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CHANDLER, JAMES EWING INTERVIEW

JAMES EWING CHANDLER, Informant

-Jas S. Buchanan

Writers note ----- The following is of Mr. Chandler's own words and extracts from authentic records in his possession handed down from his father.

My grandfather, Jacob Chandler, was born in the year of 1793 in the state of Kentucky, and when a child moved with his parents to Tennessee, where he grew to manhood and married Miss Elizabeth Reeder. About 1825 he and his family moved West of the Mississippi River locating in the territory then occupied by the Choctaws, but two years later moved to the vicinity of Evansville, Arkansas, where he died in 1876. My Grandmother, Elizabeth Reeder Chandler, died when quite young, at the age of 36, in the year 1836. My father James M. Chandler, was educated in the Cane Hill College, which, at that time, was the best school in the state of Arkansas. At the age of eighteen he began teaching in the schools of the Cherokee Nation at a salary of \$33 1/3 per month, but thinking that he could not rise in that profession, he resigned and accepted a position as clerk in a store at a salary of \$12.00 per month. After working for his employer until salary due him was almost as much as the stock in the store was worth, he and his

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partner, N. B. Dunningburg moved the stock to a place one-half mile north of Evansville, Arkansas, and began business.

In 1856, my father was married to Margaret L. Morrow, daughter of Reverend George Morrow, and to them was born one son, William M. Chandler. Margaret Morrow Chandler lived only five years after their marriage, and died in 1861.

In 1862, James M. Chandler enlisted in the Confederate Army and served in the Commissary Department most of the time under Stan Waite until the close of the War.

In 1865, Mr. Chandler married Helen N. Ewing, daughter of Reverend Young Ewing. This union resulted in the birth of five children, Charles H., Addie D., Lula E., Lillian, and myself, James Ewing Chandler. In 1867 after the close of the Civil War he opened a store in Evansville, Arkansas, and continued in that business until about 1890. He was also Postmaster at Evansville for several years. He was a Democrat, and he and his mother belonged to the M. E. Church South.

James M. Chandler was born April 23, 1833, near the town of Evansville, Arkansas, where he spent the greater

part of his life and reared his family, enduring the many hardships of a life on the border of the Indian Territory in those days. In their declining years they moved to Muskogee in 1909, where father died in 1914, and mother in 1924.

#### INDIAN OCCUPATION OF NORTHWEST ARKANSAS

The Indian occupation of Northwest Arkansas presents points of interest in early days history. That territory was first claimed by the Osages and was frequently visited by them in their hunting tours, but it is not probable that they had any established villages in that region. As early as 1808 some of the Cherokees settled above Point Remove on the Arkansas River and by a treaty made July 17, 1817, acquired title to the territory west of the line from the mouth of Point Remove on the Arkansas River, to a point on White River to the town of Debuks, thence, west of south to the mouth of Frog Bayou. To this country a large number of Cherokees were transferred. Bands of Shawnees and Delawares also established themselves in this region and had quite a large village near where the town of Yellville now stands. Hunting parties came into what is now Washington County,

(until later treaties, considered Indian Territory), where they found abundance of game.

In 1825 a treaty was made at St. Louis between Governor William Clark and a Deputation of Chiefs and Warriors of the Great and Little Osages. By it the title to the following territory was relinquished. Beginning at the Arkansas River where the Osage Boundary line strikes it at the mouth of Frog Bayou, thence, up the Arkansas River to the mouth of the Verdigris River to the falls of the Verdigris, (where the town of Okay now stands), thence, eastward to the said Osage line at a point twenty leagues north from the Arkansas River and thence, to place of beginning.

This tract was known as "Lovely's Purchase", and afterwards constituted Lovely County. By a treaty between the

United States and the Cherokees, who had been located in Arkansas, made on May 6, 1828, the western boundary of the state was defined as follows: A line shall be run commencing on Red River at a point where the Eastern Choctaw line strikes said river and run due north with said river to the River Arkansas, thence, in a direct line to the Southwest corner of Missouri. This cut of the greater

part of Lovely County, and on October 17, 1828, the Legislature passed an act extinguishing the county and establishing the county of Washington, embracing the Territory in which Jacob Chandler settled in the year of 1827 and James M. Chandler was born six years later.

By the treaty of 1829 the Cherokees exchanged the Territory occupied by them between White River and the Arkansas River for territory West of the present state line to which they were removed. This country embraced a strip of which is now a part of Northwest Arkansas and the white citizens that were removed east of the western boundary were indemnified from such loss by reason of such removal by a grant of 320 acres of land to the head of each family.

(The following is from the writing of Reverend John Buchanan in the old history of Washington County which was the property of James M. Chandler, now in possession of James E. Chandler at Okay)

In the year of 1826 before the treaty was made giving the white people the right of settling in what is now Washington County, then considered Indian Territory, a few settlers were in that country and were considered as trespassers. In the summer of 1826 a command of soldiers were sent from Fort Gibson to remove them. The soldiers notified

the settlers to vacate the territory and went into the fields and chopped their corn down with their swords and when the soldiers had completed their work and returned to Fort Gibson, the settlers went into their fields and shocked the corn, the soldiers had cut down and remained on their claims until the Treaty was made in 1828, with the Cherokees giving the right of settlement to the white people and fixing the line which divides the state of Arkansas from the Indian Territory. So from then on immigration into that country was rapid.

(The following is a copy of an affidavit written by hand on a certificate of election issued to Jacob Chandler, as Justice of the Peace of Vinyard Township of Washington County in 1866 complying with the law of Arkansas prohibiting the fighting of duels in that state after January 1st, 1838.)

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State of Arkansas  
County of Washington.

I, Jacob Chandler, do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the State of Arkansas and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office of Justice of the Peace. And furthermore swear that I have nor directly or indirectly been engaged in any manner concerned in any duel, or give or been the bearer of any challenge to fight a duel in this state since the first day of January, 1838.

JAMES EWING CHANDLER

-Jas S. Buchanan

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Sworn to and subscribed before me October 31st, 1866.

Signed -

Sam P. Blake, J.P. -----

Signed -

Jacob Chandler.

When the Cherokees were brought from Tennessee and Georgia in 1838 and located on the territory since known as the Cherokee Nation, the immigration brought with it a great number of those doubtful characters that have always been found on the extreme frontiers of our civilized settlements. They were attracted here in unusual numbers by the fact that the Indians had been paid a large sum of money for their improvements upon their old reservation and were flush with silver and gold. They came to sell them whiskey, gamble and trade with them. Runaways from every state in the Union were collected along the Cherokee line and preyed alike on the whites and the Indians. For the especial benefit of these desperadoes, as it seems, grocery stores were erected immediately upon the line, one half of the house being in Washington County and the other half in the Cherokee Nation, so when a crime was committed in one part of the grocery the offender had but to step across a plank in the floor and he was in another jurisdiction beyond the reach of legal process issued by the court on the side he had committed the crime.