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BOONE, WALTER LEAVY.

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Form A-(S-149)

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BIOGRAPHY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name Jarvis Tynes

This report made on (date) April 20, 1938

-
1. Name Walter Leavy Boone
 2. Post Office Address Ramona
 3. Residence address (or location) 1 block south of Post office
 4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month December Day 9 Year 1886
 5. Place of birth Trenton, Tennessee.
-

6. Name of Father Benjamin Boone Place of birth North Carolina
Other information about father _____
 7. Name of Mother Mary Butler Place of birth North Carolina
Other information about mother _____
-

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 8.

Jarvis Tyner,
Interviewer,
April 20, 1938.

Interview with Walter Leavy Boone,
Ramona, Oklahoma.

I came to Indian Territory over forty years ago. I came to Oologah on the train from Cross Count, Arkansas. Tennessee was my parents' home originally and from there they went to Kentucky.

A man of the name of Greenwood was the cause of my coming and I settled on what was known as the Williams' place near the town of Cherry Valley. The Williams' place is now where Rube Swan lives.

The present town of Ramona was then a wheat field. One day I started to Ringo since this was the closest post office. The postmaster at Ringo gave me a letter addressed to Mary Boone. I reached home and handed the letter to my wife whose name was Mary. She opened it up and it contained a check for \$300.00. The check was a Government one and of course this didn't belong to us because we were not Indians. Ringo being four or six miles away I decided I wouldn't take it back to the post office until the next morning. I

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started out the next morning with the letter. I was going at a very fast gait when a man soon passed me and stopped and called back to me and asked if my name was Boone. "Yes" I replied, "It is." He also asked me if I didn't get a letter with a \$300.00 check in it. "Yes" I said, "Well, you won't have to go any farther because I am Alec Boone and that letter belongs to my wife." I refused to give the letter to him so we decided to ride on back to the post office. I handed the letter back to the postmaster. He said, "Well, I will have to give it to Mary Boone." I went on back to the shack where my wife and I were living. We had bought lumber to build a new house and tent combined. We had not finished it, however, so we were living in the little old shack on the place that we were going to rent. That night I heard some men at our door and I opened it up and saw the Indian with whom I had had the letter trouble. The man had large guns strapped to his hips and said, "Boone, I've come to blow your heart strings out." I explained again that I had opened the letter by mistake and besides my wife was named Mary, too. Alec Boone told me, "You made me lose \$300.00 and I am going to shoot you for it."

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I said, "Well, if you are looking for trouble I can give you that." I reached in behind the door where I had been keeping my shotgun and my wife grabbed the gun and wouldn't turn loose. The Indian finally, after a few years, made friends with me.

One day later this Indian came to me and told me this: "Boone, you have a large family and I like you. I can put you on an easy string. You've got quite a family and I want to help you. Say, where did your folks come from?" I told him, "Tennessee". Alec Boone told me that this was the same state that his folks came from. He says, "I can fix it so you can get your allotment all in one big place. I will swear that you are relation of mine and get you on the roll that way". I said, "I want land but not that bad. You need not lie for me."

From there I moved to a farm west of Ramona. It was known as George Tyners' farm. I leased from John Greenwood and he in turn leased from George Tyner. We had trouble over the land and George Tyner brought a "law" down and was going to put me off but he never did.

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Reuban R. Tyner was threshing wheat and the machine was to move from Tyner's place to mine. Reuban Tyner said to me, "I had a little trouble among the hands. There is a negro among the crew. What are you going to do at noon, when they go to eat- the negro will sit down, too." I told him, "Well, he won't eat at my table." Reuban Tyner asked me if I didn't think a negro had a soul? "Yes, I suppose he has," was my reply. "Well, when we get to heaven, if we are that fortunate, what will we do then, we will have to associate with colored people, won't we?" Reuban Tyner said, and added, "I hope you don't have any trouble."

The threshing machine pulled on over to my place and threshed just a little while and then stopped for dinner. The negro whose name was Dixon came up and started washing with the rest of the men. I called him to one side and told him, "Dixon, you are human and all that but I don't allow a colored man to eat at my table. You just wait awhile and the wife will fix you something after the other men have finished." The negro got mad and left the house and went down to the stack yard- I went to call him to his dinner and the negro wouldn't eat. The machine was at my place for

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three days and all the time that they were there Dixon went to a little town where he bought him something to eat. The owner of the machine was from Kansas and the men told him afterwards that he came very near leaving and not threshing any of my grain. I had cane and oats and also wheat.

I attended various churches before I came to Indian Territory but when I lived out west towards the Osage hills I went to Reuban Tyner's church close to the twin mounds. They came to me and asked me if I wouldn't preach to them. I wasn't a preacher so I refused but I attended and heard Mr. Tyner preach several times. There were circuit riders who would come and preach at different times. There was also a man of the name of Bill Evans who preached there at the little Methodist Church.

I went to Nowata to the mill and changed a load of wheat for flour. I crossed the Carter Crossing on the Caney River going over. I came back and the river had risen. My horses were down in the water before I knew it. There was nothing to do but go on across the ford. The horses

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were swimming then. I let them go where they would and they swam across safely to the other side. I had a new wagon box on my wagon and my flour didn't get wet at all.

One other time I went to Talala and crossed at the same place. I went there after a barrel of salt. I had to cross a great open place where cattle grazed. The cattle smelled the salt. Before long there was about five hundred head of cattle strung all about me and behind me. They began to mill about and soon would have torn my wagon up but some cowboys came out and turned the cattle away from my wagon. I hollered at them and said, "Why don't you salt your cattle?"

Austin and Ringo were the only two towns that I knew of that aren't in existence now.