

KILGORE, HENRY CLAY

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Etta D. Mason, Investigator
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Incidents that I remember that happened when I was a child by Henry Clay Kilgore, colored and part Choctaw, Atoka, Oklahoma.

I am the son of slaves. My father was Simeon Kilgore and my mother was Rebecca Berry. My father's master was Jesse Kilgore and my mother's master was Hugh Berry.

I was five years old when the slaves were freed. After my father and mother were freed they were married and lived on Hugh Berry's land and the first year made a share crop. After the first year they lived on Simeon Coggins farm for many years and Father became a man of means. He was respected by all white people who knew him.

Simeon Coggins paid my father \$50.00 per year for my services to him. He taught me to work on the farm, to make baskets and many other kinds of useful work.

When I was eight years old he told me that if I would pick a hundred pounds of cotton in one day he would give me a pony. I picked the hundred pounds.

We lived in the Indian settlements and grew up with the Indians. My father has told many tales of the bravery of the Indians during the war.

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They had their schools, churches, shrines, and councils. We, the children of the slaves, did not attend any of these but we hunted and played with the Indian children and many of us tried to imitate many qualities of the Indian.

Mr. Coggins gave me two lessons each day. One in the blue backed speller and one from the old time arithmetic. I stayed with Mr. Coggins till I was grown and I feel that I owe him much gratitude.