

MALONE, WILLIAM

INTERVIEW #12154

187

MALONE, WILLIAM.

INTERVIEW.

12154

James R. Carselowey,
Interviewer
November, 17 & 18, 1937.

Interview with William Malone
Vinita, Oklahoma.

Before coming to Vinita my wife and I visited her father, the Reverend Mr. J. W. Ritchey, at Kimmundy, Illinois. The night before we left we attended a prayer meeting at her father's church. The minister called on a good old elder to close the meeting with prayer. After he had prayed for the oppressed and the distressed of every land and clime, he closed his prayer with these words, "Lord, thou knowest Brother and Sister Malone are going to Oklahoma to make their home. We feel sorry for them for it is a land of cut throats and robbers, gathered from every part of the United States."

The next day we took the train for St. Louis. We transferred to the Frisco and then headed for Vinita. We stepped off a west bound train at Vinita, twenty-eight years ago; three pistol shots rang out in quick succession, and a policeman ran out of the station yelling, "Stop or I'll wing you." My wife

MALONE, WILLIAM.

INTERVIEW.

12154

2

clung to my arm and tears rolled down her cheeks, and I thought she would collapse.

We remained all night at the Cobb Hotel and she spent a restless night. After our breakfast we went down to the International Bank and Trust Company, located then where George Noes Barber Shop now stands, and had a long talk with Mr. J. W. Orr, president of the bank. He assured my wife that the shooting scrape that had occurred at the depot the night before was the only shooting affair that had ever occurred in Vinita since the city had been incorporated and that in all probability there wouldn't be another shooting affair in Vinita in the next thousand years. This made her feel a little better, and we cautiously ventured to take a little stroll over the city. We went west past the First National Bank, and up to the corner past the Crowder Hotel. In the gutter across the street was a Chester White sow lying in the mud with a half dozen little pigs.

Thinking we might run into a herd of buffaloes, or a lot of blanket Indians with scalps dangling at ^{their} belts, I suggested that we go back to Main Street, which we

MALONE, WILLIAM.

INTERVIEW.

12154

3

learned afterwards was Wilson Street. We turned south at the First National Bank Building and across the street we noticed quite a pool of water. Some wag had stuck a board in the pool, with these words, "No Fishing Allowed."

We passed a livery barn where the fine two story brick building is now occupied by Ridgway's Bargain Center.

We then crossed the street, walking on a narrow cinder walk, to the lot where the Phoenix Federal Saving and Loan Building now stands, then we proceeded north, passing the lot now occupied by the W. M. B. building. Both lots were as bare as Cimarron County wheat fields.

Vinita is ideally located, being seventy-eight miles north of Muskogee, sixty-six miles southwest from Joplin, about sixty-seven miles from Tulsa and an equal distance from Parsons. The city has an elevation of about 600 feet above sea level.

Editor's Note: An exhaustive report on the "Historical and Statistical Facts about Vinita and Craig

MALONE, WILLIAM

INTERVIEW

12154

-4-

County" was submitted in 1936 to the Chamber of Commerce in Vinita. This full report was submitted to this office, but since the valuable information contained in Mr. Malone's report is available to the student of Oklahoma history from other sources, only excerpts from his manuscripts are used in this project.