

SCOTT, J. W. INTERVIEW.

#6184

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BIOGRAPHY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for OklahomaField Worker's name Grace KelleyThis report made on (date) June 9 19371. Name J. W. Scott2. Post Office Address Henryetta, Oklahoma3. Residence address (or location) Gilliam Addition4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month _____ Day _____ Year 18645. Place of birth Kingston Mo.6. Name of Father James D. Scott Place of birth North Carolina

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Mary McIntosh Place of birth Tenn.

Other information about mother _____

Notes or complete narrative by the field worker dealing with the life and work 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 _____.

FIELD WORKER GRACE KELLEY
Indian-Pioneer History S-149
June 9, 1937.

INTERVIEW WITH J. W. SCOTT
Born 1854, Kingston Mo.
Henryetta, Oklahoma

Father's name James D. Scott
Born North Carolina.
Mother's name Mary McIntosh
Born Tenn.

MY EARLY LIFE

In 1859, when I was five years old, my people crossed the plains from Missouri to Colorado and were attacked by the Indians three times. The Colorado Indians went on the War Path periodically and without any cause. My experiences with the Indians and Indian fighting were in Colorado so even if interesting would be unimportant to you. Those Indians were very different from the Five Civilized Tribes.

RAILROAD CONTRACTORS

In the year of 1885 my brothers, James and Andrew, and I moved our railroad outfit to the Indian Territory, as we had gotten a contract building the grades for the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad. This road went bankrupt and was later re-

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organized as a part of the Frisco and was extended into Oklahoma City and on into Quanah, Texas.

We were known as the Scott Brothers, Contractors, and had from a hundred to two hundred and fifty men working for us all the time. The heavier the grading or the harder the work, the more men would be worked but we never had less than a hundred working at one time. They were strung out the full length of the contract so that everyone could work without interfering with anyone else and in that way the grade would be finished sooner. The men were paid a dollar and a half a day, or two and a half with a team. Some of the men had their wives with them, and their families, too. They lived in tents, I don't remember how many there were though. We always had a Commissary with us; it took two long tents and had a stock of general merchandise as good as any big store. We had a book-keeper and some clerks; Tom Wilson usually had charge of the store. Quite a few Indians traded with us, and I can't tell that they have changed much in their trading.

Our first Contract was for two miles north and east of Tulsa, When we finished that we switched a box car on to a track for a depot.

TULSA TOWN LATER TULSA

There wasn't much of a town there, just a Creek village, having a trading store and harness shop, box hotel, blacksmith, hardware store and a few Indian residences. I little thought it would become a city as it is today.

RED FORK

The next spring, 1886 we built the railroad from Tulsa over to Red Fork which was ^a cattle loading point, and it laid there for two years. Then we got the entire contract from Red Fork to Sapulpa.

SAPULPA

Sapulpa was just a little Indian Trading Post, having a box hotel, blacksmith, Price Harness and Saddle shop, Turner's Trading Store. That was all of the business houses there at that time.

MAIL DELIVERY

When we were working on the Tulsa railroad it ended at Vinita so the mail for us was brought to Tulsa from Vinita by horseback. We sent our men to the store in Tulsa after it. When we were at Red Fork and later at Sapulpa and my wife wrote to me, she would address the letter to me at Red Fork or Sapulpa and it would come to Tulsa on the train and would be brought the rest of the way horseback.

OLD PERRYMAN PASTURE

The old Perryman Pasture was forty miles long by twenty wide. They fenced it and whoever rented it had their riders who took care of the fence, called Fence Riders.

The Perrymans were well educated, prominent people. Legus Perryman was Chief of the Creeks and another was the Justice of the Peace.

There were thousands of head of cattle in this pasture, I wouldn't have any idea how many, there were so many.

A few years later I was Superintendent for Frank P. Anderson, Contractor on a fly-by-night railroad from Red Fork to Mounds. (there were ten miles). A man by the name of Brown schemed this railroad which had no charter.

HENRYETTA, COAL MINES.

About 1899 or 1900 I came to Henryetta, which had no name, and opened the first coal mine and loaded the first load of coal out of the Henryetta District. It was a strip pit and had no name at that time but was later called the Old Central. It was east of town, and had a tent town but sent to Henryetta for provisions. Forty or fifty men worked there. The dirt was taken off with horses and slips then the coal was taken up with picks and shovels. There was no underground work at that time.

Henryetta had a box hotel, blacksmith, J. C. Hall and Co. General Merchandise or Trading Store, Harness Shop, Price Reynolds Hardware Store, Saloon tent by the Frisco Depot.

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Hugh Henry lived where J. R. Reynolds lives now, 509 W. Moore, and it was a long way out of town to his house. All around Henryetta were pastures.

Hay making

My brother put up several tons of hay around Henryetta, and in what is town now. The Blue Stem grass was as high as your head. The grass has been burned out and trampled until the better grasses have died out and left the harder and not-so-good grasses.

HUNTING

When I came to Henryetta the deer tracks were as thick around the mines as sheep tracks on a sheep ranch. They would ruin a patch of corn in a night. There were turkeys, ducks and everything was plentiful. My favorite sport was hunting but I didn't care much for fishing.

SNAKE UPRISING

Chitto Harjo and his followers were against white settlement, and no Indian nor Freedman could rent his land to a white person. If he did he was taken out and killed. Then they decided to run the whites out of the Creek Nation; at one time the soldiers were sent to get and arrest Crazy Snake, but he eluded them and would ride through the coal camp with his men. We would send our wives

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and children to Henryetta every night as we were afraid to risk their staying at the camp. They went to the hotel for we had no friends in town to stay with. The soldiers at last arrested him and his band. I saw them in the cattle pens guarded by soldiers. There were thirty or forty of his men, their horses and everything in there. They were held a while, three or four days, and turned loose.

Several years later he again organized; went down to the Hickory Ground town and had a big meeting and was going to come up and take Henryetta. The whites heard about it and formed a company and went to the Hickory Grounds after them. Several were killed on the Indian side but none on the white side. I think the Indian side was mostly negroes. I don't think anyone knows where Chitto Harjo died or was buried. He was a rover among the Indians, trying to keep them against the whites and I don't know where his home was, if he had one.

BELLE STARR

When I was at Tulsa I met Belle Starr, her daughter and brother, Henry. Regardless of all the crimes they committed and were accused of committing, I found them

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the most agreeable sort of people, unless aroused and in a case of that kind they settled with their guns. I well remember meeting her. I had a Frenchman, Fontaine, working. One night he returned to camp drunk and without his money. He told all around that Belle Starr robbed him. She heard about it and rode up to me, at the camp, and asked to see Fontaine. I've always tried to do whatever a lady asked if possible, and this lady had her gun handy so I didn't try to argue with her. I called Frenchy, as we called him, he hesitated but came to her. She told him that he had been lying about her in Red Fork, and for him to come with her to Red Fork and tell the people there that he had lied. He complied with her request and all was peaceful once more. I think he was more careful with his talk after that.