

INDEX CARDS:

Choctaw Nation
Gaines County
Wilburton
Living Conditions
Choctaw Railroad

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

Field Worker's name Bradley Bolinger

This report made on (date) Junell 1937

1. Name Louise Hall Cook--Widow 67 years of age.
2. Post Office Address Wilburton, Oklahoma.
3. Residence address (or location) _____
4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month May Day 22 Year 1870
5. Place of birth Near Dalton, Georgia--Murray County.
6. Name of Father John Johnson Hall Place of birth Dalton, Georgia
 Other information about father _____
7. Name of Mother Mary Ann Smythe Hall Place of birth _____
 Other information about mother All the death records of my parents.

were destroyed in fire the burning of my home. I have forgotten them.

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 _____.

An interview with Louise Hall Cook.

A widow of 67 years of age.

Born near Dalton, Georgia.

Bradley Bolinger, Field Worker.

My father's name was John Johnson Hall, born near Dalton, Georgia. The record of his birth and age was burned with my home and I do not remember them.

My mother's name was Mary Ann Smythe Hall. She was born near Dalton, Georgia, and her records were also burned when my home burned and I do not remember these either.

My husband was Uriah Cook. We were married on February 23, 1885 and moved to the Indian Territory to begin our life. That is we were married and first moved to Ozark County, Mo., later to what is now Latimer County. This county was named during the Choctaw government as Gaines County, Choctaw Nation.

My husband about one year after we came to the Choctaw Nation was trying to cross the Gaines Creek which runs now through this county about 10 miles west of Wilburton. He was traveling with a good team of horses and harness and wagon and was trying to ford this creek when it was up bank full. My husband and his team were drowned in this crossing. This crossing is located at this present time where Highway No. 270 runs with a good substantial bridge across this creek from Fort Smith to McAlester.

-2-

When we moved to the Choctaw Nation we settled right in the townsite of what is now Wilburton, Oklahoma. There was nothing here then but just a trading post. This trading post was operated by a man named Lewis Rockett. There were only a few white settlers in this Choctaw Nation in those days and most of those white settlers were what they called intermarried Choctaw citizens. That is a white man who married an Indian squaw and had met all the Choctaw requirements to be classed as an intermarried citizen and could realize the same privileges as the fullblood Choctaw Indian.

There was a school house and a church house located on this ground at this time but mostly this building was used for a public gathering place. When this building was built and for some reason I was never able to find out there never was any windows built in the building. That made it a dark looking big room even on a bright sunshiney day. When a few of the white settlement women came to this country they all got together and got some windows cut in this old building.

About the time the Choctaw railroad was coming through this country a man by the name of Riddle was operating a

-3-

kind of a country store and trading post where Wilburton now stands. My brother, Mr. R. H. Hall, was helping to operate this trading post in those days and about all the outlaw acts that came to my attention then was the hold-up of the store and to the best of my knowledge that was done by white men. Mr. Hall was held up for all his personal belongings and everything valuable that was in the store. From all information the robbers were of the white race and were never caught.

When we settled here in the Choctaw Nation you could raise cattle and hogs and it was not necessary to try to raise feed stuff for livestock. Most of the valleys between the mountains afforded a very good grazing for hogs and cattle. They could come through the winter on the forage in the creek bottoms between the mountains and the hogs could get fat on the forage of the nut and acorn trees.

There was a man who lived in the Choctaw Nation in what was called Gaines County by the name of J. S. Latimer. This man had the reputation of being one of the best settlers in the Choctaw Nation, as he had the welfare of the early settlers at heart. Therefore they named the County Latimer after Statehood went into effect.