

McCARLEY, HARVEY L.

INTERVIEW

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

Field Worker's name Jasper H. Mead.

This report made on (date) August 17, 1937. 1937

1. Name Harvey L. McCarley.

2. Post Office Address Chickasha, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) 621 North 6th Street.

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month July Day 21 Year 1899.

5. Place of birth Durant, Oklahoma.

6. Name of Father William H. McCarley. Place of birth Arkansas.

Other information about father Died at the age of 63.

7. Name of Mother Minnie Sturdadent Place of birth Arkansas.

Other information about mother Died at the age of 33.

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 3

Jasper H. Mead,  
Interviewer.  
August 17, 1937.

An Interview With Harvey L. McCarley,  
Chickasaw, Oklahoma.

I was born at Durant, July 21, 1899, 38 years ago.

As I first remember Durant it was a very small place. I saw the first street paving in Durant. The sidewalks were about one half dirt and the other half was made out of bois d'arc blocks.

The water supply came from dug wells and a few springs, but later on the town of Durant put in a water system. The water supply came from Blue River.

The only railroad company that came through Durant was the M. O. & G. from the north. The first locomotive I ever saw came down this track.

There was very little farming as most of the land was in big ranches. There weren't any roads, just cow trails. You could drive for hours at a time and never see where a plow had been put in the ground.

In 1906 I saw a threshing machine run by animal power. It took twelve head of mules to pull it. In 1907 the steam engine came out.

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Our nearest neighbor was four miles away. Most of the houses were built of logs and half dugouts. They were few and far between.

There were lots of Choctaw and Cherokee Indians around Durant. They never caused much trouble, only among themselves, with the exception of one. His name was Chitto Harjo. He was a Snake Indian and extra mean. He had a small band of Indian outlaws that went with him. He has killed lots of white men. I never will forget when father would take cotton to the gin. My oldest sister and I were always afraid that Chitto Harjo would kill him and get his cotton money, but he was always lucky. Chitto Harjo was very hard to catch because he would go from one Indian camp to another, and Indians are hard to tell apart. Finally some Indian snitched on him and he was killed.

There is a prairie north of Durant called the Twelve Mile Prairie and there is one east of Durant called Impson Prairie. There are large piles of dirt on these prairies, and in early days they were called Mounds, but we called them knolls. The belief was that a long time

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ago some tribe of Indians, called Mound Builders, built caves deep in the ground and left these mounds of dirt.

The first school house I ever went to was a frame building. Our seats were made like old time church seats, out of pine lumber. Sometimes four and five children would sit in one seat. We had a speller, but not the original old time Blue Back, but we did use the slate and slate pencil. Luther Holingsworth, the man who caused the trouble at the Pocasset Bank, taught me my first lesson.

Ruel Taylor was the first sheriff in 1908, one year after statehood.