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BOURDETTE, J. R. INTERVIEW

10071

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

BOURDETTE, J. R.

INTERVIEW

10071

Field Worker's name Don Moon, Jr.

This report made on (date) February 23 1938

1. Name J. R. Bourdette

2. Post Office Address Cuthrie

3. Residence address (or location) Masonic Home for Aged

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month November Day 1 Year 1852

5. Place of birth New York

6. Name of Father George L. Bourdette Place of birth

7. Name of Mother of Welsh descent

Other information about mother France

Died when he was young.

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 2

BOURDETTE, J. R.

INTERVIEW

10071

Don Moon, Jr.

Interviewer

February 23, 1938.

Interview with J. R. Bourdette
Guthrie, Oklahoma.

Mr. Bourdette has been a peace officer most of his life, but also worked as a cowboy for a few years in Texas. He worked for Sam Goldson several years in Texas. Goldson was a big cattleman with cattle all over that country. His brand was the Big D. The Big D cattle ranged as far north as Fort Sill. Mr Bourdette went on many a cattle drive up the trails across this part of Oklahoma sometimes to Wichita and sometimes to Abilene. Usually about six men went on these drives. Once they took two thousand head of cattle to Wichita and this was the biggest herd of cattle Mr. Bourdette ever drove although he made about a dozen such trips.

During the last year that he was with the Goldson outfit Mr. Bourdette accompanied an officer who was trying to stop the Indians from stealing cattle. For about six months they two rode the plains on the lookout for Indians with stolen cattle. They found several bunches of them and if they weren't easy to capture they shot them down and left them lying there.

BOURDETTE, J. R.

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All the Indians had stolen cattle for they knew all the brands, and to whom the cattle belonged. These Indians were Cheyennes and Arapahoes.

Then Mr. Bourdette went back to Winfield, Kansas, where he had lived for awhile before going to Texas, and from there came down to Oklahoma in a wagon when the Iowa land was opened. He and a man named Donart filed on a place as a townsite, and started the town of Stillwater. Mr. Bourdette was Deputy Sheriff and on the Police Force twenty-five years (for five years as Chief of Police), until he was too old to serve longer and came to Guthrie to the Masonic Home for the Aged.

The desperadoes gave the town of Stillwater a wide berth,
so Mr. Bourdette did not encounter them often.

When his friend Donart and a lawyer named Robert A. Lowry were representing their county in the Legislature, Lowry sent word to Bourdette asking him which he wanted Stillwater to have, the State Penitentiary or a college, and Mr. Bourdette sent word back, "We don't want any penitentiary at Stillwater, give us a college." And sure enough, Stillwater got a college.