

SMITH, ISLAND

INTERVIEW

#6729
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BIOGRAPHY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

6-7-284

Field Worker's name Jerome W. Ammons

This report made on (date) July 17, 1937

1. Name Island Smith

2. Post Office Address at 1, box 98, Morrilton, Ark.

3. Residence address (or location) 18 miles SW of Morrilton, Ark. on Rte. 1 W. S. 30. and E. 7.02. Morrilton School.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month Feb. Day Year 1877

5. Place of birth at what is now Taft, Ark.

6. Name of Father Isaac Smith Place of birth Unknown

Other information about father died when Island was a child.

7. Name of Mother Mama Robinson Place of birth Unknown

Other information about mother still alive - was 12 years of age when the stars fell - she supposed to be 14.

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 fourteen.

7-16-57

INTERVIEW WITH ISIDORE CHENEY

By Jerome M. Wilson, Field Worker

Island Smith, which lives 18 miles south-west of O'ahuigoo, is 1/4 creek and 3/4 Negro.

I am on the creek side of a bay. My father was a Negro and my mother was a creek and one half Negro.

I am a member of the church. The town. Pearl's Brother was the town. The symbol was a bell.

My father was a man and my mother was a woman. My uncle.

CC 011 1

I never attended any schools in the creek. There weren't any here when I was a boy. When they were established, I was too old to attend.

CC 011 1

My parents raised only about an acre of corn every year. They raised some cattle and hogs, which just ran wild. My father had also about 150 head of horses.

... only have one Indian now left. The
 ... all died. ... about 1870
 ... is 36 years old.

... all ...
 ... of ...
 ...

... wolf-dog ... to be ...
 ... leave ...

... never ...
 ... violation of ...
 ...

... never raised any chickens, turkeys or
 guineas until the 1900s or until the wild owl

... began to be thinned out. I have guineas now
 that I believe to still have a strain of prairie
 chicken in them.

... H. ...
 ... Reed, Crowder, Dick, Ben, and Calhoun
 were some of the marshals I remember. Jesse Al-
 len, who is still living, was a deputy, also.

CHEROKEE BILL

My mother nursed Cherokee Bill. His mother was white and his father Cherokee Indian.

I used to fiddle for dances, etc., with a violin which was owned by Cherokee Bill and on which he had carved his initials. I was offered \$150- for it, but refused to part with it. It became warped one time and I left it in Okfuskee to be repaired. The jeweler with whom I left it said it was stolen from his shop.

When I was a boy, we didn't receive calendars from the traders as people do from stores today. A man would come around and sell an al-

manac for fifty cents. He usually sold one every third or fourth house. If we didn't happen to purchase one, we would sometimes have to go see our neighbor to find out the day of the month.

FOOD

We prepared sofka and puskee from the

corn we raised. In fact, I still make muskeg.
 I used to trade loss for flour, which
 was shipped in from Texas and Arkansas. Two
 year old corn sold for \$1.50 each.

beans, hamper, muskies, etc. for the
 flour. I used to trade for the flour and
 corn for the flour and our food supply.

we got the chills in the winter, we
 would break the ice if we could get into
 the water. This would break the chills.

certain roots, herbs and bark were used
 in the process of medicine. I have learned
 about a lot of this and doctor people of various

disagree. I know them when I see them and
 what they are used for, (the herbs).

After a funeral, people would gather on
 the ground pecco-mesis (gingerroot) and wash in
 it so they wouldn't get sick.

PARTRIDGE

When I got married, people never used a
 ceremony. I asked the woman if she would be

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my wife. When she said yes, we considered ourselves married.

It cost me \$65. the first and \$75. the second time I was married, for food to prepare a feast for friends and relatives.

MIDDLE POSTS

The first I knew of Okmulgee, Fred B. Severs had the only store there. Jim Parkinson was at Red Fork, ^{and} 7 years later, ~~he~~ moved to Okmulgee and put in a store. Capt. C. C. Welcher was the first Postmaster that I remember.

Jim Bonnett had a store seven miles South of here, where Bryant is now.

McDermott had a store and sawmill South of Okemah.

Pentress had a store between what is now Okemah and Weleetka.

Springfield was just East of Okemah on Bad Creek. Gull C. Davidson ran a store and Post-office there. I used to take the mail into Okmulgee on Friday and return on Saturday.

Jim Parkinson told me that the Indians had shown him where some bones were buried over on the other side of the river. I think he buried the bones some years ago and had traced them to him. So the same trail was called "1000."

George La Mott proved that there was gold and some silver coins in it. He didn't know the value of the gold and silver. He gave Allen, an Apache, for a new saddle. George La Mott, a Creek Indian, was just a young boy at that time.

I have an old stone jar, which was made by one of the first pottery manufacturers in the U.S., to which was buried \$750. It was found by an Indian woman friend, before her death, told me where to find it. It was buried only a foot deep and had her apron wrapped around it. I didn't realize the value of money at that time, and bought a saddle and a pair of boots with the money found in this jar. He seldom

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had any use for money in the early days and spent it as soon as we got it.

NEEDLES

I have two old saddles, both worn out. One is about 45 years old and the other 30.

I have a broadaxe to hew logs with, and a mallet, a maul and a pair of froes which I use to make clapboards with. I have 900 clapboards in the yard that I made last year.

I have an old, gray mule's hoof, which I use to make liniment. I just shave off part of it as I need it.

I have a long handled spoon, that I use to take guinea eggs from the nest so that they won't change their nest, that I have had for many years.

I also have bows and arrows, pictures, one of my first baby dresses and dozens of other articles kept over from Territory days.

DRESSES

The children's dress, when I was a boy,

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consisted of a shirt or dress, which came to the knees. In the case of a boy, a belt was generally worn about the waist. Children, until later years, went barefooted, summer and winter, except the few that wore moccasins.

Women wore bonnets, corsets, and long dresses. Some wore moccasins and others shoes, called 'dog troughs'.

Creek Men and Freedmen wore usually home made shirts and pants obtained from stores. Some cowskin caps with the tails left on and others the large felt hats, which were worn more universally later. Their footwear was either moccasins or boots.

GREEN PEAKE WAR

The Government sent about 1,800 troops to quell the uprising caused by Sparhecher. They came through Okmulgee and camped out here on a creek. We tried to talk to them, but they wouldn't talk. They were little black men, not much bigger than I was, who wore uniforms with brass buttons. They were riding small horses and

carried .38-40 Colt pistols. The wagons, which had iron wheels and spoked, were drawn by big mules. Small flags were attached to the bridles of these teams.

My uncle, Morris Kentic, and a neighbor named Praxier Robinson, were with the warriors out in the Sac and Fox reservation.

3 IN HIS

I remember attending at least two of the Indian ball games held at Muyara. One of them was between Muyara and Wilaby towns. This game ran into a big fight and one man was killed and several badly injured before it could be stopped.

Ben Grayson, of Wilaby town, was the medicine maker. I don't remember the year this happened,

but it was in the territory days.

3 IN HIS

Andrew Bonnett was an Indian Preacher, who lived at Dog town south of here.

The church that I remember was the Compsah Dinah church, located one mile south of what is now Bryant, Okla. Compsah Dinah, the

preacher, was a full-blood Creek Indian.

COURT HOUSE

The Court House for this district was at Wajaka. The last Judges were Holy Brown and Joe Lyles Looney.

Some of the lawyers that I remember are: Dick Bruner, Sam Wagners, Tom Adams, Wallace C- Mac, Jos Belmont and Isbornorton. They and other lawyers would come from the different

Danger Johnson, Tom Ward and Tommie Tom- were the authors who were shot or shooting by gun in church. Some of the boys taken my girl away from me and then fazed about it. I was a little hot-headed about it and might have gotten myself into serious trouble. I came out of the charge innocent as I was pretty well liked in my town.

TRICK AND TRICKS

The Tom-son and a middle, made from a board, were about the only instructions that I saw among the "Creeks" as a boy.