

SMALL, ROBERT W. CEMETERIES--MISCELLANEOUS--#8785 267  
NEZ PERCE AND TONKAWA

## KAY COUNTY.

## BURIAL GROUND FORM

## WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

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Field worker's name Robert W. Small.This report made on (date) September 24, 1937

1. Name (if any) of burial ground Name of the Nez-Perce tribe  
Some time during period that they lived on their reservation here.;
2. Founded (date) Lived on their reservation here.; By
3. Abandoned (date) When they left. Why abandoned
4. Present owners of premises Allotted by a member of Tonkawa tribe.

Address of present owners 

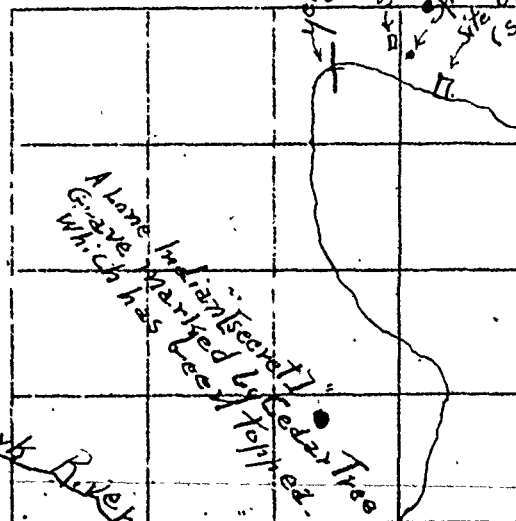
NOTE: Answer fully, if possible, questions 5 to 13 inclusive, here or on sheets firmly attached to this form.

5. Original owners of premises. Formerly a part of Nez Perce reservation.
6. Give names of other persons who at one time owned the premises. 3
7. Approximate number of graves. 3 (Not including "secret" grave)
8. Approximate number of marked graves No markers at present time.
9. General condition of headstones, including inscriptions. None
10. Number of inscriptions copied and attached. None (Place each inscription on a separate sheet and attach all to this form).
11. Any other information you were able to gather about the burial ground including its history. See attached note,
12. Condition of the premises In a cultivated field. at one edge.
13. Detailed location of burial ground.

14. Legal location of burial ground, County Key CountySection 8 Township 25 N. Range 1 W.

The plat on this form represents 640 acres, one square mile, and is subdivided into 40 acre tracts. The center of the section, and burial ground should be located accordingly. If possible, make additional subdivisions on plat to give more accurate location.

Number of sheets attached

to this form 1

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About a quarter of a mile from the city limits of Tonkawa, ~~on~~ the west side and about three hundred yards below the old site of Yellow Bull Crossing on the Salt Fork River three Indian graves were situated on a high bank on the north side of the river and two of these graves had markers of common native stone in the year 1892. One of these graves is said to be that of Yellow Bull, Chief of the Nez Perce tribe of Indians. All trace of these graves has become obliterated in recent years and the markers have been removed, although the exact place of interment is confined to a relatively small space of ground that extends out on a high bank somewhat closer to the river than other surrounding lands; this ground is in a cultivated field.

A lone grave, referred to on the attached plat is located two or three hundred yards from the Salt Fork River, on the north side and is in the bottom lands of the river; no road or trail is near this spot; the grave is marked by a cedar tree not a common growth of timber to this section. The top part of the cedar tree was cut

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off some years ago for a Christmas tree and a near relative of the Indian buried at the spot expressed regret over the matter and the owner of the land, Mr. C. L. Gilkeson has forbidden further trespassing on the sanctity of the spot that is only marked by this cedar tree. Mr. Gilkeson states that this grave was one that is known as a secret grave by the Indians. For some reason it was desired to bury the body in a secret and isolated spot and to avoid the erection of a mound or monument of any kind but the small cedar was planted among the native growth of brush and has grown into a tree of considerable size and stands a silent sentinel at the secret grave.

Statements contained herein were made in interview with C. L. Gilkeson, owner of S.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$ , Sec. 8, and the lessee of N. E.  $\frac{1}{4}$ , Sec. 8, in 1892, who has lived here continuously since.