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BOATWRIGHT, DEWITT.

INTERVIEW.

6625.

W. T. Holland, Interviewer.
July 12, 1937

Interview with Dewitt Boatwright.

532-38 West Avenue , Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Speaking of wild hog hunts, and round-ups, we had an interesting experience with a Bull dog. This dog was owned by a man who had come in here from the north, and he laughed at the people here for using fices as hunting dogs. He asked why we didn't use a dog that could really fight, get in there and stay. That was the point, and he didn't see it. You needed a dog that could run in, nip, and get out of the way before the hog could get him. We were starting on a wild hog hunt and we tried to persuade the man to leave his Bull dog behind, but he was obstinate. Our leader, or foreman, then told him he would not be responsible for anything that might happen to his dog, and with that we started.

As soon as we reached the "bottom" land and timber where the hogs were, in went the Bull dog. He picked out, it seemed, one of the biggest sows and

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"nailed" her by the ear. The sow let out a squeal and in came a big boar. These boars, when from one to three years old, have tusks that extend out on each side of their mouth from two to four inches, one on each side. These boars were always ready for a fight and were dangerous to man and beast. So when the sow squealed, he got into the fray at once. It didn't take long to end it for the Bull dog. As he hung onto the sow's ear, the boar made just one swipe at him and ripped him open along the side and stomach. In a minute or two the Bull dog was dead. This showed our friend that the Bull dog was not the proper kind of dog to fight wild hogs with.

These wild hogs when fattened on mast, pecans, and other nuts, made delicious meat. They were seldom fed any corn, as they liked the flavor of the meat best when fattened entirely on "mast". This

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was in the bottoms of the Clear Boggy and Muddy Boggy Creeks, near Boswell, Oklahoma, in the Choctaw country.

There was a school and church (Mission) located at that time about two miles southeast of Boswell, known as Ponto School. They had a white man as principal and preacher. He was a Presbyterian by the name of Nash and came in there from Illinois. This was in 1833.

A trading point and post office were located about five miles east of Boswell. Two brothers, Walter and Jim Parks, white men and both teachers, came into the locality and Walter succeeded in getting a post office established. He named it Arnett. It was located near the home of Timothy Dweit, a Choctaw Indian. These men, the Parks brothers, also ran a store, in fact, the post office was located in

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a part of their store. They kept a complete line of general merchandise for that time. They handled dry goods, such as overalls, etc.. Their line of groceries included green coffee, sugar, flour and meal and some salt. They also handled some hardware, such as farming implements. They also sold tobacco. They kept some pretty good, ready-made suits for men. These were kept in cases under lock, as they were considered valuable. To my knowledge, based on my recollection, these suits were rarely ever sold to anyone except for a corpse or a man about to be married. These two occasions were about all that required the use of a "store suit".

Another merchant and trader known to me was Wilson Jones, a highly respected man and a successful merchant. He ran a wholesale and retail store

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at Caddo. He made a market for most anything the people had to sell and always gave them market price for it. A good part of all money received for cotton, cattle and other things was in turn spent with Jones in buying supplies. He controlled a lot of land and owned quite a tract and in this he raised hundreds of cattle. He would round up cattle in the fall and cut out the fat ones for shipment. He personally saw to it that only number one fat steers were shipped out. He built up a reputation this way and always got top market prices for such cattle.

One day a "drummer" was in to see him. He was representing a wholesale house at St. Louis. He was talking to Jones about his business and complimenting him on his success and business ability. He asked him, "What percent net profit do you figure you make

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in your business per year?" Mr. Jones replied, "Indian don't know about white man's percent. Indian only knows where him buys something for one dollar and sell it for two dollars, three dollars and sometimes four dollars; he am making money. Don't understand percent." So when it came to profit Wilson Jones knew when he was doing well, even though he couldn't figure the percent of net profit.

Jones also owned and operated a cotton gin. He ginned the cotton for the seed, that was the toll he charged, and seed was worth as much then as now.

I was married September 26, 1885, to Alice Duvall of Franklin County, Arkansas. I had gone into Arkansas for a while and was working at a cotton gin as weigher and bookkeeper. This girl's step-father also worked there and I met his step-daughter when she came to bring his lunch. He

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opposed our friendship from the beginning and caused us a lot of trouble. Her mother, however, approved of our friendship and courtship, but owing to the disposition of her step-dad, I had to meet her out at parties and neighbors' houses. Anyhow, we decided to get married. She didn't have any "Sunday" shoes and was afraid to tell her folks about it because then her step-father would know why she wanted new shoes. I told her I would get them for her and bring them with me when I came for her. We chose a day when her dad would be away. I borrowed a horse and rode to a neighbor who had promised to help me. He and his grown son hitched his team to a wagon and we lit out. We stopped about a quarter mile from the house and I went up alone and afoot. My girl was ready, had on her best dress with an old dress over

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it, so we went out in the orchard, and when we got out of sight we went to the wagon. We drove all night except when we stopped for a couple or more hours to rest the team and ourselves and to cook something to eat. Early the next morning we were in Fort Smith. Fearing we might have trouble here in getting married, we decided to go south about six miles to a preacher I knew, whose name was Lowry. The unusual thing about this matter was that the house of Lowry, the preacher, was built on the state line between Indian Territory and Arkansas. The front, or west side, was in Arkansas, while the back rooms were in Indian Territory. So the preacher told us to go into the back rooms. There, in the presence of witnesses, we were married. However, I didn't have to get a license and no official record was made of it. The only thing I got was a statement written out and signed by the preacher, saying he had

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married us, giving the date and the witnesses present. That was all, except that he charged me three dollars for the services. I came back to Indian Territory in the late fall of 1885.