

MARLEY, RALPH H.

INTERVIEW

#8042

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

Field Worker's name Louise S. Barnes

This report made on (date) July 22, 1937

1. Name Ralph H. Marley

2. Post Office Address Kingfisher, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) _____

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month November Day 6 Year 1882

5. Place of birth Clay Center, Kansas

6. Name of Father Ernest Marley Place of birth _____

Other information about father Farmer

7. Name of Mother Thora Unger Place of birth _____

Other information about mother Her father was a miller

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 _____.

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Interview with Ralph H. Marley
Kingfisher, Oklahoma.

Mr. Ralph Marley came to Oklahoma in 1890, when he was only nine years old. He came with his parents from Clay Center, Kansas by covered wagon, driving horses. It took them two weeks to reach Hennessey, where they made their first camp. At this time the Cherokee strip was not opened.

They stayed at Hennessey about two weeks before moving on because his father wanted to stake a claim after leaving Hennessey. They moved on south camping at John's Creek where the City Park at Kingfisher is now located.

His father bought a farm six miles southeast of Kingfisher, the only farm in that community that had a frame house on it. Most of the farms had dug-outs for homes.

He traded a team, wagon and one hundred dollars for the farm, leaving them with very little money and a team without any harness, wagon or anything to travel in. His father bought some rope, chain

and hames, and made harness enough to get along; besides he bought an old wagon, costing ten dollars. They had a total of five dollars left and hardly anything to eat. His father, while out working lost the five dollars and they had nothing. After searching everywhere they thought he had been, the little daughter found the money while playing, but even then it was needed so badly and would not go very far. They had to have money to live. He tried to buy a plow on credit, but until he had promised to pay them the first money he secured for plowing they would not let him have the plow. The family needed the money then but under the circumstances that was the only thing they could do, because they had to live, so he bought the plow on credit.

The neighbors all worked together and broke sod to build the first school house. There were only a few schools but the teaching was general of course.

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The schools only had benches to use as desks except a few pupils who had parents with money, they had their own desks that had been made at home.

There were lots of entertainments given in the schools at this time such as literary and church. The whole community took part and attended.

Even since he had come to Oklahoma he had wanted a horse, saddle and a big hat, but had only succeeded in getting a horse until the Cherokee Strip opened in 1892; and then his father entered the race to stake a claim for his grandfather. In running they found a horse that had been abandoned when his leg was broken so they shot him, and took the saddle with them, and it became "Mine", Mr. Morley stated, but I never did get my big hat.

Mr. Morley is now a merchant at Kingfisher.