

INDEX CARDS:

Salina
Salt Springs
Making Salt

Alfred F. Hicks, Interviewer,
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351

An Interview with Mr. Henry Downing.

How Indians Made Salt in Early Days.

There is a place near Salina that has salt springs. I well remember when I was a small boy, my parents and some of the neighbors would go there every year to make salt for their year's supply. They had three large kettles, four feet across the top and about three feet deep. They would build up a large fire under each of these kettles and fill them up with this salt water and boil it until the water was all boiled away. Then they would take out the salt that was left in the kettles. As near as I can remember we got about three or four gallons of salt at a cooking, and the part I played in making this salt was to keep the fires burning for there had to be just so much fire burning all the time under each kettle and it was up to us boys to keep that fire just so.

After the old people would get the kettles all filled with water they would all gather around and smoke their pipes until the water was all boiled away and the salt ready to take out. We would get about five cookings

off in a day's work. There would be as many as twenty-five families at a time gather to make their year's supply of salt.

I remember there were three springs very close together. Two of the springs had water that was clear, cool and good to drink. The other spring was where we got our water for the salt.