

NET, HENRY

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

Worker's name Thad Smith Jr.

Report made on (date) 4-23 1937

Name Henry Red

Post Office Address Chickasha, Oklahoma

Residence address (or location) 116 East Dakota Avenue

DATE OF BIRTH: Month May Day 11 Year 1871

Place of birth Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Negro

Name of Father Josh Red Place of birth Pennsylvania

Other information about father Buried in Pennsylvania

Name of Mother _____ Place of birth Pennsylvania

Other information about mother Buried in Pennsylvania

For complete narrative by the field worker dealing with the life and story of person interviewed. Refer to Manual for suggested subjects and questions. Use blank sheets if necessary and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached _____.

INTERVIEW WITH HENRY RED
Chickasha, Oklahoma
Thad Smith Jr., Interviewer

I came to Oklahoma by myself the year 1881, being twelve years old. I landed in Ardmore and walked from there to Wanette, not very far away.

I had come from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with a white man that was a horse doctor. While we were in Texas the doctor died, and I got his medicine and tools and when I got to Wanette I commenced doctoring horses. I was big for my age and got along very well.

About two years later, I started singing and preaching the Baptist faith. At that time I was a very good singer, and I think a good preacher.

There were not very many colored people in that country then, and we did not have a regular church but every Sunday we would decide where we would meet the next Sunday.

There were a good many Indians near Wanette at that time, and a good many white people drove oxen to their wagons.

The supplies for Wanette were freighted from Purcell and Ardmore, but mostly mules, and a few horses were used to pull the freight wagons.

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The white people at Wanette had a Baptist Church, and the minister's name was Darlington.

I doctored horses, preached and sang in Wanette and all around the surrounding country until the year 1895, when I heard that men could get jobs working for the Rock Island Railroad at Chickasha, so I packed my belongings and walked to Chickasha.

Not long after arriving I got a contract with the Rock Island Company to keep all the loose coal loaded on cars, keep the cinder pit clean, and dry the sand that the engines used on the tracks to keep from slipping. My salary was one hundred and ninety dollars per month, but at the same time I had to hire two men to help me keep the work up like it should be.

In 1901 when the Caddo, Kiowa, and Comanche country was opened, I laid off long enough to go to El Reno to register for the drawing. There were lots of people there who did not draw, as well as I.

In 1904 I got a job in the mechanical department at fourteen dollars per week.

I worked for the Rock Island Railroad Company for forty-one years.