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BARNETT, JIMMIE

INTERVIEW

7088

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BARNETT, JIMMIE. INTERVIEW
BIOGRAPHY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Grace Kelley

This report made on (date) August 10 1937

1. Name Jimmie Barnett

2. Post Office Address Bryant, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) Second house from the first store
in Bryant

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month _____ Day _____ Year 1894

5. Place of birth West of Bryant

6. Name of Father Dave Barnett Place of birth West of Bryant

Other information about father Half-brother to wealthy Jackson Barnett

7. Name of Mother Nancy Place of birth close to Bryant

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 8.

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BARNETT, JIMMIE, INTERVIEW. 7088.

Grace Kelley,
Interviewer,
August 10, 1937.

An Interview with Jimmie Barnett,
Bryant, Oklahoma.

This faction of the Creeks were called Snakes because they wouldn't allot and were followers of Crazy Snake. The parents who would allot gave their children in to be allotted when they gave their own names in and they were usually allotted close together. When they wouldn't allot, the Government allotted them wherever it wanted to. As the parents didn't file their children, quite a few were left out. My parents allotted me and all of the Barnetts were allotted but Jackson Barnett. The Government allotted him and everyone knows his story as it has been in the papers so much. There were two Jackson Barnetts; one now dead, the rich one who was the son of Siah Barnett, the other is living and was the son of Jim Barnett, he is called Black Jack.

Towns and Clans

My mother belonged to Kealigee Town, East of

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Hannah.

My father belonged to Tuckabatche Town, North of Yeager. I belong to Kealigee Town as the family always follows the mother both in towns and clan. Mother was (Woka) Coon so I'm Coon. No person could marry in his own town but had to marry into a different town. Everyone in that town is related. The husband belongs to the wife's town in this way:

He goes to the Green Corn Dances, fasts, takes medicine even if he happens to be a church Indian. He doesn't have to dance if he is a church Indian. They fast four days and take medicine which is a good physic and is really good for health as it makes men supple and clears all malaria out. He does this to show that he cares for his wife and wants to protect her. If the king writes him to be there and for some good reason he shows he can't be there, he sends some tobacco or anything they can all enjoy; or else he sends money which is used for tobacco which they all smoke. That is because he has the right intentions

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and is friendly. If he just doesn't want to come they fine him a certain amount of money. The king gives him a name, it's no secret yet like a pass word in a lodge, and like a lodge they are all brothers. This name is called a Square Name or War Name and is kept on the books instead of his own family name.

Billie West lived North of Bryant, across from where the Victoria coal mine used to be. His Square Name was Spokogee Harjo but he is not the Spokogee Harjo of the Piankashew Indians.

If one lives close to one town he doesn't dance with them but goes back to his own town no matter how far away that one is. That is why some go to Shawnee, Wetumka, and other towns during the time green corn is good to eat.

Ball Games

The last ball game I know about was in 1921 or 1922, east of Bunk Pharoah's place which is Spring Hill. It was really intended to be a game for fun, but ended

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in a fight between the Arbeccas and Thlop Thlocos. The King and medicine man makes the match with some other town's king and medicine man.

There is no hard feelings between them at all, they don't know of the grudge between one or more of their team and one or more of the other team. When they are playing or before, these players decide to get this grudge fought off and start quarreling or fighting. Sometimes they are told to play ball and fight after it is over, that this a game for fun and not a fight. Other times the players will take up for their "brother" and it will be a free-for-all.

How Women and Men Play.

When the men play together they have sticks with medicine on them and play entirely different than in a mixed game. In a mixed game they use the pole that is danced around instead of the two goals in the men's game. The men use sticks without medicine while the women catch and throw the ball with their hands. The ball has to hit the cow's head on top of the pole. They have a score keeper off to one side who marks on

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the ground to see who hits the cow's head most, men or women. This game is similar to basket ball except there is only one goal.

Medicine Man

Indians still have their medicine man who goes to the woods and gets his herbs and roots at the proper season, some in the summer and some in the fall, and dries them for future use. He is a good man but doesn't belong to a church, yet he is like a preacher. This is hard ~~to~~ to explain so it can be understood. There are two of them, like twins. The medicine man picks a man who is not wicked or strong headed but settled in his good ways. He keeps this man with him like a twin all the time and teaches him to be a medicine man when the medicine man dies he can take his place. Indians have their own medicine man and they will go miles to him.

After a matched ball game the sticks are taken back to the home town and other medicine is put on them which kills the effect of the first that was used before the game.

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Agriculture Fairs

I don't think they had any certain place for these fairs but they were mostly around Okmulgee. In the old days they were held just like now. The first and second of September there will be one at Wetumka or South of Wetumka. They had one every year.

Politics

There are so many things I've heard the old folks talk about, but can't remember enough to tell. After the Civil War they had two parties like the Republicans and Democrats only they called them the Cold Country People as they were the ones who went under North/Opuiithli Yahola and the McIntoshes who were the ones who went south and were known as the Hot Country People.

Oil Business

I don't know why they thought there was oil on our land but they make some tests and in 1921 the Carter Phillips people drilled on my sister Ida's and

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brother Robert Barnett's places. Robert's was next to mine and they struck oil on his land but later when they drilled on mine they didn't get it. W. B. Pine had a lot of leases and sold out to the Carter people. Wilcox did the drilling.

Hunting

The Five Civilized Tribes didn't have regular hunting grounds but were like the white people. They could hunt wherever they pleased then for the country was free while now so much of it is posted.

Payments

The only payments I know about were at Okmulgee. The Indians went in wagons and it took two days. Some of them stayed three or four days at Okmulgee. They were paid money but I don't know the amount.

Mail Route

There was a mail hack between Muskogee, Okmulgee and Oklahoma City.

Ghost Towns

Sonora was southeast of Henryetta. Frank Licoska had a ranch and store here. When he got the post office in

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his store it was called Sonora for his wife, Sonora, the daughter of McIntosh. There was also a cotton gin.

South of Bryant was the Barnett settlement. Dad's uncle, Jim Barnett, had a store and ranch. Joe Siah Looney lived about two hundred yards from the store, and he was the judge. Tom Harper was a school teacher who lived about a mile away. Josh Ashberry was well educated but didn't have any office, he worked in the store some.

In an Indian village the homes will be from two hundred yards to a mile apart, they're not close like in our towns.

Marriage and Divorce

The old Indians were really married but they didn't have papers as we do now. They had certain laws that they had to obey but I don't know them exactly. After they separated they had to live apart so many years before they could remarry.