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BUXTON, BERT. INTERVIEW.

Field Worker: Harry M. Dreyer  
February 19, 1937

BIOGRAPHY OF Mr. Bert Buxton  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

BCRN February, 1889, in  
Chillicothe, Missouri

Father: A.F. Buxton Mother: Mary J. Buxton

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In June 1889, (Mr. Buxton was at that time four months old) my parents came to Oklahoma City. They remained there until 1901. We came to Oklahoma City by the way of Bartlesville, Oklahoma and according to facts often related to me by my father, we forded the stream there. He came in covered wagon. There were about five wagons in all. Several of our friends came with us.

In 1901, we went to ElReno. My father registered file for a claim. He took up a homestead near what is now Fletcher, Oklahoma. We went to our homestead by way of Anadarko, and Lawton. We went out to the homestead from the latter point.

The town of Fletcher was not there then, but was built after that time. It was named after a man by the name of Fletcher Dodge. There was quite a dispute between citizens around Fletcher over the railroad at that time. The railroad put a depot at Cyril instead of Fletcher, as they had only a crane for mail there. Citizens went out and set fire to the Crane at Fletcher one evening, and fired several shots over

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flame as it burned, warning others around not to try to put the fire out. I was very small then, but I remember standing near by and watching it burn. There was a large crowd of people there. They also soaped the tracks in order to stall the train, so it could not pull up grade, and railroad men would get out and rub and rub on tracks to get the soap off of it in order to proceed with train. The railroad company finally decided to give them a depot at Fletcher.

We were bothered pretty much with cattlemen at that time, but got rid of them by taking ropes and tying them to a chain and to the saddle horn, then riding our ponies, we would drag this rope soaked in kerosene and ignited across the prairies and burn the grass, so cattlemen would move out as there wouldn't be any grass to graze the cattle on.

My father traded a lot with the Indians, and I was practically raised with them, I played with them, ate with them, and danced and slept with Indian boys in the teepees.

The Kiowa and Comanche Indians lived around us. When I was about 11 years old I went to their dances. The Indians would paint and dress me up so I looked like one of them. I can dance their dance today. They held their dances in the teepee. They would build small fire in center on ground.

Fixed with long weeds lined up in straight row, encircled about fire. Both old and young male Indians danced about fire and occasionally the Squaws would dance, but not very often. They would wait on the men. They would make a tea out of the mescal beans, a yellow fussy bean. I would drink tea with them, and then we would dance some more. The tea tasted kinda funny, and would make one crazy drunk. They would also make coffee out of green bean issued to them by the Government. They had small bowls about six inches in diameter and two inches deep made of solid rock, and a crusher about three inches long and two inches in diameter that they used by pounding into bowl to grind coffee and corn.

For music they used the tom toms. It was a stick with a large ball on the end, and they would take a cowhide that they tanned and stretch the hide over a hollow log, and beat on the hide with this stick. You could hear the tom tom beats for miles around. The Indians would get out in the warm sun and take sunbaths for hours at a time by lying in hot sun.

When they ate they would come up around the pot, and each would have a cup or handmade bowl, and each would dip food from pot with a dipper serving themselves and sit down and eat.

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Fieldworker's Note:

Mr. Buxton upon completing his story took me to a location in the 300 block on West California Street, Oklahoma City, to show me some cooking utensils, coffee grinders and meat blocks that were used in the early days. He pointed out to me the first school built in Oklahoma City, a frame shack at 307 West California Street, which still remains.

Mr. Buxton has in his personal possession, a picture of a washing powder that was advertised 47 years ago, given to him by his grandmother. He has a letter 60 years old that is with his sister in California.