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The Story of Captain Walter Bates as
Given by his daughter Mrs. Ruth Shankle, 607 N.B.
Street, Muskogee to Miss Ella M. Robinson, Field
research worker. April 17, 1937

My father was born in New York City in 1818, the son of one of three brothers who emigrated to the United States about the beginning of the Nineteenth century. The brothers, after landing in New York, separated, two going South and one remaining in New York. They never saw nor heard of each other again. My father made his home in New York City. At the age of 17 in 1835, he in company with a party of men, went to California making the trip in ox wagons. I do not remember how many months they were on the way or any of their experiences en route. He stayed there during the gold fever and engaged in mining. After the excitement of the gold rush was over, he returned to the East and located at Terre Haute, Indiana, where he was married. Two children were born to them, both dying in infancy. Then his wife died and he came west locating at Carthage, Mo. There he was married to Miss Susie Thompson, who was my mother, a daughter of a wealthy Virginia family. Her mother's family had disinherited the girl because my grandmother had married a poor man. My father bought a steamboat called the "Adelia" that plied the Mississippi river between St. Louis and St. Paul. He was captain of the boat and that was how he acquired the title of Captain. It was not a

military title. After successfully operating the boat for several years, he sold it and moved to Britol, Texas. Here he built a log cabin home in which I was born in 1866. They lived there during the entire period of the Civil War. But he did not serve in either army. A college was afterwards established on the grounds, where the cabin home stood and I was privileged to be present when the buildings were dedicated. My father then moved to Cincinnati, Arkansas, and engaged in the mercantile business.

His contemporaries in business were Captain F. B. SEVERS, W. C. Trent, former Muskogean and Mr. Shields, brother-in-law of Captain Severs, who later established a store at Shickville, where the present town of Okmulgee now stands. My father had a large patronage from the Cherokee Indians who came across the line to trade with him. They drew money known as Headright or Breed money and they ran credit accounts in anticipation of the payments. In that way he became acquainted with a large number of Cherokees. John Wilson, a prominent of Tahlequah, persuaded my father to move to Tahlequah. In 1890 he located at Tahlequah and entered the hotel and livery business. He operated a stage line from Tahlequah to Ft. Gibson and also had a contract for carrying the mail. During the time when the Cherokee National Council was in session at Tahlequah, the hotel was crowded to its fullest

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capacity. The stage was a large three-seated conveyance, carrying nine passengers and the driver with large racks at the backs for baggage. They drove four big horses to it. As there was no railroad except the Katy in this part of the country, everyone having business at Tahlequah traveled by stage. After a few years he sold out his business at Tahlequah and moved to Ft. Gibson, renting the Ross Hotel from Mrs. William Ross and sons. Located near the Iron Mountain depot. There were six children born to my parents, two of whom are living. In 1894, I was married to Dr. J. N. Foy in Texas. My oldest son, Bates, was born October 1895. Dr. Foy died January 1897 leaving me with a 15-months old baby. In 1898 I married Mr. Shankle who died in December 1900. John S., my youngest son was born March 1901, so a four months after the death of his father. In 1903 I moved to Wagoner, Indian Territory, where I stayed for three years and with my two little boys came to Muskogee in 1906 where I was able to secure employment. The first dollar that was earned, however, after coming to Muskogee, was earned by my little son Bates by selling papers on the streets. A Mr. Lewis, a kind-hearted man who had charge of the newsboys heard in some way that I had a little boy and was in need of work. He came to the house and asked me if the boy might sell papers for him. And he went to work the next day and earned a dollar. I think that was the biggest dollar I ever saw and

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went the farthest. When Bates was ten years old he got a job on the railroad that ran from Wagoner to Dustin. I am sure the President of the road didn't feel half so important as did my little son. He attended St. Josephs College in Muskogee, and worked evenings and Saturdays. At the age of 15 he went to work for Mr. O. B. Revelle, a large real estate holder in Muskogee. Here also he worked evenings and Saturdays for two years. When he was 17 years old Mr. Revelle took him to Asheville, North Carolina, where he worked for him and Bates attended night school until he completed a prescribed course. He then was engaged by a Chemical Company and sent to Little Rock, Arkansas, as Assistant Manager of a plant where they manufactured high explosives. When the World War closed in 1918, he was sent to New York City to close up other plants. Completing this work he went into the service of the City National Bank of New York. There they gave a course of intensive training including several foreign languages in preparation for foreign service. When he was ready they sent him to Buenos Aires, South America, as manager of the Credit Department of a bank owned by the Company. After having been there three years he was sent to the west coast of South America to take over another

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bank. After completing his work there they called him back to New York. He sailed east, came through the canal and returned to New York. There he was offered a position with the Chemical Bank and Trust Company of New York City, with an advance in salary. He has been connected with the institution for the past ten years and now occupies the office of Assistant vice-president. He is sent abroad twice a year to install banks and inspect those in operation. He by his own efforts together with what early training I was able to give him, has advanced from a little newsboy, selling papers on the streets of Muskogee early and late in all kinds of weather to the position he now holds, Ass't. Vice-president of one of the largest institutions of its kind in New York City. He is married and makes his home there. My son John S. was five years old when we moved to Muskogee. He too attended St. Joseph's College and worked in vacation and Saturdays for Mr. Revelle. At the beginning of the war he joined the Navy and served through the entire period of the war. After he was discharged from the service he went to Fresno, California and was employed by an electrical Company, leaving them to take a more lucrative position with the Reynolds Tobacco Co., as that required his absence from home, he resigned and took a position with the Peabody

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Electrical Company of Muskogee where he remained until the company dissolved. He was then engaged by the Chrysler Automobile Company of Muskogee, where he is now employed. He recently qualified for the 100 club which is composed of the best 100 men in the employ of the company. He married Miss Marie Knott and makes his home in Muskogee.