came to Kosoma, there was a big planer located there. They got their lumber from the mountains where they had sawmills; they hauled the lumber from those mills to the planer here it was planed and shipped to some distant place where it was loaded on cars and shipped. The lumber was hauled by teams and oxen and they made pretty good money by hauling the lumber from those mills. At that time this country was full of fine yellow pine timber, cedar, whiteoak and walnut timber; this was very large timber but the mills soon cut them down; they got the best timber they could and then moved to some other place.

At that time there were lots of wild game, deer, turkey and other small game and a great deal of fish in the creeks and rivers; the boys would go out and kill deer or a turkey at any time they wanted and we could go down to the river and kill all the fish we wanted in a little while and some of the men killed some bears on the mountains and sold the meat to the people of the mill, and the Indians would sell their meat to them also. At that time this

country was a fine country but now it is all gone to nothing.

I married an Indian woman; I had to buy my permit to marry this Choctaw woman and it cost me \$100.00 in scrip. I could buy this scrip for about half price so it did not cost me the 100.00 but about \$50.00. Under the Choctaw law when a white man wanted to marry an Indian he could buy his licenses that way or he could marry without buying the permit, but in order to be within law of the Nation and by the advice of another man I thought that it would be best to buy the permit so I did so. The difference was that when you married under the Choctaw law you had the same rights and privileges as the Fullblood and were as much subject to their laws as one of them and you had a right to file on land and get the benefit of the payments like a Fullblood, but on the other hand if you did not get married under the Choctaw laws you were just a citizen and not entitled to any of the rights and privileges as a Fullblood, so when the Law's Commissioner came down to enroll the Choctaws, I know of several white men who had married Indian women by getting their licenses from Paris, Texas which was the nearest place to get licenses at that time. They had to get their permits and marry over after they had been married for a long time and they

found out that they would not get any land nor be entitled to their payments so they had to get married again in order to get on the rolls and have the right to select their land just the same as the Indians.

I have been among the Choctaw tribe ever since I have been here in their country and have had an Indian wife but I never did have any trouble with any of the Indians; in fact, they are all good people and attend to their own business and let others alone and are all honest and law-abiding citizens and make good neighbors. I never did attend any of their camp meetings nor any of their cries. I am now living at Finley, but my home is at Osoma where I have lived for the past thirty years with my mother and wife.