

JESSE BOONE

Source: Descendants of Israel Boone, Alice H. Boone, 1969, McCann Publishing & Litho Co., Springfield, MO

"Jesse Boone, oldest child of Israel Boone, was born in 1748, either in Pennsylvania or Virginia; died in McMinn County, TN, about 1830; buried in the family graveyard at the old Homestead where he had lived, near Athens, TN.

Married about 1772, in Rowan County, NC, Sarah McMahan, daughter of James McMahan of Rowan County. From selected portions in Dr. Hodges' book, including additional quotes from Dr. Draper, in his "Notes on Jesse Boone", p. 197, the following:

'Jesse Boone was a son of Israel Boone, a brother of Col. Daniel Boone; and from notes left by Daniel's son Nathan and wife, 'Young Jesse was mainly raised by Daniel Boone and wife.'

In the book "My Father Daniel Boone" Nathan Boone said Jesse's parent's both died of "consumption" (Tuberculosis), and was raised by Daniel and Rebecca Boone. He also stated that Jesse always seemed unlucky and once broke his arm and another time his leg.

Daniel had married only two months after his brother Israel's death. And Jesse's granddaughter, Mrs. Sarah Henderson, said, "His parents dying when Jesse was young, he lived in Daniel Boone's family."

Jesse was known to have gone into Kentucky a time or two with Daniel and his brother Squire Jr., to help with supplies. Jesse is said to have been about five feet, 8 to 10 inches tall.

According to the findings of Dr. Hodges, Jesse first entered land in Burke County in 1777, and by 1801, he had entered four tracts. Burke County was just being formed in 1777, but it was not uncommon for persons wishing to settle in a new county to go a year or two in advance of its establishment and "squat" on the portion which they wished to occupy for a home site. The land grants are recorded in the Raleigh Land Grant Office.

Jesse Boone raised his family of eight children in Burke County, but soon after 1810, he moved to the Watauga territory of NC, settling near Coffey's Gap of the Blue Ridge, now known as Watauga County, the County Seat of which is Boone. A creek flowing through that section into the Watauga River was named Boone's Fork. (Dr. Hodges)

Jesse Boone was always an active worker in the church, having been chosen clerk and Deacon at different times in the old Yadkin Baptist church in Burke county. The church in the Watauga section to which they moved after 1810 was called the Three Forks Baptist church. It had been founded in 1790, and its old Minutes, still preserved, contain many entries concerning the Boones. But after several controversies with the Three Forks church a short time before leaving North Carolina, Jesse was said to have been excommunicated because of a remark he made. This may have been the reason he decided to make another move, as he was quite advanced in years at the time.

He sold his farm in 1823 and moved to McMinn County, TN, where he built with his own hands his last home, a large room twenty by twenty feet with a lean-to. The house had a large stone fireplace that would take a log 6 ft long, and it was equipped with pot hangers and all that went with a good fireplace in those days. Behind the house was a small cabin for their faithful old negro woman, Dinah, who had come with them from Burke County, NC, and had joined the Three Forks Church with them. She lived to be more than a hundred years old. The church in McMinn County was known as the Zion Hill Baptist Church and is located about five miles east of Athens, TN. It was organized in 1822 by a group of pioneers standing on the banks of Chester Creek. They then cut logs and put up the first church building. The Zion Hill Church is the oldest church in McMinn County and is still active, and the cemetery is well-kept.

Sometime after the move to McMinn County, TN, Jesse Boone came forward to the Church and explained to them the situation between him and the Three Forks Church, and the people at the Zion Hill Church decided that he had been wrongfully excluded, and they wrote his former church requesting a letter, but the Church refused to send one. However, the Zion Hill church was more lenient, and voted to accept Jesse as a member, letter or no letter. At this time Jesse was about 80 years old, and in the old church Minutes, he is referred to as 'Old Father Boon', possibly because his grandson, Jesse Boone, was also a member of the same church.

The following are a few quotes from the old Zion Hill Minutes:

Page 21--3rd Saturday in Feb., 1828: - "Old Father Boon came forward to the Church and stated that he had been a member in the Baptist church and was excluded from the church and told us the circumstances and we concluded to write the church where it was done for a bill of charges, and appointed brethren John Byler and James Sewell to write the church concerning the matter."

Page 26--3rd Saturday in Feb., 1829: - "Received an answer from the New River church concerning Old Father Boon's case and laid the matter over until the old man could be present."