

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Thad Smith Jr.

This report made on (date) July 10, 1937

1. Name Andrew Edwards

2. Post Office Address Chickasha, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) .5 miles NW. of Chickasha

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month May Day 6 Year 1865

5. Place of birth Tennessee

6. Name of Father Robert Edwards Place of birth Tennessee

Other information about father Buried in Tennessee.

7. Name of Mother Anna Ewen Place of birth Tennessee

Other information about mother Buried in Tennessee.

Notes or compl to 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 10.

Thad Smith Jr.
Field Worker
July 10, 1937

153

Interview with Andrew Edwards.
Chickasha, Oklahoma.
Born May 6, 1865.
Father-Robert Edwards.
Mother-Ann Ewen.

In the spring of 1885, I left Gainesville, Texas, horseback, bound for the Indian Territory. I forded Red River, at what was called the Love Ford. This was named after some Indians named Love.

I didn't have any pack outfit with me, and I had to stay all night any place that I could. The first night in the Territory I stayed all night at a negro's home. Their home was nice and clean, and I was given a nice clean bed to sleep in, that they kept for white people only. A good many of the pioneer negroes kept beds that were never used except by white people.

I got a job as farm hand, from a man named Sexton, who lived at Pauls Valley. Mr. Sexton farmed about fifty acres. He had twenty-five acres of corn and twenty-five acres of cotton. The cotton made a bale to the acre. It was ginned at White Head, and sold for four cents per pound. The corn made sixty bushels per acre, and was sold to a cattle feeder, for fifteen cents per bushel.

In those days snapped corn was piled on the ground in dug ricks. One fall and winter some of the farmers

couldn't find buyers for their corn, and it rotted in the rick.

A good bit of land was broken the next few years after I came to Pauls Valley, and people, then, didn't have any farm implement to cut the sod with. They would cut it in two with an axe and drop a grain of corn in the crack, and then step on it. The rows were made about three and one-half feet apart. Of course this corn couldn't be cultivated but yet it would make as much as sixty bushels to the acre.

Tom Grant ran a general mercantile store at Pauls Valley. Mr. Grant had his supplies freighted from Sherman and Gainesville, Texas, which were about one hundred miles south. Freighters charged a dollar per hundred for hauling supplies from either place.

In 1887 I married Sarah Sexton in Pauls Valley. I didn't have a marriage license, but we made our vows to a Baptist Preacher.

The first fifty pound sack of flour I bought, I gave five dollars for, at Pauls Valley. The store at Pauls Valley didn't carry much hardware in stock,

and I had to make a trip to Gainesville, Texas, in a wagon to buy a cook stove. Wood was burned exclusively by everyone.

My first home after marrying was made of logs, and covered with clapboards.

Our light was made by a little brass kerosene lamp, which had a small round wick, but no globe. We had to keep it turned pretty low to keep it from smoking, and therefore it didn't give enough light to read at night.

When I first married I bought dressed hog meat for three cents per pound.

Chills and malaria fever caused more sickness than anything else, as the mosquitoes were very bad. I took so much quinine, that I couldn't hear.

There weren't so many deaths but when one did die, he was buried in a home made pine coffin.

During the winter, there would usually be two or three dances given, and people would gather for miles around.

The fourth of July was always celebrated by having horse races, foot races, and a big dance. Barbecued beef was our main food at these celebrations.

- 4 -

There were lots of wild turkeys, thousands of quail, and prairie chickens, and in the fall there were many wild geese.

I made the Run into Old Oklahoma in 1889, starting on the line about thirty miles west of Purcell. After I got over into Old Oklahoma, I saw several "gooners" plowing with oxen. There were six of us who staked the same claim not knowing where the lines were. None of us were satisfied, so we all agreed to auction it to the highest bidder of the six, and it sold for eighty dollars. The money was divided between the remaining five of us, and I went back to Pauls Valley.

Land was so cheap and there was so much of it, during the other opening, that I didn't attempt to get a claim.