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Grace Kelley  
Field Worker  
May 12, 1937

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Interview with J. J. Bradney  
319 E. Trudgeon, Henryetta, Oklahoma.  
Born 1866. Mount Sterling, Ill.  
Father-C. W. Bradney  
Mother-Sarah Bradney

The Oklahoma City of 1894.

When I was twenty-eight I came to Oklahoma City by train. It was about the size of Henryetta now, between seven and eight thousand population. There were a few two and three story brick buildings, but none taller. There was a wagon yard where the Lee Huckins Hotel stands, H. B. Garrison was the owner. I've seen the Jimson weeds go to seed there and I saw the first dirt moved for the Lee Huckins Hotel to be built. One time a four-horse team got stuck right in front of it. There was no paving and sixth street was the north boundary of Oklahoma City. There was a thrashing machine one block west of the place where the Court House now stands. I worked on a wheat binder where the State Capitol was later built. The wholesale District east of the old Santa Fe depot was a frog bog. The depot was a little old wooden one not fit to keep a fire in. I hunted rabbits where the Capitol is. There was only one cabin there and I can't think of the owner's name. There were just two railroads. I think there was a church of every

denomination but of course they were smaller and less expensive than now. Their pride was their schools, one and two story brick buildings and good teachers.

The Grand Avenue Hotel was two stories high, a regular commercial hotel but not fancy. They had busses that met the trains and brought the passengers to the Hotel. They were like our busses except they were drawn by horses instead of being automobiles.

The men from Cleveland, Kansas City and farther East would have business in Oklahoma City and they would be really afraid to come for they thought they would be killed before they could get away. They would be surprised to find just as nice people in Oklahoma City as back East. I've heard them talk about it.

W. W. Stone owned a blacksmith shop, made hand-made harness and wagons, and owned also a hardware store. I went to work for him in the blacksmith shop at first, later I worked in the Hardware store; many times he would take in seven hundred dollars on Saturday, besides the credit business. His wagons sold for \$55.00, that would sell for \$75.00 now, but he bought tire iron for \$2.25 a

hundred from Kansas City that would cost \$5.00 or \$6.00 now. I've seen oxen teams come to trade in Oklahoma City.

When I worked in the Hardware store, the Indians would come to buy ammunition and they couldn't talk English and I couldn't talk Indian. They would raise their arms and point it like a gun and grunt. I would get a handful of shells and they would pick out the size they wanted and buy a box of them.

Kiowa and Comanche Opening.

When I worked in the Hardware store, competent men were plentiful and, when they hired you, they expected you to work ten hours a day, and a vacation was an unheard of thing. If you didn't stay on the job, somebody else would get your job. That was why I didn't go to the opening.

The trains would come through Oklahoma City going to El Reno. They would be covered with men, as thick inside as they could stand, on top and every place a man could stick. Tables were placed along the track at the depot with the registration papers on them. In El Reno they had to stand in line before the drawing until they were weak.

There was absolutely no place for a man to sleep.

One day I was laying in my hammock on the porch and a man came along and wanted to rent the hammock to sleep in. I told him he could sleep in it if he wanted to but I didn't want any pay for it. He was from Missouri. After that they would come there, and want to pay to get to sleep on the porch. I never did turn anyone away but I didn't charge them for it.

High-jacking Unknown.

Those men lay there, and some of them had plenty of money, and were safe; because if you were honest and behaved yourself you would be all right but if you were crooked, you'd land in the other world.

I was reared on a farm and we had plenty, though we worked hard to get it. Dad thought it was a disgrace to be hitching up the horses to plow after sun-up. We worked from sun-up till sun-down, all during the farming time. Just the chores for work until spring came again. The people of that time were more honest and hardworking and healthy than they are now.