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HARRY, JOHN

INTERVIEW

#1249

481

BIOGRAPHY FORM
 WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION 1249
 Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

1249

Field Worker's name Harry M. DreyerThis report made on (date) April 19, 19371. Name John Barry2. Post Office Address Oklahoma City, Oklahoma3. Residence address (or location) 801 NW 40th st.4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month Day Year 5. Place of birth Cherokee, Oklahoma6. Name of Father Robert Barry Place of birth IllinoisOther information about father settled in Cherokee strip in 1893.7. Name of Mother Mary Elizabeth Place of birth KansasOther information about mother maiden name was Holmes, born nearWellington, Kansas.

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 .

Experiences of John Barry
801 NW 40th st., Oklahoma City,
Oklahoma.

I was born in Alfalfa County Oklahoma, in 1893. My mother, Mary Elizabeth, whose maiden name was Holmes, was born near, Wellington, Kansas. My father, Robert Barry, was born near Peoria, Ill. He came to Kansas in the eighties and settled near Berth, Kansas, a town near Wellington, Kansas. Both parents are of Irish descent.

Father made the run from the Kansas line near Kiowa, Kansas. He came in a wagon and took a homestead one mile south, and one east of Cherokee, Oklahoma. There were no buildings in the country then and the first Postoffice was at Irwin which was one half mile east and one half mile south of Cherokee, but this is no longer in existence. There were three or four stores built there, which later were moved into the present site of Cherokee, Oklahoma.

After my father staked his homestead, he went to Alva in a wagon drawn by a team and registered at the Government Land office. Alva was a small town then, but the Santa Fe Railroad already had a train through Alva, from Kiowa. The settlers freighted their supplies with teams and wagons overland from Kiowa. There was no river to cross, only Salt Fork and it was easily forded.

The Orient Railroad Company first built their line

down through Cherokee from Anthony, Kansas, and the Rock Island was built from Alva to Ingersol. It was one half mile west of Cherokee going south to Geary, and they thought that the town would build west, but it never did. There were never any disputes over properties around Cherokee that I know of. Only a gradual growth brought it to its present size. There was an academy there, three miles north and two miles east of Cherokee, Oklahoma. They taught up to the eighth grade, then many of students went from there to Friends University at Wichita, Kansas. The academy is no longer in existence.

Mr. Cessna, the organizer of the Cessna airplane factory at Wichita, Kansas, an early settler, learned to fly a plane by taxying the plane up and down the salt plains which border on the east side of Cherokee. There used to be great gatherings of people on Sundays from the around/country of Alva, Kiowa, and surrounding communities, to witness the hounds chasing rabbits that were released. This was quite a sport. For some time when I was a small barefoot boy, fairs were held on the plains and later we had motorcycle races.

Cherokee was formerly in old Woods county, which included the present Woods county and also Major county.

Fairview, Cherokee, Carmen and Ingersol were rivals for the county seat. Fairview finally became the county seat of Major county. The rivalry was left between the three remaining cities, with Ingersol as strongest rival, but Cherokee which is present county seat, finally won in Woods County and the inhabitants from Ingersol began moving to the county seat.

Baseball has always been a great summer sport in that community and there were also a good many horse races held in connection with early fairs. These fairs were in cooperation with neighboring cities.