

COOK, J. L.

INTERVIEW

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Etta D. Mason,
Investigator,
12-1-37.

Agricultural and Mineral Development
after 1890, by J. L. Cook, Atoka.

In 1890 the population of the Indian Territory and Oklahoma Territory was around 242,000.

Such an increase in population caused a very large increase in farm products. Cotton industry especially increased. Many of the first settlers were in such straitened circumstances upon their arrival in a new country that they did not have the means to buy seed.

In some of the wheat areas, railway authorities furnished seed wheat to the farmers and permitted them to return the seed the following year.

Other interests such as banks and transportation companies helped also to furnish seed.

Corn was the principal crop attempted and fairly successful crops were gathered the first year. In the western part of the state where the rainfall was doubtful crops such as kaffir-corn, milo, maize and various kinds of sorghum were raised with success.

Horticulture began to be developed and soon grapes, peaches, apples, plums and several varieties of berries

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were raised successfully. Potatoes of both varieties were successfully raised in all sections and with the raising of fruits and vegetables, the canning industry began to flourish although none of the canning plants survived long enough to be profitable.

The new settlers had brought very little stock with them and so the stock industry had changed from the time when the prairies were covered with cattle and stock of all kinds.

Coal had been mined in the Indian Territory for some years previous to this time but owing to slow transportation coal mining had never been developed, but with the building of new railways many new mines were opened up and production was stimulated. By 1907 the output of coal was over 3,000,000 tons a year.

Petroleum and natural gas in Oklahoma.

Oklahoma was in an oil belt.

The first prospecting was done in Oklahoma in 1884, several miles west of Atoka, and near Tahlequah. After ten years of inactivity other wells were drilled in other parts of the country and soon the oil industry grew to great

proportions. By 1907, 43,000,00 barrels of crude oil brought to the Territory about \$17,000,000.00.

The gas industry developed with the oil industry.

Other mineral resources were, ~~building stone,~~ limestone, sandstone, granite, marble, lead and zinc.

Other minerals were known to be in the Territory, but no use had been found for them.