

TODD, C. E. INTERVIEW.

#4884

248

488

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

Field Worker's name Thad Smith Jr.This report made on (date) July 7--21 19371. Name C. E. Todd2. Post Office Address Chickasha, Oklahoma3. Residence address (or location) Three miles south of Chickasha4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month November Day 21 Year 18705. Place of birth Arkansas6. Name of Father Alfred D. Todd. Place of birth GeorgiaOther information about father Buried in Oklahoma7. Name of Mother Betty Davis Place of birth ArkansasOther information about mother Buried in Oklahoma

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 \_\_\_\_\_.

## INTERVIEW WITH C. E. TODD

Thad Smith Jr.,

Field Worker

My mother, father, brother and I left Arkansas in two covered wagons. We had a team of horses hitched to one wagon and a yoke of oxen hitched to the other. When we left Arkansas, we had made up our minds to hunt for some good level rich land, where there was a school and a Baptist church. When we reached Courtney Flat, Indian Territory, in December, 1888, we found just what we were looking for. Courtney Flat is in the Chickasaw Nation, about a mile from the Red River. The nearest ford was called "the Illinois Bend ford."

John Fowler ran a big general mercantile store, and the postoffice in Courtney Flat. The mail was carried there on horseback from Nacena, Texas.

I taught school in Courtney Flat in a box school house, the first three years that I was there. It was a subscription school, and I had about forty pupils, who paid me a dollar and a quarter a month each. This school was very difficult to teach, on account of the books used. Some of the children used McGuffey's books, while others had books edited by some one else. This necessitated hearing two different classes of pupils, who were in the same grade.

-2-

The pupils didn't have desks, but sat on benches, made of one by four planks, twelve or fourteen feet long. I had ten or twelve children attending school who were half Indian, but they all spoke English. Our school terms were seven months long.

Corn and cotten were the two principal crops raised.

Corn made about fifty bushels an acre, and was sold to the cowmen for fifteen cents a bushel, to winter their cattle on. The first two or three years cotton was planted, it did not fully mature before the fall freeze. What did mature was ginned at Courtney Flat, hauled to Necona, Texas, and sold. It brought about seven or eight cents a pound. The men who hauled the cotton to Necona, would load their wagons with supplies for the store at Courtney Flat, as all of the supplies for this place were freighted from Necona.

I have been told that Courtney Flat was named for a white man by the name of Courtney. Mr. Courtney found a Chickasaw Indian boy on the prairie with a broken leg, took him in, and kept him until he was well. To show his appreciation, the Indian Boy's father gave Mr. Courtney a right to the flat that was named after him. All of the farms near Courtney Flat were fenced with rails. The grass was excellent, and there were many deer, wild turkey, and wild hogs.

-3-

My father and I tried to fatten some of the hogs on corn in a pen, but they were so wild, they would only eat at night, and they didn't do any good. In the fall of the year, after the pecans, hickory nuts, and walnuts had fallen on the ground, the hogs get fat and made good meat.

In 1892, I moved to Iona, which is just a few miles east of Wynnewood. There was one store, a gin, blacksmith shop, postoffice, and a school.

Fait Parks ran the store and postoffice. I taught the school for seven years. There were several fullblood Indians there. Mese Chigler, a fullblood Chickasaw, was well educated, and handled lots of cattle and horses. Matt Wolf was another Indian and cattleman.

In the winter there were thousands of ducks and geese. The ducks were easy to kill, but the geese were not, as it was hard to get close enough to kill them.

When the Caddo, Kiowa and Comanche Country was opened, I registered for the drawing at Ft. Sill and drew a claim.