ROUTH, JOHN INTERVIEW 8673

Form A-(S-149)

BIOGRAPHY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

ROUTH, JOHN INTERVIEW #8673

Field Worker's name Ida A. Merwin

This report made on (date) September 27, 1937

1. Name John Routh

2. Post office address Perry, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) 726 Cedar Street

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month January Day 29 Year 1865

5. Place of birth Delaware County, Indiana.

6. Name of Father Milton Routh Place of birth Randolph County Indiana.

Other information about father

7. Name of Mother Betsy (Stanley) Routh. Place of birth Randolph County Indiana

Other information about mother

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 4.

ROUTH, JOHN INTERVIEW #8673

Ida A Merwin
Field Worker
Sept. 27, 1937

Interview with John Routh
Perry, Oklahoma.

I am the son of Milton and Betsy (Stanley) Routh, and I was born in Delaware County Indiana, January 29, 1865.

In April 1889 I came to Oklahoma to make the race in the opening of old Oklahoma. I entered the race at a point near Orlando, but was not successful in securing land.

I went to the town of Guthrie where I secured work with a drayman and helped with the unloading of furniture and articles that were being moved here, and after about three months I returned to Kansas.

In making the trip from Kansas to Oklahoma there were four or five of us in a group and at Arkansas City, Kansas, we joined a group of soldiers who were moving southward and we made the trip in company with them.

In 1893 I returned from Kansas to Oklahoma to enter the race of the Cherokee opening hoping to secure a farm.

I started in this race on the line near Orlando, I was on horseback and made the race without any difficulty

or hindrances and staked land in the northwest part of Noble County.

When I came to Perry to file I found that I could buy rights on a piece of land about five miles northwest of Perry. I did not file on the land I had staked, but after dealing for rights on the other I filed on it.

After I had made a dugout on the land I had secured, I returned to Kansas to gather my crop of corn.

During the winter of 1893-94 I returned to Oklahoma, and brought with me a sawmill which I had purchased in Kansas. I installed this on my land and I lived in the dugout until I could cut logs and saw lumber.

I built a 12 by 14 box house from the lumber I sawed. I also built other improvements and sold to others in this community about 200,000 feet of lumber that I sawed from timber on this land; I also sawed lumber for others, who furnished their logs, and by so doing I earned enough to finance me for other needs.

During the first year I broke sod and planted Kaffir corn and followed this with wheat the second year; during the second year I finished breaking sod for all the cultivable land that was on this farm after which wheat was the main crop. In 1898 I raised 3,000 bushels and the price ranged around ninety cents.

I dealt quite extensively in hogs and cattle, selling 200 or more head of hogs each year. The price of hogs ranged from four to six cents a pound and cattle prices were fair.

During the race the deer and coyotes were so excited and so nearly run down, that a person could get quite near them.

I secured my supplies in Perry where there were several stores. After a few years I married a woman, who had made the race, and secured the farm north of the one I had. Our furniture was mostly made from lumber which I had sawed.

I dug a well, which supplied the water, and we used wood for fuel. In 1910 I sold my farm and moved to Perry,

where I secured work in a poolhall and where I worked for two years.

My wife clerked in a store known as "Every-Body's Store," and in 1915 she was made manager of a branch store at Morrison. While there I assisted her in the work at the store; later it was discontinued and I bought a farm in Pawnee County on the Arkansas River, and later sold it and moved to Perry, where I now reside.