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

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HUFFMAN, ALLEN WILLIAM

INTERVIEW

4836

Field Worker's name Robert H. Boatman,

This report made on (date) July 12, 1937

1. Name Allen William Huffman,

2. Post Office Address Purcell, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month October Day 16 Year 1867

5. Place of birth Indiana

6. Name of Father Hiram S. Place of birth Indiana

Other information about father Farmer

7. Name of Mother Ellen McWharten Place of birth Indiana

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 3

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Robert H. Boatman,
Interviewer,
July 12, 1937.

An Interview with Allen William Huffman,
Purcell, Oklahoma.

I was born October 16, 1867, in Indiana. I began my life on the farm with my father in the state of Indiana and there I continued to live until at the age of twenty-one years, I then started in life for myself.

I quit the farm and began work as a wage earner. Then in 1889, I was hired as depot agent at Purcell by the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company and have been with the same company at the same place continuously since that time.

I have seen the development of the rolling stock from a rude locomotive of a speed rather slow to the best modern equipped trains known, with locomotives of a speed capacity of 100 miles an hour and with many thousands of miles of railroad from coast to coast. I knew Purcell in 1889 only as a very small place; a depot, and two or three stores and only a few rude dwelling houses.

When Purcell was established as a Division Center

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from Newton, Kansas, and Fort Worth, Texas, the town grew very rapidly. The townsite was laid off, store buildings were built, homes erected and business began in general. Most all the buildings at first were log buildings but after the railroad was fully established, lumber was shipped in from Louisiana and the Carolinas by train loads and log houses were done away with and frame buildings began taking their places.

Purcell has developed successfully and the railroad has developed along with it. Many thousands of head of cattle and hogs and many farm products have been shipped from Purcell by railroad to practically every market known. The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company has today the most modern equipped trains and some of the best lines of among the leading railroads of our country.

A Mr. George Gerard, who drove the first locomotive over the new road when it was built through Purcell, has been with the company continuously and is still an engineer operating out of Purcell, west.

We have a picture of the first locomotive of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Company. As time passed a

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roundhouse was built; railroad shops, freight houses, and elevators and when in 1907, this Territory, with Oklahoma Territory was admitted as the state of Oklahoma, Purcell became the county seat of McClain County. Today we have a very beautiful city with something over 3,000 population. I have been in Purcell since 1889, and think there is no other place that could really be called home.