

DRAKE, W. T.

INTERVIEW

#8268

- 17

DRAKE, W. T.

INTERVIEW

Form A-(S-149)

8268

BIOGRAPHY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for OklahomaField Worker's name Thad Smith, Jr.This report made on (date) August 20 1937

-
1. Name W. T. Drake
 2. Post Office Address Chickasha
 3. Residence address (or location) 327 South 3rd. St.
 4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month September Day 24 Year 1856
 5. Place of Birth Mississippi

-
6. Name of Father W. L. Drake Place of birth Alabama
Other information about father Buried in Texas

-
7. Name of Mother Liza Skinner Place of birth Alabama
Other information about mother Buried in Mississippi

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 .

Thad Smith, Jr.
Interviewer
August 20, 1937

Interview with
W. T. Drake
Chickasha, Okla.

I came to the Indian Territory in 1906 and landed in Chickasha.

I had chartered a railroad car in Dallas County, Texas, and had shipped all of my belongings to Chickasha, as I had heard that it was a thriving little town. My car got lost on the way here and as I had come up on a passenger train I got here several days before my car came in. Several tracers had to be sent out before the car was located and sent on its way.

I stayed at the New Palace Hotel, where I paid five dollars a day.

I was not able to find a house to move into upon my arrival in Chickasha and had to live at the hotel for some time before a real estate man found a house for me which was for rent.

The town was filled with people of all nationalities, and there was work for all.

- 2 -

Several new buildings were being built and I got a job helping to dig a basement for a business building that was being erected on Main street.

My wages were three dollars and fifty cents a day.

Penney and Smith had a plumbing shop and I secured work from them at seventy five dollars a month.

Most of the wild game had either been killed or had left the country.

I trapped several o'possums on a creek, in the edge of Chickasha, by using a barrel with a fall door, baited with bread. The door swung on a rod, which ran across the center of the barrel and when weight was put on the door, on either side of the rod, it would open and let the weight drop in the barrel.

I have seen several cowboys and a few Indians get drunk in Chickasha and get chased out of town by the law, but in my own opinion the people were more civilized then than now.

A man by the name of Goodwin farmed three hundred and forty acres of corn west of town, I believe it was

- 3 -

[
the year of 1908. We had a wet spring and summer and he got part of his crop harrowed and part of it he could not harrow on account of the wet weather. The corn that was harrowed made seventy bushels of corn to the acre and the corn that was not worked at all made fifty bushels to the acre.

It seems to me that there were hundreds of coyotes, around Chickasha. When I first moved there they made so much noise barking at night that I could not sleep, but I later got used to it.

Some of the fourth of July celebrations held in Chickasha soon after I came were nothing but basket dinner picnics.

Sometimes a few horse races would be run and occasionally some ambitious politician would make a speech.

In 1908, I worked for the Sigmon Furniture and Mattress Manufacturer in Chickasha.