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AUSTIN, HENRY

INTERVIEW

12673

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

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Field Worker's name Nannie Lee BurnsThis report made on (date) January 14 19381. Name Henry Austin2. Post Office Address 31-G-NE Miami.

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month April Day 15 Year 18955. Place of birth North Carolina.6. Name of Father H. S. Austin Place of birth North Carolina

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Martha Austin nee Matlock Place of birth North Carolina

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 3.

Nannie Lee Burnas,
Investigator,
1-14-38

An interview with Henry Austin
31 C- NE Miami.

My father was H. S. Austin, born in North Carolina.

My mother was Martha Austin nee Matlock, also born
and reared in the same state.

I was born in North Carolina, April 15, 1895.

Moving

When I was very small my parents moved west and
settled near Paris, Texas, on a farm where they remained
until 1898, when they decided to come to the Indian
Territory. Disposing of their surplus things there,
they left Paris and traveled north in two covered
wagons drawn by big mule teams and reached Webber
Falls in February, where they were caught in a severe
snowstorm.

Dad looked around and moving on finally located
between Fort Gibson and Muskogee on a farm that contain-
ed a lake that overflowed from the river.

Father decided to cut a ditch to the river and so
drain the lake. That year he had a fine crop of both

cotton and corn. From there he moved near Wagoner and remained there until 1903 when he moved to Ottawa County and located south of Fairland.

I attended my first term of school in Wagoner and the rest of my school days were spent in Ottawa County excepting the last three years of my school life were spent at the Northeastern State Normal school at Tahlequah.

Boyhood Days

Dad did not allow us to have a gun but I learned to be skilful with a rock and have killed many, many squirrels with rocks. I have killed as many as twelve squirrels from one tree.

This was our Sunday sport, hunting and killing the squirrels with rocks but unlike most boys, I cared little for fishing.

Later Years.

We lived on a farm and our schools in that part of Ottawa County were very elementary so in 1913 I came to Hattonville, now Commerce, and worked in the mines there and later at Picher helped sink the first shaft for the Eagle-Picher Lead and Zinc Company.

I then entered school at the Northeastern State Normal at Tahlequah, where I remained three years and then I taught

two terms of school near Partlesville.

I decided that I would try the oil fields, so I went to Okmulgee and worked back and forth out of there and at Shidler for three or four years dressing tools. When they were building the K. O. & G. Railroad through this country, I took my father's team and worked on the road and I received \$4.00 per day and thought that I was getting rich. After our work hours on the road, they would allow us to use the machinery and as we worked near the towns of Ketchum, Pensacola and Strang, we would take the machinery and we graded and leveled the main streets in those towns.