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BOWLBY, F. S.

INTERVIEW

8837

14

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

BOWLEY, F. S.

INTERVIEW

8837

Field Worker's name Ida A. Merwin,

This report made on (date) October 14 1937

1. Name F. S. Bowlby

2. Post Office Address Perry, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) 310 Cedar Street

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month August Day 12 Year 1856

5. Place of birth Hunterdon, New Jersey

6. Name of Father Alexander H. Bowlby Place of birth New Jersey

Other information about father _____

7. Name of Mother Margaret (Hazlett) Bowlby Place of birth New Jersey

Other information about mother _____

Note: 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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Ide A. Merwin,
Investigator,
October 14, 1937.

An Interview with Mr. F. S. Bowlby,
810 Cedar Street, Perry, Oklahoma.

I am the son of Alexander H. and Margaret (Hazlett) Bowlby and I was born at Hunterdon, New Jersey, August 12, 1856.

In 1893 my brother-in-law and I came from Kansas to await the opening of the Cherokee Strip. Our purpose was to secure land on which to make a home. Our trip from Kansas was made in a wagon bringing a camping outfit. We located in Payne County, at a small town called Clarkston; this town was then about ten miles west of Stillwater, but it did not exist very long after the opening of the Strip. During the time we were waiting, we spent part of the time training our horses for the race. On the day of the run we made the start from the south line northwest of Stillwater, I was on a horse and staked land on the N.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 22-21 1E, Noble County. This was real good land.

I had become acquainted with a guide who was leading some people to the Red Rock country, and he had told me

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that when he gave a certain signal during the Run for me to fall out and stake, as there was good land in this part of the country. This land I secured was all prairie; there was only one cottonwood tree on it. After filing on the land I returned to Kansas to move my family. I drove a team and brought some furniture, only some necessary articles for the home; after I had built a small building my family came on the train.

The first home was a one room 12x16 box house of native lumber which I bought at a sawmill in Payne County. We lived in this box house about three years when I built a building about four feet from this one, which I used for a granary when needed, and the rest of the time we used it for living quarters until I could build a house which was a few years later. It was about 1920 when I built the four room house that is there now.

I have not lived on the farm during the past fifteen years- my health failed and I rented the farm and moved to town. The first shelter or barn for the stock was a shed barn.

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I had a well drilled to a depth of sixty-four feet which provided plenty of water.

For fuel I hauled wood from the timber lands, sometimes clearing a piece of land for the wood, other times we would buy the wood by the load.

The first year I broke fifteen acres and sowed it in wheat, buying the seed in Payne County, I paid 40 cents per bushel for the seed. I also put ten or twelve acres in kaffir corn- this I planted with a hand planter.

I raised wheat, oats, cotton, and cane in later years- wheat being the main crop. I broke out ninety acres of the land, the rest was left for grass which provided the hay and pasture.

I did not deal in stock extensively, but had only what was needed for farm use. I hauled the farm products to Perry and bought our supplies while there.

We raised good gardens and good crops, and never saw the time that we were in want, but we did experience some hard times, and did a lot of hard work. I had some property in Kansas that was rented, and this income helped

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us to buy what was needed- later I sold the property there which aided in improving my place here.

People were very kind and friendly in those days and always ready to help one another.

On one occasion a man and his wife from near Morrison were on their way to Perry to have her hand treated for a burn. They had a load of hay that they were to sell to pay for the treatment; a blizzard overtook them and they stopped at my place for shelter. They were with us for two days. He offered me the hay to pay for their keep- but I would not take it; two more people made it awfully crowded and inconvenient for us but I was glad that we could help them.