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BERRYHILL, ALEX.

NINTH INTERVIEW

6144

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6144.

Jefferson Berryhill,  
interviewer,  
June 1, 1937.

FORDS AND FERRYBOATS.  
Alex Berryhill.

Mr. Alex Berryhill was born four miles north and three-fourths west of Okmulgee in the year of 1870. He is a Concharty Clan and now lives north of Okmulgee.

He is half Creek and half Irish and is sixty-seven years old.

His father, Jefferson Berryhill, was an Irishman. His mother was a full blood Creek Indian of Concharty Clan, dates of birth and deaths unknown.

In the recollection of Mr. Berryhill there were four ferryboats and four fords that he well remembers as well as the locations of each. Of course, these may be or were some others, but these mentioned Mr. Berryhill remembers.

In the recollection of Mr. Berryhill there was a ferryboat and a ford right close together, located southwest of Okmulgee about six miles on what is now known as Shapp road. After crossing the river bridge, about a quarter of a mile south and about one hundred and fifty yards east off the road, was a ferryboat and just below the ferryboat there was a ford. This ferryboat was owned and operated by Jim Canard, an Indian.

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Then there was another ferryboat operated for a time by an Indian by the name of Kelly Harrison and his helper, Yahu Fixico. This ferryboat was moved after it met with a tragedy. It was located two miles southwest and about two miles south of Okmulgee.

This ferryboat was moved by the same man Kelly Harrison to its new location, four miles west of Okmulgee, on the main paved highway, about two hundred yards south of the river bridge. The ford was just a few feet away from the river bridge, on the south side. The ferryboat was lost during the floods, on a fishing trip about two miles from the river bridge, south.

Then there was another ford and ferryboat located one and one-half miles north of Nuyaka Mission. It was owned by Asparhechar and operated by some of his men.

This ferryboat owned and operated by Kelly Harrison met with disaster, that was the reason for its removal to a new location west of Okmulgee. The ferryboat had not been built very long when one day a white woman and her two children came to the ferryboat to cross over. Mr. Kelly and his helper, Yahu Fixico, proceeded to get them across. The lady

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and children were in a buggy. With little difficulty they had the team of horses and the buggy on the boat. As they started and the boat began to move the team became excited and backed off to one side of the boat. That unbalanced the boat and they slid in the swollen river. Yahu Mixico and the woman and two children were drowned, also the team of horses, Mr. Harrison was saved by clinging to some limbs of an overhanging tree.

In another incident, the boat was being operated across with some passengers, during the high water. A little boy about the age of seven or eight was on the north side of the boat leaning over, playing with his hands in the water when he over balanced himself by leaning too far over and fell in under the boat. He came up away from the boat, such was the force of the water. No one was able to get him out. He was drowned and was found about a mile away a few days later. These are actual stories of fords and ferryboats from the recollection of Mr. Alex Berryhill. He said he crossed the river on ferryboats many times on horseback.