

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

CHRISTIE, EMMA.

INTERVIEW.

7706.

Field Worker's name W. J. B. Bigby.

This report made on (date) September 30, 1937. 1937

1. Name Emma Christie.

2. Post Office Address Christie, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) Christie, Oklahoma.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month July Day 15 Year 1861.

5. Place of birth Belleview, Texas.

6. Name of Father John Christie. Place of birth Georgia.

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Jennie Starr. Place of birth Georgia.

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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W. J. B. Bigby,
Investigator,
Sept. 30, 1937.

Interview with Emma Christie
Christie, Oklahoma.

I am a quarter blood Cherokee, born at Belleview, Texas, July 15, 1861. My father was John Christie and my mother was Jennie Starr, daughter of Jim Starr who was killed by a mob for participating in the treaty which caused the Removal. There were eight of us children, Ella, George, Emma, Lucy, Samson, Jim and Simmie of whom two are living now, Jim and I. We live near Christie.

My family moved to Texas immediately after the killing of Jim Starr and I was born while there, during the Civil War. About 1868 the family came back to the Indian Territory, settling in the Starr Community south of Stillwell, and remained in this community one summer. The next year we bought improvements at Piney, the farm now owned by Frank Adair, and three years later we sold these improvements at Piney and moved to Christie on Peacheater branch. I now live just thirty yards from where the old buildings were when we moved there; the old smokehouse is still standing

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over a hundred years old. Tom Sanders, an old Cherokee, owned the place before we bought it. Most of my early life was spent at this place where I still live, I never married.

I finished the eighth grade at the old Whitmire plantation school located on a prairie about three miles southeast of Christie. The same schoolhouse served as a courthouse and in this building Zeke Proctor had his fight on April 15, 1872. Some of the first teachers were Mrs. McLain, Mary Whitmire and a Mr. Mack, the latter was the last teacher. I went to school at Whitmire.

Cincinnati, Arkansas, was our trading and milling point and the early traders at this place were a Mr. Craig, Bill and Bob Rhea, brothers, and the Moore Brothers who operated the mill which at that time was located about a mile and a half south of the present town of Cincinnati.

When our family first came to the Indian country there were not many diseases among the Cherokees, chills being the most common ailment among them. Consumption was also common and meant death to the Indians for they did not know how to treat it. Most of our medicine was made of bark and roots

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gathered from the woods; we also did mythical doctoring, that is faith doctoring, which is still done by the full-bloods. Among the Cherokees, Youngwolf Vann, Jackson Redbird and Quatie Redbird were well-known doctors in this part of the nation.

People did not need much money then but when they needed more than they had, they borrowed from one another; notes and mortgages were not known.

Game and fish were plentiful, I have seen as many as twenty deer in a bunch. All along the branch, in the valley where we lived, were cane patches and in winter deer came to eat of the leaves of these. Turkeys were also found in bunches. Most of the meat consumed by the Cherokees was wild game, deer was prepared as hog meat. Some Cherokees would smoke the meat. I have seen as many as three or four deer hanging in the smokehouse.

My father joined the Confederate Army and served out the four years with the South but he never told of any battle he took a part in.

The earliest church in this part of the country was at Green, about four miles east of here. The Methodist people established a church near the home of Sher-

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iff Ben Knight, now a mile north of Addieloe in 1876. Aaron Corntassell was an active church worker at this time. Later, Reverend Adkins was appointed a Circuit Rider and held services at Whitmire School; and he came once a month. Cherokee ministers helped him in these services; among them were Johnson Spade, John Gritts and Adam Lacie.

The only camp meeting I ever attended was at Rabbit Trap, about 1880; I believe about fifteen hundred people were present.

The earliest post office was Goingsnake which was located at the courthouse on Peacheater, about five miles north of Christie, now called Strawberry Springs; Ben Chandler was the first postmaster; later, Charley Cox.

The Cherokees in the Christie community opposed the allotment of their lands and the laying of railroad through their nation.