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BURGESS, THEODORIC. INTERVIEW.

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Nettie Cain  
Indian-Pioneer History  
April 20, 1937

Civil War Days by Theodorice  
Burgess, Holdenville, Okla.

Theodorice Burgess, Creek Negro, was born Dec. 22, 1844, in the Indian Territory, place unknown but in the Creek Nation.

He was living with his grandfather, Roger Perry, and he and two little negro girls were playing in the yard when one day two men came by and asked him if he was a boy and he said "yes" and they asked him if he wanted some candy and his reply was 'yes. There being a store only a short distance from his home, the men told him to get up behind them on the horse. After going a short distance, the man put him in front of him as he was about to fall off. They stopped at the store and the men bought him the candy. Then started on. He didn't realize he was not going home until they reached the Washita river. Then he began to cry to go home and he was told he would soon be home. They stopped with him about 5 miles from the river and tried to sell him to Jim Jessie, a Choctaw Indian, but his wife was a white woman and they already had several numbers of slaves. Then they asked Jim Jessie if they could leave him there and Jim Jessie said, "Yes," "I guess so, he's little and want be much trouble." He then stayed

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there more than a year. Then he was sold by the two men to Tom Drennan, but was kept by Jim Jimson. Tom Drennan lived in Van Buren, Arkansas. He had a store at Van Buren, and also one in the Indian Territory. About a year later Theodoric was taken to Van Buren and sold to Charlie Scott, a brother-in-law of Tom Drennan. He was about five or six years old. He then was hired out to work in a flour mill to a Mr. Hayman and he worked for him until he was fourteen years old. About this time he joined the Yankees under Capt. Theodoric Burgess serving as waiter boy for Capt. Burgess. After a few months Capt. Burgess' health was failing and he got a leave of absence to go home for a rest. Capt. Burgess' home was at Little York, Mo. This being an old stage town. When on the way home, the young negro got lost from the captain and his guards. After a few hours, the guards heard some shots fired. They returned and found him. The shots had been fired at him by some strangers but the shots had failed to hit him as he threw himself to one side of his horse. The captain was very glad to see him when he reached where <sup>they</sup> had stopped. He then stayed with Capt. Burgess from 1862 to 1863. Then the recruiting officers came to Little York and told Capt. Burgess they wanted the boy for a soldier. Then captain Burgess told him, he must go

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and he went with them.

He enlisted in the 111th regiment and then later the 111th and 112th were both assigned together making 113th reg. of 1000 men in all. He was then assigned to 113th A being a hundred men in a company. Capt. Gillpatrick, 1st Lt. Skillman; Sarg. Benny Dawse. Duty Sarg. Bryant; 2nd. Duty Sargt. Richard Weathered, Corp. Grant Wiley.

When he left, Capt. Theodorick Burgess asked him to go under the name of Burgess as the only name he had was Dick, that being a nickname. He had remembered that his given name was Odoric.

The first battle he was in was at 16 miles west of Ft. Smith, near Gunters Hill. They only lost five or six men and 10 or 12 wounded but a number on the Southern side were killed. This being the latter part of 1863.

The second battle was at Cavern Creek, Kansas; however, this did not amount to much. Third battle was near Dardanelle, Arkansas. His company only lost three men. The Southern men were pushed back about 25 miles from Dardanelle and here the Northern men captured several head of horses as the southern soldiers had ran off and left them. The soldiers had plenty to eat, except for one time they had to do without

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food for three days as their supply wagon had been captured. He was never wounded but one day they were having some trouble and someone shot through his cap bill, just missing his head.

During the Civil War, there were large wagon trains. Three teams of mules or horses would pull one wagon and a hundred or more wagons in one train, bringing supplies to the soldiers. He served three years in the war and was discharged at Devale Bluff, Arkansas, fifty miles east of Ft. Smith. He lived for many years near Devall Bluff and in 1867, he married Martha Hurley.

He never met with any of his people only an uncle, a brother of his father's, who told him his name was Odoric Brown; but he continued to go under the old Captain's name.