

HENDRIX, BELL.

INTERVIEW

10313

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

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Field Worker's name Lillian Cassaway.

This report made on (date) March 26, 1938. 1938

1. Name Bell Hendrix.

2. Post Office Address Anadarko, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) 409 West Broadway.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month February Day 1 Year 1887.

5. Place of birth Pleasant Hill, Missouri.

6. Name of Father S. P. Fansler. Place of birth West Virginia.

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Sarah Bradley Fansler. Place of birth Pennsylvania.

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 _____.

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Lillian Gassaway,
Investigator,
March 26, 1938.

Interview With Bell Hendrix,
Anadarko, Oklahoma.

My father came to Gracemont in 1902. We had been living in Isabel/^{la}and while living there the headmaster of the railroad came and asked my father to come to Gracemont and supervise the laying of the switch tracks, as he was one of the best switch layers on the road. They gave him about two hundred Greeks to work. We were at Locksba for awhile and followed the railroad on south.

Our home was in two railroad cars. One was used for a living room and bedroom and the other was our kitchen and dining room. These cars were placed by the side of the track and end to end. There was a covered porch from one to the other, which was walled up with a door in the side and steps leading down to the ground. It was very comfortable and there was plenty of room.

A Mr. Bailey, who still lives at Gracemont and who had a little store not far away, used to come to Anadarko and get our supplies for us if he couldn't supply them.

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If he didn't have room to bring them to us he would send them up on the train.

There were several trains out of Anadarko a day, going north. One time, there was a flood and the tracks were washed out between Anadarko and Gracemont and there were no trains out for about a week. During that time Mr. Bailey brought all our supplies. There was nothing at Gracemont then except our box car depot and all our supplies were brought to us, even our water. The train would stop by our house and fill our two water barrels that we had of the cars by the side, by running a hose from the tank to the barrels. My mother had what she called her water rags, large pieces of heavy canvas that she put over the barrels before she put a lid over them. This was to keep out all dirt. These two barrels of water would last us until the train came again.

One day, during the winter, while my father was away at work, my mother looked up the road and saw an Indian coming along the road in a wagon. We watched him, for we were not used to Indians and didn't know what he might do.

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He was driving slowly and sat like he was pretty cold. He kept looking at our house and as we had the door open we could see him step. He got out of the wagon and came to the door and by the way he pulled the blanket around him we knew that he meant to say that he was cold. Mother asked him in and sat him down in front of the kitchen fire. He sat there quite a while then he began to sniff the air and act as if he was hungry. Mother had some vegetable soup on cooking, and when it was almost done we tried to make signs and ask him if he was hungry. Our signs were not very good but we finally made him understand what we were trying to say. Mother gave him a bowl of soup and he ate it and two or three more bowlfuls. He ate so much we wondered if there was going to be enough left for the rest of us. When the Indian had finished eating and he had gotten warm he made a few grunts and left. I never learned who he was and I never saw him again.

My father made arrangements with Mr. Ogle of the Old People's Store at Anadarko to hold the store open on a Sunday morning so that he could bring the Creeks down to

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do their trading as that was the only way and the only day that they could get off. Every time they came to town they soon spent several hundred dollars. Sometimes the clerks would try to overcharge them but the interpreters would find it out and then my father would find it out. He told the clerks that the men didn't have to come to Anadarko to trade and they could go to El Reno if they didn't want to treat the men right, as it didn't cost them anything for transportation and it would be just as easy to go over there. Often, my mother and I would come down, too, and do some trading for ourselves.

Father finally went back to Isabella but he has since worked at Hitchcock and Geronimo. He is now living in Geronimo.