

SPRING, BUSTER J.

INTERVIEW

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Pete W. Cole,
Field Worker,
July 28, 1937.

Interview With Buster J. Spring,
Atoka, Oklahoma.

I am a one-half Choctaw Indian born in 1875 near Goodland in Choctaw County. The town of Hugo, now the county seat, had not been built then and Goodland was the post office at that time.

My mother was an Indian of the Roebuck family. Her parents came from the state of Mississippi with the early emigrants in 1876 and settled at Doaksville. An Indian settlement had been established here for several years and most of the emigrants who came to this country settled at this place. This was Kiamichi County in Territorial days. Later my mother and her family moved away from this place to a place some few miles west and began improving land to farm.

They built a log house and in a few years the land was all in cultivation, and a large settlement of people were living at and near this farm. In about the year 1900

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the land was surveyed for a railroad which was to be laid from Ardmore to Hope, Arkansas. The town of Hugo sprang up at the intersection of this new road and the main line of the San Francisco Railroad and in a short time Hugo was a town of ordinary size and later the county seat of old Choctaw County.

After a few years we moved out to another place south and west of where we had been living, close to a big lake of several acres which was named Roebuck Lake after the name of my mother's parents who were living near this place at that time. Raising hogs and cattle was our chief occupations although we farmed some. This being an open country, we did not know what it was to pen up hogs and fatten them for winter meat. I was fifteen years old before I saw my first hog penned to be fed and fattened for meat in the winter.

When Congress passed a law granting us one hundred and sixty acres of land as our homestead, it was not to be taxed and was to be free of all incumbrance with the provision that it should always remain in our name. I allotted my

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homestead in Atoka County where I now am living. This is in McGee Valley. I moved from Goodland in Choctaw County forty years ago, and since my removal here I have not been one hundred miles away from home in the last forty years.

I was the last sheriff of Atoka County in Territorial days before Oklahoma became a state. The Indians were not bothered about politics in those days, but now and then some few were interested and took part in the game. A large settlement of Choctaw Indians were living around Redden and Daisy. At one time during the election Jesse Bond, a full blood Choctaw who was one of the emigrants from Mississippi, the first time he ever voted an Eagle Party ticket voted for me when I was a candidate for the sheriff office. Dr. J. H. Miller now dead, an inter-married citizen and a big cattle man, lost \$5.00 bet because this man voted for me on that ticket.