

INDEX CARDS

Journey to Oklahoma  
Negroes--Chickasaw Nation  
Pauls Valley  
Paul, Smith  
Churches--Chickasaw Nation  
Fort Arbuckle  
Caddoes  
Whitehead  
Fords--Washita River  
Ferries--Washita River  
Grist mills--Chickasaw Nation  
Tishomingo  
Gano--Chickasaw Nation  
Houses--Chickasaw Nation  
Outlaws--James brothers  
Outlaws--Chickasaw Nation  
Fort Sill

Field Worker: Maurice R. Anderson

268

BIOGRAPHY OF Nathan Harris (Negro)  
 Pauls Valley, Oklahoma  
 BORN Cedar County, Missouri, in 1851

\*\*\*\*\*

Nathan Harris came to Pauls Valley, Garvin County, in 1864.

He was born in Cedar County, Missouri, 1851. His father was owned by Judge Jim Henry, who was Judge of Cedar County in the year of 1851. Judge Henry moved to Grayson County, Texas, at the close of the Civil War taking Nathan Harris with him. Nathan came to what is known as Garvin county with John son Morris as pony boy. He then went to work for Mr. Smith Paul, for whom Pauls Valley was named. It was in the year of 1865, no building there, he helped Mr. Paul build his first house. It was built of willow log and covered with bark

He recalls when the Washita River was only a small clear stream and today it is approximately muddy the year round. It ranges from 100 to 200 feet wide. The first minister to come into this territory after Nathan Harris came, was a Catholic Priest, who remained only a short while The aged negro remembers sometime later Smith Paul built several houses out of cottonwood logs. After this there was a wedding day set and it was at this time Mr. Smith Paul married Mrs. McClure. The aged negro remembers the first death in what is known as Pauls Valley. It was a 14 year old white girl named Fenia Copeland.

She was buried one mile north of Pauls Valley on the bank of the Washita river. There were not any doctors at that time in that locality.

2.

The aged negro remembers the first soldiers to camp at what is known as Fort Arbuckle, it was the 10th Calvary, commanded by Captain Waltz, in the year 1867. He became acquainted with one of the soldiers named Private George Reed. Nathan Harris was the only colored man here at that time. A tribe of Caddo Indians camped five miles northwest of Pauls Valley. There was an old Indian woman named Whitebead, later the place became known as Whitebead. There was one white man with this tribe of Indians. His name was Bill Williams, he traded a pony to this Indian woman named Whitebead for her daughter. They settled north of Whitebead in what is known as Williams Flat. Nathan Harris went to work for W.G. Kimberlin in 1880. He remembers the date clearly, as it was their first Almanac year. They forded the Washita River 4 miles north of Wynnewood known as Cherokee Crossing. Later they built a Ferry boat. Nathan Harris made the first trip across with it. He has a photograph of Mr. and Mrs. W.G. Kimberlin and he praises it very dearly. It was made in 1880. They had to haul their corn to a mill at Tishomingo known as Bill Boyd Mill. That was about the year 1870. The aged negro says at that time there were plenty of Turkey and deers. The aged negro is now on his 86th year.

Note by Mr. Anderson:

I learned that Nathan Harris, whom I sent you a story of, has a sword used by Jack Brown, a white man in the Civil War. This sword was given to Nathan Harris by Jack Brown about forty years ago. He says this sword is in good condition and will not part with it. It is being used in the Masonic Lodge (Negro).