

WILEY, GLOSTER. INTERVIEW.

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Field Worker: Maurice R. Anderson  
April 16, 1937

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BIOGRAPHY OF: Mr. Gloster Wiley (Negro)  
Pauls Valley, Oklahoma

BORN: 1892 in Cherokee Town, Chickasaw  
Nation

PARENTS: George Wiley, Texas  
Jemima Allen, Indian Territory

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I was born at Cherokee Town, Indian Territory, in the Chickasaw Nation. The first School I went to was held in an old church house near where I lived. I was six years old. A white man named Henry Russell was my teacher. My father paid Mr. Russell one dollar a month for my tuition. He only taught three months. We used slates and sat on benches. We had no desks. There were about fifty children who went to this school. The white children, Indians, and Negroes all went to school together. After that three months of school was out I did not go to school any more until 1901.

My father, George Wiley, with Dixie Smith, Monroe Smith, Zash Allen, Steve Allen, (all Negroes) and Mrs. Elizabeth Crawford, a white woman, donated enough money to build a negro Mission School. My father was one of the trustees and Mrs. Elizabeth Crawford was one of the teachers, they had the Mission School built in 1900. It was located three miles east of Wynnewood, Oklahoma.

The Mission was a two-story building, built of lumber, and there was a basement. The kitchen and dining room was in the basement and on the first floor was the class room. The boys slept there on cots and in the mornings they would carry their cots out in theyard. If it happened to be raining they

would have to be stacked up in a corner of the room. We had long benches to sit on and long tables for desks. On the second floor was where the girls and the white women teachers slept. There were four white women teachers. A Mrs. Fannie Johnson, was the head of the School. There were about two hundred negro children attending this school. Some of the children came from Ardmore and some from Seminole. Lots of the children who lived within six or eight miles of the school would go home in the evenings. I stayed and boarded the first ten months, after that my father got a horse for me to ride back and forth on, so that I could live at home.

I heard my father say that each child paid five dollars a month for board and schooling and one dollar a month if the children went home in the evenings and brought their lunch from home. The children had to furnish their own clothing.

Monday was wash-day. The boys would carry the water from a big well about a hundred yards away and the girls would wash the clothes down in the basement. This Mission was called, "Beth Mission" and it was for negro children exclusively. It stood there until it was wrecked in a storm in 1917. I attended the school until 1907. I was in the fifth grade and I had to quit and stay at home to help my father on the farm. We raised lots of cotton and corn.

THE END