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BIOGRAPHY OF: Mrs. Raymond Gordon  
(nee Mary Scott) Ardmore, Okla.  
Confederate Home

BORN: April 21, 1849 at Fort  
Gibson, Oklahoma.

PARENTS: Father: Sterling Scott,  
( $\frac{1}{2}$  French,  $\frac{1}{2}$  Scotch-Irish)  
born in Granger Co., Tenn.  
Mother: Susannah Wolfe  
( $\frac{1}{2}$  Cherokee) born in Georgia

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When the Civil War started all full-blood Cherokees went north and joined the Union. The white men and half-breeds crossed the South Canadian and came South. The full-bloods would sometimes slip across the river and kill the southern Indians.

We lived just a little ways from Fort Gibson on Bayou-Maynard Creek. One day a man came down the road from toward Talequah on horseback. He had been riding his horse so hard that it fell when he reached our gate. This man, I do not remember his name, told Papa he had better leave at once because the full-blood Cherokees were coming in that direction. Papa wanted to take time to get something to eat but the man insisted that they hurry on across the Canadian. Papa was a big cattle owner, and had sold many cattle that year. While he was getting his horse saddled, and a new horse for his friend, I went to the room where he had three trunks full of money stored under the bed. I pulled out the smaller trunk which was full of money sacks. Each sack contained five hundred dollars in twenty-dollar gold pieces. I took two of the sacks and put part of the money in Papa's

wallet, and the rest in his overcoat pockets.

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After papa went south, it left my step-mother, her children and me at home with the negroes. The negroes all went to Fort Gibson. We only had six or eight of them. After they left, my step-mother did not want to stay there, so we moved over to her mother's home. Her mother was Mrs. Ada Adair. She lived in a sixteen-room house, which had been built by an old woman who was a whiskey-peddler. She died and my grandmother bought the house. Grandmother's negroes carried over about one hundred fifty or two hundred head of hogs that papa had butchered. He killed about that many hogs every fall and sold the meat and lard to the fort. He smoked the hams and shoulders in Hickory smoke and sewed them up in sacks. The negroes were always happy at hog-killing time. They would usually butcher fifty at a time.

The negroes carried the meat over to grandmother's house and hid it in the basement, which was concealed under the dining-room floor. We put our bed-clothes through a trap-door in the bed-room. This door had a ring on it, and was always kept concealed under a rug. Underneath was a hole that did not connect with the basement. I wanted to bring our money over and hide it here, but my step-mother was afraid that we would get caught with it.

We could get our bedding out after ten-o'clock every night, because the Cherokees and Creeks never made a raid after that time.

In February father decided to come back across the river, and get some of his horses. His son-in-law, Archie

Love, was with him. They crossed the river and got the horses. Love took three of them and went to his home, and papa brought four and came to us.

Grandmother had a turnip-patch at the side of the house. She also had a yoke of oxen, one of which wore a bell. That night Grandmother's negro boy, eighteen or nineteen years old, heard one of the oxen jump into the turnip-patch. He went out to see about it. It was a bright night. The moon was shining almost as bright as day. When the negro crossed the turnip-patch, someone began shooting at him from the barn. Of course, we knew it was the Indians after papa.

I helped papa get into his clothes. He wanted to cross the yard and make a run for his horse, but I knew if he did he would be killed. There was a large walnut tree standing at the back of the house, and this was the only safe place I could think of for him to hide. He went out the back door and made for the walnut tree. I gathered up his saddle, saddle-bags, and clothes. Grandmother always raised some cotton every year, and kept the seed in one room of the house. I took his things and went to this room and began burying them in the cotton-seed. The Indians saw the light and began shooting into this room. I kept working, and had just got the things covered when they broke into the house. They came into the room, sixteen of them, and forced me to take the lamp, and go with them to search the house.

I told them papa was not at home. I led the way upstairs and all over the house. They then went into the smoke-house and took all of grandma's meat. As they went out they walk-

ed so close to papa he could have reached out and touched them. They got on their horses and rode off. I stood and watched them to make sure all sixteen were leaving.

After they left papa came back into the house. I told him to leave, and I would send his things, together with some dry clothes to Little Shelf on the other side of the creek. "Little Shelf" was a rock ledge on the south bank of the creek not far from where we lived. Papa waded the creek and went to Arch Love's house. His clothes were frozen to him before he got there. He and Arch Love got the three horses and went across the river that night. The next morning we counted the holes and found that there were sixteen shots fired into the room where I was that night.

My sister told Arch not to come back home anymore, because he would get killed if he did. He told her he would have to come back and cut her some wood. Papa told her to get a negro by the name of Cicero to cut the wood. A short while after that Arch came back, and brought a white man by the name of Jim Goree with him. The Indians attacked the house and killed both of them. Arch got out in the yard before he fell, and Jim Goree got a little ways from the house. They cut his head off. After they were gone my sister had a hard time keeping the wolves away from their bodies. They came out of the hills in a large pack, ran the dogs away from the house, and made for the bodies. My sister got the gun and killed some of them. As fast as she would shoot one, the others would devour the body. She finally got a pen built around the men, and the old negro,

Cisero Riley, got there. We went down the next morning and helped dig their graves. There was no way of getting coffins, so we wrapped quilts around them, put some sheets over them and lowered them into the graves.

After the white men came to Fort Gibson, they put guards around our house, and wouldn't let anyone in without our permission. There were ten thousand soldiers camped around the fort. We put up all of the milk cows we could find and milked them. I sold the milk to the soldiers for one dollar a pint. We would fill up a canteen for two dollars. My step-mother had always had negroes to do the work for her, and didn't do anything except knit and piece quilts. This left most of the work for me to do. Grandmother was only seventy-five years old, but she thought she was old. She had three negro women, one negro girl, one boy and one old negro man. They all stayed with her during the war.

We stayed at Grandmother's almost all of the first three years of the war, then went south under a flag of truce. We went to Warm Springs, and met the southern men. That night we all camped together, both Union and Confederates.

When we started south I had eight hundred and eighty dollars, which I had made selling milk. I sewed this money in my clothes. Papa laughed at me and said my money would soon be worthless. From Warm Springs we went to Mount Pleasant about ten miles south of Boggy Depot. Mount Pleasant was named after we went there. A man by the name of Smith operated the Post Office in a tent. My father, Major

Sterling Seott, had two large log houses built for us. Stand Watiss camp was about one half mile for our house. When we had been at Mount Pleasant a few days the children wanted some milk. There was a Mrs. Morgan living about a mile for us, and we went to her house and asked to buy some milk. She asked if we were refugees, and I told her we were. She said she would give the milk to us, but she wouldn't give it to the Choctaws, because they had cows and were too lazy to milk them. We got the milk and I went home and baked some corn bread.

I always rode horse-back when I went after milk. One afternoon I rode up in front of the Morgan home, and as I started to get off my horse, the stirrup leather broke, and I fell from the horse. The horn of the saddle hit me in the breast, and it was several hours before I was able to return home. I went back home that night and papa sent for Doctor Turnbull who lived near our camp.

After that we built a pen and I traded a Choctaw woman two dress patterns of ten yards each for two good milk cows. I carried plenty of clothes with me and I gave Mrs. Morgan two dress patterns, one of voile and the other of calico. I also gave her two petticoats and a pair of shoes.

Our nearest neighbors were Si and Becky Fulson; Choctaw Indians. Jessie Wright lived one mile north of us. He was a Choctaw.

About the only entertainment the refugees had was attending the Choctaw dances, which were held around at different houses. The first dance of the evening we would always

have to dance with the Choctaw men. After that we could dance with anyone. Becky Fulsom was very jealous of her husband, and would always ask me to dance the first dance with him. The Choctaw men always had their wives to ask the women to dance with them. These dances usually lasted until two or three o'clock in the morning.

The wild plains tribes of Indians met at Armstrong Academy and asked the half-breed Cherokees to go home with them. We lived about ten miles west and north from the Academy and my father and I attended the meeting. We went on horseback.. A young Arapaho Chief asked papa to let him see his daughter. I was scared to death. He was all painted up in green and red paint. He came out and took hold of my hair and offered fifty blankets and fifty ponies for me. Papa teased me and said he had better sell me, because he probably wouldn't be offered that much for me again.

We met old Aunt Sallie Standwatie at Armstrong Academy. She had her young son with her and he thought I was my step-mother's daughter. That would have made him my cousin. I didn't tell him any better and he rode home with me. When we reached home my step-mother told him we were not related. I was sixteen years old then, but wasn't interested in him, because I had a sweetheart. William Penn Boudinot was another refugee on the Red River during the war.

One time he had to go to Texas after supplies. His overcoat was worn out, so he cut a hole in a blanket and put it over his head. His clothes were very shabby.. He drove his wagon all day, and in the evening drove facing the



sun. Late that evening he stopped at a house and asked the lady if he might stay all night. The lady told him that her husband had not come in yet, but that he might put up his team and come in.

He put his team in the lot and went in and sat down in the parlor. The daughter and her beau came in, and a little later the daughter's friend and her beau came. They had a large piano in the room which they had hauled from the north. They all tried to play in by rounds and couldn't. One of the girls, thinking that she would be making fun of the visitor asked him to play. Boudinot, got up and asked her which she preferred, a new tune or an old one. He had some new music in his pocket, and got up and started playing. They were really astonished. When the father came in he asked Boudinot his name. He told him W. P. Boudinot. The man asked if his brother was Elias Cornelius Boudinot. They didn't know how to act when they found out who he was, and that they were being entertained by a man who had played and sung for thousands at a time over the United States. After that W. P. Boudinot was a welcome guest at their home anytime. My eldest daughter married W. P. Boudinot's son. She was fourteen and he was nineteen. He only lived two years after they married.

After the war we went back to our old home place and everything had been burned. Grandmother's house is still standing. We rented a place on the Canadian and made a crop. The next year we bought two tents and went back home. Everything had been destroyed except the well. Before we left

I hid a small amount of money under a rock and it was <sup>38</sup>gone. Papa later built another house, although it wasn't as good as the first one.

Before the war I attended school at Fort Gibson public school. Prof. Fred Kerr taught there, also Miss Alabama Schrimsher, an aunt of Will Rogers, taught for awhile. I also attended school at Bayou-Maynard. I had finished the sixth reader when the war started.

My folks always worked with the Ross party. The other party was the Ridge party. Jim Starr belonged to the Ross faction, and the Ridges were determined to get rid of him. Nineteen of the Ridge gang went to his home to kill him. There were twelve of the Starr boys, but they were all away from home except the youngest who was only twelve years old. They killed Jim Starr and the twelve year old son. One of the sons was Tom Starr. When Tom heard that his father had been killed, he went home and asked his mother the names of all the men who had taken part in the killing. He put down all the names in his day-book and started out after them.

He did not like to kill men in their own homes where their people were, although he did on one or two occasions when he had waited three days and they didn't come out. At one time he had his horse shot from under him. Tom kept on until he killed eighteen men. The nineteenth man, Dennis Bushyhead, left and went to California. The Cherokee government finally promised Tom they would let him go free if he would come in, and promise not to kill any more men.

My first sweetheart was William Keyes. Papa would not

let us get married, because all of the Keyes relatives were drunkards. He left the country and went to Colorado, and died six years later after a severe attack of pneumonia. When he found out he had only a short while to live he wrote and told him to come. I married George Starr when I was nineteen years old. We married on March 26, 1868 and lived six miles south of Fort Gibson. George Starr's grandmother was Nellie Reece, a full-blood Cherokee. Her husband was a white man.

George Starr and I had four children, and raised three of them. One is still living, Mrs. Adna S. Benge. She lives at Fort Gibson, and taught school forty-two years. She was born March 1, 1871. My other children were Elizabeth, Sterling and Henry.

Jesse James worked for papa in 1877, and went by the name of Jesse Wells. He hauled two loads of corn from papa's place to our house and stayed all night. He could grit his teeth in his sleep harder than anyone I ever knew. He finally told papa who he was and left. He visited me here at the Confederate Home last summer. Most people think he is dead, but I know he isn't. The reason I know it was the real Jesse James, is that he told me about my children, and just what size they were when he was at my house. He also told me that we had steak and gravy for supper that night, and fried chicken for breakfast, and that is what we had. He reminded me of telling him the next morning that he gritted his teeth in his sleep. While he was working for papa I carried a chicken over one day and made dumplings. He told

me about that.

He told me that he had a cousin Jesse James, about his size and age. This cousin was in the penitentiary, sentenced to be hung. The original Jesse James put on two suits of clothes and visited him. He had the cousin to put on the extra suit of clothes and leave the building. James waited until the cousin had time to get in his car and get away, and then asked the guards what had become of his car. Both men went to the cousin's house. The cousin told Jesse James, he had rather be shot than hung, so James put on the cousin's clothes and left. The cousin put on James' clothes. After James left one of their cousins by the name of Dalton shot the man that was to have been hung. Jesse James went under another name for fifty years then told who he was. Henry Starr was killed at Harrison, Arkansas. He would rob banks and give the money to farmers to pay off mortgages. He was killed on February 22, 1921. I got there before he died. His son went with me. His wife now works at the State Capitol Building at Oklahoma City. She was a school teacher before Henry was killed. Her son, Ted Starr works for the United States Indian Service at Tulsa. Henry was forty-eight when he was killed.

Belle Starr was only a cousin by marriage of my husband. Her father-in-law, Tom Starr, was the one who killed the eighteen men. Belle's husband was killed about a year after they were married and her son killed her.

THE END