

MYERS, HENRY S.

INTERVIEW

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Jas. S. Buchanan,
Investigator,
December 15, 1937.

an Interview with Mr. Henry S. Myers,
4118 W. Broadway, Muskogee, Okla.

I was born October 25, 1875, five miles west of Muskogee in the Creek Nation. My father was John A. Myers, Creek freedman, the son of A. G. Myers, a white man and Harriet Cooney, a Creek freedwoman. Father was reared at Fort Gibson and near Muskogee. In early manhood he was married to Hagar Lewis, Creek, the daughter of Henry and Dianah Davis Lewis. She was also a Creek freedwoman. Four children were born to them, including myself.

Soon after their marriage Father established a claim five miles west and two miles north of Muskogee, on Pecan Creek. The four children of the family were born on that place and the family resided there until the Creek allotments were made.

During Father's early life he became active in political affairs of the Creek Nation and was personal aid and interpreter for Isparhechor during his stormy political period and the Green Peach War and was with

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Isparhecher during his winter refuge in the Comanche country where he and his followers were extended the hospitality and protection of that tribe by the Chief, Asa Habbe. Father remained in the Comanche country with Isparhecher until the following Spring when a detachment of United States soldiers conducted Isparhecher and his followers back to the Creek Nation with a guarantee of protection until peace could be made between the warring factions.

Later he served eight years in the service of the Creek Light Horse, then he was elected as a member of the Creek council in which capacity he served until the abolition of the Creek Government.

I was reared and grew to manhood on the old home place west of Muskogee and attended the Creek schools, also the Baptist Mission school at Tullahasse and the Pecan Creek Mission school west of Muskogee. When I first started to school at Tullahasse it was a mixed school for Creek and freedmen children, but during the time I was there it was made an exclusive colored school. I attended the Pecan Creek mission the first term it was open. J.P.

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Davidson, whose Creek name was "Buz" Hawkins, was the first superintendent of the Pecan Creek Mission.

After the Indian Agency moved from the stone building on Agency Hill into Muskogee, in 1872, the building was unused until the Creek Government established a Creek orphans home and school and used the building for that purpose for several years. Another memory of the old Agency Hill that lingers in my mind is of the old wind grist mill that stood a short distance from the Agency building and when I was only a child I would accompany my grandmother when she would take corn to the mill to have their meal ground. The mill could not grind the corn only when there was a good strong wind blowing, so when there would be a spell of good strong wind the neighborhood would all take their little batch of corn upon the hill to be ground. An old gentleman by the name of Foreman owned the mill. I always heard him called Major Foreman.

My first work after leaving school was riding range and herding cattle for "Buz" Hawkins, a Creek who had large herds on the range west of Muskogee.

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I was with Hawkins about three years. Leaving that job I went to work for Captain Severs riding range and worked for him about two years. At that time Captain Severs had a pasturage lease about twenty miles square. His lease covered the Territory from Muskogee south almost to Oktaha, west to near where Boynton now stands, then ran a northeast direction to the vicinity of where the little town of Taft was later built, then east to Muskogee. There was an extensive cattle business carried on in this country until the allotments were made and the country began to settle up and one of the greatest cattle ranges destroyed, and an industry put out of business that was more prof-

itable than the same country has proven to be for agriculture in later years.

Leaving Mr. Severs, I went into partnership with Bustin Hawkins and put in a store and engaged in the mercantile business. Our store was located north of Tullahassee on the north side of Verdigris River, at the old swinging bridge. We conducted this business together

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about three years, when I sold out my interest to Hawkins and moved back to Muskogee and accepted a position as collector for W. H. Batesman, who was in the real estate business here at the time. I was with Mr. Batesman about one year. Leaving that position, I went into the real estate business for myself, in 1906, and engaged in that business for some time and in that adventure was where my money and I separated.

In 1912 I was married to Hattie Scott, Creek freedman. I have one daughter by that marriage. Our married life was not a success and resulted in separation in 1916.

In 1924 I was married to Lillian Owens, by whom I have two children.
