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Negro
Chickasaw Nation
Subscription School
Wynnewood
Chickasha
Opening-Kiowa-Comanche

Thad Smith, Jr.
Field Worker
May 12, 1937

An interview with Mrs. John
Hawkins 114 Idaho, Chickasha,
Oklahoma.

Mrs. John Hawkins whose maiden name was Lizzie Smith, a negro, was born in Texas on January 8, 1879. Father was Ben Smith, born in Tennessee. Mother, Emma Jeffers, born in Virginia was once a slave.

I came to Wynnewood, Oklahoma with my mother and father in the year 1890. My father farmed near there, raising cotton and corn. He ginned his cotton at Wynnewood.

I attended a subscription school there, that cost one dollar for each pupil per month. I studied McGuffey's reader and a blue back speller. There were a good many negro children at Wynnewood.

There was a negro Baptist Church there that had a good attendance. The preacher's name was Brother Givens.

In 1893, my mother and father and I moved to Chickasha. There were a good many more Indians there than in Wynnewood. Most of them

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were Chickasaws, as we were in the Chickasaw Nation. Nearly every fourth of July there would be a big celebration in or near Chickasha. The Indians would usually commence gathering at the picnic grounds about a week before the fourth of July. I remember once when the people picked a place about two and one-half miles southeast of town for the picnic, and the morning of the fourth everybody lined up and paraded to the ground. People were horseback, in wagons, surries, hacks, and some were afoot. There was always barbecued beef to eat. The Indians had stomp dances, the white people had square dances, horse racing, steer roping and riding. Sometimes there would be a horsepower merry-go-round. The horse was hitched to the outside of the merry-go-round and pulled it around.

There were only five or six colored families in Chickasha in 1893. Most of them worked for the white people but my father farmed south of town, raising cotton and corn. The cotton brought about 6 cents a pound and the corn 25 cents a bushel.

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There were a few Chinamen in Chickasha, that did most of the laundry work.

When the Caddo, Kiowa and Comanche country was opened my father went to El Reno and registered for the drawing and drew a claim nine miles southwest of Chickasha. He farmed his claim until in 1909. He then sold his farm for \$6200.00.

In 1893, what was then called a cab, was a hack drawn by two horses. The fire wagon was also drawn by horses.

There were thousands of Texas cattle shipped to Chickasha and unloaded and driven to grass. All of them were longhorn cattle.