

Dawes Case #946 Chickasaw

The Story of Harry Austin and Malinda Brown

Native American Research Case 5
Compiled by Helen C. Austin

Harry Austin was born about 1851 and died before 1900 in Pickens Co., Chickasaw Nation, Indian Territory (OK). Malinda Brown was born abt 1852 and died in Tishomingo Co, Chickasaw Nation, Indian Territory (OK). Both were probably born in Mississippi or Louisiana in one of the old traditional Chickasaw communities. After years of trying to survive, Harry decided to make the move to the Chickasaw Nation lands in Indian Territory in the place that later became the State of Oklahoma.

The marriage record of the Chickasaw Nation in Oklahoma, states that Malinda married Harris Austin on the thirtieth of May in 1872 in Pickens County, Chickasaw Nation. Judge Reuben R. Bourland of Tishomingo County presided at the ceremony.

After registering with the Department of the Interior, Dawes Commission, Harry or Harris (Harry Austin appears on the Dawes Card 946, but the marriage record has Harris Austin) and his wife were considered full blood Chickasaw Native Americans according to the investigators. They understood that land would be given to each individual who was a registered member of the tribe. Formerly, the lands of each Nation were held in common.

In February of 1887, a sweet little girl, Mattie (short for Matilda?) was born to Malinda, but the joy of Harry was short-lived. Both Harry and his wife Malinda died when Mattie was a very young child before she was eight years old. The Chickasaw tribe enrollment that was held in 1894 included the name of Mattie Austin on Dawes Card #946. It listed her parents as: Harry Austin, deceased, a resident of Pickens County, Indian Territory and Malinda Brown of Tishomingo County of the Chickasaw Nation, Indian Territory.

There was a place for the Chickasaw orphans to live in the Nation. It was called Chickasaw Orphan House and Manna Laboring Institute. In 1900, Mattie Austin, was found as a pupil at the school. Derrick Wilson was the Superintendent and his wife and grown children worked as teachers. All the staff at the school was white.

The census enumerators note on this page of pupils at the Chickasaw Orphan House that, "These children are all full blood Chickasaw Indians and none of them know where their father and mothers are. All are unknown and have been at the school from 5 to 10 years."