

NEWBERRY, GUY

INTERVIEW

#6838

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NEWBERRY, GUY INTERVIEW
BIOGRAPHY FORM

Form A-(S-149)

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WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

6838

Field Worker's name Bradley Bolinger

This report made on (date) July 22, 1937

1. Name Guy Newberry

2. Post Office Address Wilburton, Oklahoma, R. F. D.

3. Residence address (or location) about 4 miles Northwest of Wilburton

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month November Day 8 Year 1870

5. Place of birth Near Jefferson, Texas

6. Name of Father Jim Newberry Place of birth Tennessee

Other information about father Buried in the Paris, Texas, cemetery

7. Name of Mother Mattie Calhoun Newberry Place of birth Tennessee

Other information about mother Buried by my father in Paris, Texas

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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Guy Newberry, Wilburton, Oklahoma.

Born, November 8, 1870, near
Jefferson, Texas.

My father's name was Jim Newberry. He was born in Tennessee but moved to Texas and died there and was buried in the Paris cemetery.

My mother's name was Mattie Calhoun Newberry, she was born in the state of Tennessee. She went to Texas with my father and died and was buried also in the Paris cemetery.

I then came to the Choctaw Nation and settled near Limestone on the Limestone prairie and have been living in this county ever since. It was called or named by the Choctaw Tribe, Caines County; then, later after statehood was re-named Latimer, after the first Representative who was sent to the capital then at Guthrie, Oklahoma.

My experience in this Choctaw Nation in the early day was that all the women did all the work, such as raising the corn that they used to make their bread. The women worked these patches and gathered the corn and cleaned it for their Tom Fuller and Pashofa. The men would just sit around the house and do no work at all. That seemed to be the entire Choctaw custom. It was his duty

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to go out in the woods and do all the hunting to furnish the table with meat and lard and some clothing from the fur bearing animals that were killed in the fall and winter. That was about all I ever saw any of the Choctaw men do. They used the old time muzzle loading rifle and shot gun. They had a cow's horn trimmed and smoothed off for a powder horn and carried the shot in another skin bag around their waist. These guns had to be loaded with a ramrod every-time they were shot.

There were no fences in the whole country in those days and when you raised any form of livestock, all that was necessary was to mark and brand the animal and turn it out in the open. Stock would do well all the year around.

The Choctaws did not do their courting and sparking when they were old enough to marry. The male Choctaw would find out if the girl would want to live with him and they would go together to the Choctaw preacher and have him say the Choctaw wedding ceremony and make a record of this in his book in the Choctaw language and thus they were married as man and wife.

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All the husband had to do was go out and find them a suitable place and get some of his friends to help him build a cabin out of logs and move into it. There was very little furniture in these cabins and most of what they had was home made.

When a Choctaw family came to visit a white settler and to sell the colored cane baskets the woman had made they would not come up close to the house. They would always stop outside somewhere in the trees and stay there until some of the white people would notice them and go out and tell them to come in.

The McCurtain family was an educated family of Choctaws when they came to this country from the south. There were three brothers and all three of these brothers served as governors and high tribal chiefs of the Choctaw tribes.

The Choctaw Indian was not hard to get along with, once you got acquainted with them, as they were very peaceable.

The white settlers did not have to work very hard to live in this country then. It was not necessary for them to have to farm and raise any feed much because the

country was full of plenty of forage and the cattle and hogs would stay in pretty good shape all the year around.

The Choctaws would gather at their meeting places along in the summer and fall and have what they called their Indian Crys. They would gather in for miles around and always bring along enough wild game such as deer and wild turkey to feed the whole crowd for a week at a time. The Choctaw preachers always made this "Cry" and would preach to all of them; then they would go out in the yard and eat and then go over to the graves of their family and their friends and cry and take on over the graves. These meeting would sometimes last for a week.

The Choctaw Indians did not seem to want to settle close together in what you would consider a settlement. They just built their cabin out to themselves and it looked like that they did not visit with each other much.

The only gathering of the tribe with the exception of the Indian Crys was the big Indian ball games where all the players would strip to the waist and use two cup shaped ball sticks to carry the ball and throw it with. This was a plenty rough game and some of the players would

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come through it pretty well skinned up. The players were not allowed to do any fighting in the game regardless whether they got mad or not, but they were allowed in some of their scuffles after the ball to throw each other down hard on the ground, that is if they were the strongest man, and this would get pretty tough.

The white settlers came into the country and settled down after Wilburton and Red Oak and Hartshorne had started to build good towns here. The Choctaws seem to have developed a lot of the white man's ways of living.