

**[A placard containing two poems in tribute to the Hon. W. T. Whitaker, founder of an Orphan Home in Oklahoma] Minnesota, January, 1954.**

HENRY (EAGLE-EYE) THOMPSON

1888 HENRY THOMPSON 1915

Presented By ANNA PETERSON SHORTALL of Porter, Oklahoma

Two sons were born to Samuel H. Thompson and his wife, Cora, at Okmulgee, Okla., just two blocks south of the Council House. These boys were Henry and Riley.

Riley is now a respected and successful man residing with his wife's people, the Chippewa Indians in Cloquet, Minnesota.

In September, 1898, during the superintendency of the late George Tiger, I was sent to the Creek Orphan Home, Okmulgee, as assistant teacher.

There I first met the Thompson children. Both were ordinary, normal boys, but something about Henry attracted the attention of all who met him. His sunny, friendly smile, his willingness to help and cooperate, and above all his love of nature.

He had a most remarkable appreciation of beauty. He not only noticed, himself, the many lovely things in his surroundings, but called the attention of schoolmates and teachers to sunsets, wild flowers, birds, etc. I remember that he once ran to me and, taking my hand, led me out to show me shadows of clouds racing over the tender green grass on the pastures.

Henry loved people and books.

His first poetic efforts were made when a small boy. I feel sure that under happier circumstances he would have developed into a nationally known poet, but fate ordained for him an obscure life. He was married but a few years and died on June 15, 1915. He is buried near Okmulgee.

The poet Gray's words most fittingly describe Henry Thompson:

"Full many a flower is born to blush unseen, And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

Dedicated to HON. W. T. WHITAKER, prior to his death 1922. A pioneer and founder of his own Orphan Home, in 1397 during the Indian Territorial days. Today the Orphanage, for children now maintained by Oklahoma State, at PRYOR.

For MR. WHITAKER's Poem-Tribute, is of most significant coincidence to note the writer, in 1908 by a CREEK orphan Indian. Henry (EAGLE-EYE) Thompson of Okmulgee, Okla.

Thompson and his brother Riley, both attended Chilocco Indian School, 1905 and '06. Many of Henry's poems, were lost with exception of now, eight recorded.

Printing expense of this placard, a contribution for educational reason prepared, a credit for American Indian race. Presentable to Historical Societies and else-where of importance for display. Contributed by late poet's brother, Riley Thompson of Cloquet (Klo-Kay), Minnesota. January 1954.

#### "WHITAKER STATE ORPHANAGE"

##### Poem Tribute

In the wilds of Indian Territory, Many, many summers ago, When lawless preyed upon innocent And the ignorance of poor Lo; When youth and age in the pathway stood, Of temptations to bitter sin, Many youthful orphans, whose hands unguided, Unconsciously drifted within. Thus the orphan child grew to manhood, Unaided, unprotected; Whose heart knew not of worldly good, But with evil much affected; Untaught, unknowing of our GOD, Unbelieving in HIS name, Living on and on in ignorance, Dying in sin and shame. Amidst this cruel infesting evil, Unnoticed by the world at large, Came a God-send in form of man; Reared in a humble lodge. Thus the WHITAKER ORPHAN HOME, Founded in ninety-seven By the generous W. T. WHITAKER, Was a blessing poured from heaven. He; a man among men, Like unto a hero of old Heart that beats pure and noble; A treasure to human fold. A mind that is clean and holy, With a love so rarely possessed For GOD, his work and mankind, The needy and oppressed. Untiring in his noble mission. Unflinching in his worthy aim, Climbing for neither fame nor fortune, Upholding neither sin nor shame.

Thus we know him as they knew him, To the world is thus known, As the kind and helping WHITAKER, Founder of his Orphan's Home. Near a thriving, thrifty village On Cherokee's fertile lands, Encircled with nature's picturesque scenes, The WHITAKER ORPHAN HOME stands. Cold and silent she doth tower O'er the grassy plain; Standing at her noble duty, Braving winter snows and rain. Unselfish as her noble master, Claiming no reward; Caring for unfortunate children, Trusting in the LORD. Keeping ever the sacred promise, To a mother's dying prayer; To protect and guide her dear child, Through this world of care. Together at their noble duty, Defying the opposing hand, Bringing forth

blessings to all mankind; Marring evils of our land. Teaching all that's good and righteous, And the ways of worldly strife; Thus the WHITAKER Orphan Home and Founder, Lessen the burdens of many through life. Long after this noble Founder's soul Has joined those gone before, His name and deeds, in history, Shall live forevermore. Likewise this grand institution, Which has sheltered many a soul, Though decayed with the ages, History, its name shall ever hold.

By HENRY (EAGLE-EYE) THOMPSON

Written 1908

"YE OLD COUNCIL HOUSE"

(Built 1878)

At Okmulgee, Oklahoma

'Neath thy sheltering shades I linger Where cool summer breezes blow And list the chirp of the songbirds, As my sires did moons ago.

I long to hear the bell's loud note From thy tower on high And feel again a joyous content As I felt in days gone by.

But now, when I hear its music Pouring forth its tuneful lay, It spreads o'er my heart a sadness Which I can scarcely drive away.

Many summers have come and vanished, Many suns passed o'er thy head. Hands that carved thy towering walls Are numbered with the dead.

Within thy hallowed walls have gathered Many, many warriors bold. Chieftains mighty, Statesmen fearless, Gift with wisdom from nature's fold.

Within thy walls there echoed voices Raised for truth that ne'er will cease. From thy halls, spoke law and wisdom, From thy towers, echoed peace.

There were recounted dear traditions, Handed down from many ages. There was worshiped the Great Spirit, There preached the honored sages.

All has ceased where once life blossomed, Like unto a fading flower, Our Nation's grandeur has departed; Thou but speak of bygone power.

Where once echoes voiced eloquent, Where wisdom's voice did thrill, All is now but gloomy silence,  
Yet tender memory hangs there still.

Live on, oh dear old structure, Thou have done thy duty well. For what once a noble race  
accomplished Thou alone must live to tell.

MR. AND MRS. W. T. WHITAKER

1854-1922 1860-1919

Presented By ORA WHITAKER MORRIS (the author)

History Recounted

William T. and Stacy L. (Hood) Whitaker were married April 25, 1875, in Cherokee County, North Carolina. They removed to the Indian Territory under the supervision of the Government over the Cherokees in 1881. To this union eleven children were born. I was their seventh child, and I was known as "Pappa's Baby" Ora Whitaker.

When I was a little girl I traveled with my father on all trips that he made on the train to Washington, D. C., and elsewhere in behalf of the destitute white orphan children in the Indian Territory. The Indians were under the jurisdiction of the Government and all had homes and schools for their own blood. As there were no schools for white children in the Territory at that time, W. T. Whitaker made an arrangement with the Federal Government to send white orphan children into government Indian schools.

Since the death of my mother and father, recalling my childhood days, I have written many articles of my father and his founding the great orphanage institution. Many years ago I wrote a manuscript, "WILLIAM THOMAS WHITAKER IN MEMORY". In the story appeared my tribute to my mother, "mother Dear", following a tribute to my father, "Whitaker And The Orphan Home" By Henry "Eagle Eye" Thompson, Creek Indian. The tribute, written prior to my father's death, once was published by him in his articles "Historical Sketch of Pryor And The Orphan Home" and "Historical Sketch of the American Indian."

The tribute to my father now appears on a placard. Riley Thompson, Cloquet, Minnesota, had the placard print made in memory of his brother. The poem tribute by the late poet is true history beautifully told of W. T. Whitaker.

## Founder An Indian

W. T. Whitaker by blood was a Cherokee Indian, a pioneer, and founder of his own Orphan Home for white orphan children. He set apart forty acres of his land from his Cherokee Claim adjoining Pryor and the Whitaker homestead, and on it erected a three-story stone building, bearing the corner stone name and date of W. T. WHITAKER ORPHAN HOME 1897. He gave his all and added his time and talent in caring for the white orphan children in the territory. He continued supporting them by his own energy and self-sacrificing efforts until statehood when he donated his orphanage with the forty acre tract of land on which it stood to the state of Oklahoma for the purpose of caring for orphan children. A blessed Heritage—and in God's kingdom he wears a crown inherited “from the foundation of the world:” Matt. 25:34. King James' version. And all Oklahoma's gratitude, for this benevolent act, the institution still carries the name of the founder, Whitaker state home, as a lasting monument.

The author is a Cherokee Indian, born in Pryor Creek, Indian Territory, now Oklahoma.

Ora Whitaker Morris (Mrs. D. H. Morris) Breckenridge, Texas.

August 1955.

Signature of Author

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Gift of Congressman John A Blatnik at the request of Riley Thompson of Cloquet, Minn. to  
Contribute to the LOC a Poem Tribute Placed Together

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w/ enclosure entitled, “History Recounted.”

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