

MARTIN, JAMES HENRY.

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Lendolphus D. Maybee  
Investigator  
March 15, 1938

An Interview With  
James Henry Martin,  
Pryor, Oklahoma

I was born in Wayne County, Tennessee, in 1848. I was married to Emma Thomas and we came to the Indian Territory in 1891 with my father, N. R. Martin, who fought in the Civil War and now lives close to Rose, in Delaware County.

My father and I were farmers together. Later, father carried the mail on the first mail route in the vicinity when we settled on Markham Prairie. In recent years I have carried mail here in Mayes County, following in the footsteps of my father. We carried the mail with a team and wagon first and later with one horse and buggy.

Joel Mayes was Chief of the Cherokee Nation at that time, but the white people were governed by Federal Law only and the closest United States Court was at Fort Smith, Arkansas.

We raised most everything we ate but bought a few

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supplies at the W. T. Whitaker store, the only store in Pryor at that time. Ed Gwartney bought this store from Whitaker and later sold it to Ghram and Hogan. We also traded with Clem Hayden at Chouteau in the year 1891.

The Joel Mayes ferry was located on Grand River between Pryor and Locust Grove about eight miles from Pryor, southeast. The J. R. Riley ferry was located about five or six miles above the Mayes ferry. There were no bridges anywhere in the country at that time.

Some of my friends were "Nick" and "Soggie" Sanders, full-blood Cherokees, J. M. Bryant, Johnny War, Joel Mayes, Sam Mayes, Joe Martin, John Hogan, Crutchfield and Bunk Markham.

I am now living on a small farm southeast of Pryor, just outside the city limits. We have raised nine children who have all attended the Pryor schools, the first one being a subscription school in the south part of town taught by Mrs. Bryant. Each pupil paid one dollar for a three months term. Mrs. Bryant would teach a term just whenever she could get from five to ten pupils together at one time.