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BYNUM, ARTHUR.

INTERVIEW

#12587

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

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INTERVIEW

12567

Field Worker's name Mary D. Dorward,

This report made on (date) December 29, 1937

1. Name Arthur Bynum,

2. Post Office Address Tulsa, Oklahoma,

3. Residence address (or location) 1345 South Troost,

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month _____ Day _____ Year 1875

5. Place of birth Near Indianola, in Indian Territory.

6. Name of Father R. N. Bynum Place of birth _____

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother _____ Place of birth _____

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.

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INTERVIEW

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Mary D. Dorward,
Investigator,
December 29, 1937.

Interview with Mr. Arthur Bynum,
1345 South Troost,
Tulsa, Oklahoma.
A biographic sketch.

Arthur Bynum was born in 1875 on his father's farm along the Canadian River near what is now the town of Indianola. When Arthur was about eight or nine years of age the family moved to the town of Tulsa where his father established a mercantile store.

Tulsa at that time was known as Tulsey Town, a name which, as was usual in the Creek Nation, meant not only the little settlement itself but a great deal of surrounding territory as well. In the early days Indians came from a wide radius to trade in Tulsa, from the far western part of the state and the Sac and Fox country. The Indians would come in groups of fifty or more and camp in their tepees for a week or more until they had finished their trading.

Arthur Bynum's father, R. N. Bynum, was mayor of Tulsa when the town purchased the mission school from the Presbyterian Mission Board and converted it into a public school. The money for its purchase was advanced by the mayor and

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four other citizens, including J. M. Hall and Henry C. Calhoun. Each man was reimbursed in time from the public funds. At that time the only source of revenue for the city government was from fines and occupation taxes, the tax paid by anyone wishing to conduct a business of any kind. The purchase of the school took place the second year after Tulsa became an incorporated town under the territorial, or Arkansas, form of government. The city officials consisted of the mayor, five aldermen, a clerk, a treasurer, and a marshal, none of whom received a salary. The mayor served as police judge as well.

Arthur Bynum recalls that as a child he used to have to go to the old Tuckabatchie pasture southwest of the town and was always afraid of the old Indian, Tuckabatchie, not because the Indian had ever caused any trouble but just because he was an old man whom little Arthur didn't know. The Indians were always trustworthy. It was the sealawag whites who caused trouble when there was trouble.

Fourth of July celebrations used to be held in the vicinity of what is now the intersection of Twelfth and Boston, where there was a spring, and also at Eighth and

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Boston. There would be a merry-go-round, a dance platform, and contests of various kinds as well as speeches.

Arthur Bynum frequently witnessed Indian ball games. There was never any referee or umpire for these games and if someone not in the game wanted to get in, he would go up when the players were in a huddle and strike one of them over the head with his bat with force sufficient to knock him out of the game.

Billie Burgess, a Cherokee Indian policeman, used to check express packages for liquor. He would hold them up to his ear and shake them and if his suspicions were aroused, he would smash the package then and there.

Poo Sunday, a Cherokee, was another Indian police.

Arthur Bynum recalls seeing Wesley Barnett shoot Lun Lokie. Both were Creek Indians who had a grudge against each other. One day Legus Perryman, chief of the Creeks, and Lokie were going to Perryman's office which was in the J. M. Hall store. As they reached the southwest corner of what is now First Street and Boulder Avenue, Barnett, who was in a house nearby, saw them coming. He stepped out on

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the porch of the house and, addressing Lokie, said, "Ready?", for each knew that if they met they would shoot it out. Barnett did not take advantage of the fact that he saw Lokie before Lokie saw him. Barnett went back into the house, got his gun, and again stepped to the door and shot Lokie. Barnett then went out of town and hid in a cabin. He was already wanted by the Federal authorities on some other charge, so when he hid in the cabin the Federal officers set fire to the cabin, forcing him out into the open. He came out shooting and the officers soon shot him down.