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BRADFORD, ... S.

INTERVIEW

#4443

218

BRADFORD, W. S.

INTERVIEW.

4443

Robert H. Boatman, Interviewer
Indian-Pioneer History S-149
June 15, 1937

W. S. "Si" Bradford, R.R. #1,
Washington, Oklahoma.

W. S. Bradford, Negro, was born December 1, 1855,
State of Georgia. Father was Jerry Bradford.

I had heard so much about this new country, the
Indian Territory, that I decided to come to it and in 1898
I took the train at Houston and came to Purcell, to what
is now the County Seat of McClain County. Then I came
out into the country some fifteen miles northwest of Purcell
on Walnut Creek which is a small creek in the north central
part of McClain County. There were only two houses between
here and Purcell.

I settled on a claim, cut logs, and built a small
one-room house. I made the boards that covered it and a
dirt floor was used. I did not have much trouble getting
plenty of food, for game was plentiful. There were deer,
turkeys, coons, opossums, mink, skunk and lots of prairie
chickens, the streams were all full of fish, mostly catfish,
and wolves could be heard nearly all the time and there were
also some buffalo.

BRADFORD, W. S.

INTERVIEW.

4443

2

The stock which we had was free to range anywhere although we never allowed our stock to go #very far away from our place for fear they would be stolen.

Sometimes, a band of "rustlers" would come through the country and if they got your horses you very seldom could get them back for they generally headed the stolen horses toward Red River and into Texas.

As years passed people began to clear land and build homes. The game was just wasted. I bought the little farm I first settled on when I came to the Territory. My father was half Irish and half Cherokee Indian and my mother was a fullblood African. I never did get any land allotted as I did not know my grandfather's name, though I still have my little home of forty acres which I bought from the Chickasaw Tribe.