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BOSTON, M. E.

INTERVIEW

#4893

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#4893

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BOOTON, M. E.      INTERVIEW Form A-(S-149)  
BIOGRAPHY FORM  
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION  
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name John C. Kerr

This report made on (date) July 28 1937

1. Name M. E. Booton

2. Post Office Address Perry, Oklahoma

3. Residence address (or location) 818 Delaware Street

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month June Day 25 Year 1861

5. Place of birth Washington County, Iowa at Pileburg

6. Name of Father J. W. Booton Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Other information about father Fought in Civil War.

7. Name of Mother Malinda E. Dickey Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Other information about mother German descent.

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 \_\_\_\_\_.

John C. Kerr  
Field Worker  
July 28, 1937

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Interview with M. E. Booton.  
818 Delaware Street, Perry, Okla.

Mr. Booton states that he came from Iowa in 1893, about three months before the Cherokee Strip opened, landing at Mulhall, Oklahoma, where he worked in a restaurant. This part of old Oklahoma was full of people getting ready for the run into the Cherokee Strip. He made the race starting at the line at a point four miles east of Orlando. He staked a claim on the southeast quarter of Section 9, Township 20, Range 1 West, and still owns this farm. He came on into Perry, Oklahoma, and filed his claim. While standing in line, he states a Mr. Welch, who published the first newspaper, sent three men out selling this paper. They sold about four thousand copies in less than an hour. After filing, he gave twenty-five cents for a quart cup and carried water up to the line and sold it for fifty cents per drink.

He says that there were sixty thousand people in Perry in sixty minutes after the opening. The paper put out by Mr. Welch showed that thirty-five persons had filed on farms the first afternoon of the

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opening, September 16, 1893. One of the first businesses that opened up was a saloon and gambling house, put in by Hill Brothers who drove into Perry with a six-horse team and two wagons loaded with beer and whiskey. Beer sold for thirty-five cents a pint. They used a bushel basket for a money till, and had men guarding it with Winchesters and six shooters.

I stayed in Perry about a week and bought a kind of three-sided shack for \$2.50. This had been used as an eating place and I moved it out to my place four miles south of Perry and lived in it about one year, when I hauled native cottonwood lumber up from old Oklahoma and built a house ten by twelve feet. When I was through, I didn't have quite enough money to pay my helper so I gave him two chickens as a final settlement.

All my neighbors were very friendly and helped one another every time they could.

I put out ten acres of sod corn and it made about thirty bushels per acre. Corn was selling for ten cents

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per bushel in the Fall of 1894, and in the Spring of 1895 it was worth sixty-five cents per bushel.

Schoolhouses and churches were soon built. But times were very hard for a few years. Sometimes we had only cornmeal to eat for days at a time, but we all got along and I enjoyed it.