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Interview with Willard M. McCullough
 Tulsa, Oklahoma
 W. T. Holland--Field Worker
 May 17, 1937.

I was born in Clay County, Indiana on the 22nd day of November, 1866. I am the son of Newton A. McCullough and Mary Cromwell McCullough.

In 1881, when I was fifteen years of age, my parents moved to Lawrence County, Missouri, making the trip in a covered wagon. We came to Missouri by way of St. Louis, and from St. Louis, on, we followed the railroad to Lawrence County, Missouri, where my father settled and where I lived, until 1891.

Along about this time, which was two years after the famous run of 1889, hearing so much of this country and seeing so many people passing on their way to the new country, I became interested in coming myself, so, I inquired about and heard of a man by the name of White who had rented some land near Tulsa and was going to drive through from Missouri. I saw him and made a deal to come with him.

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We drove one of his teams. We left Missouri September 25th, 1891, and I reached Tulsa October 1st, 1891. We were on the road about a week, a trip that can now be made in one half day or less.

White, the man I came with, had rented some land in the bend of the Arkansas River from a Mr. Hogan. His land was located in the bend of the river, on the north side, and just across the river, east and a little north of the town of Bixby.

Hogan, the owner of the land, was a "Squaw man" that is he was a white man who had married an Indian woman. White and his family did not enjoy good health while here, in fact they had a lot of sickness. I do not know what caused this sickness in the family of Mr. White. I lived with them and I was not sick, however, their continued sickness caused them to be dissatisfied, so they returned to Missouri in the fall of 1892, having spent only one year here.

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I liked the country and decided to stay, so I bought a team and rented land on the Sam Davis place, south of the Hogan land, and planned to farm for myself. I worked for white the first year, and an important event in my life took place in 1903. I was married to Sadie McCloskey, who was a resident of Kansas.

I settled down and farmed on the Sam Davis place for several years. The land was fertile in that locality and I raised fine corn, oats, wheat and vegetables, in fact I could raise almost anything I wanted to.

During these years I became better acquainted with the people and more impressed with the possibilities of this section of the country both from a business and from a political point of view. So, after statehood in 1907, I made the race for Tulsa County's first sheriff, my opponent was Mel. Lewis, Lewis beat me by about one hundred votes. He, it seems, did not like the job, as he resigned after

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serving about nine months, and Herman Newblack was appointed to fill out the Lewis term.

Well, in 1910, I decided I would make the race again and this time I was elected by a margin of one hundred and fourteen votes.

I had very little trouble as sheriff, and I served two terms. Half of the time I did not even carry a gun. I never had to shoot anyone, and in turn was never shot at. I was not a bully and did not try to act as one, when sheriff or at any other time and I found out that criminals appreciated my treatment of them, as they always submitted to arrest without trouble, and as I said, frequently I was not armed.

In business dealings, while not trying to cast any reflection on the present generation, I found most everybody reliable. When a man told you he would do a certain thing at a certain time, you could rely upon him, for he would do as he said, they made business a pleasant matter and a safe one.

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During my terms as sheriff, John Cramer was County Treasurer. Pat Malloy was County attorney, Emmet Curran was County clerk, W.W. Stucky, Court Clerk and L. M. Poe was District Judge, Lew North, Nat Saunders and Jim Wooley were County Commissioners, H. C. Walkey was Recorder of Tulsa County. All the other officers, excepting myself, were Democrats. Tulsa, of course, was just a village when I came here in 1891. There was one hotel named the St. Elmo, on Main Street north of the railroad.

I remember being in town, for supplies, when I decided that I would eat at the hotel, then I stayed all night. Having left the farm near Bixby at one o'clock and having gotten into Tulsa, I had to spend the night in Tulsa. One incident I remember in connection with the hotel is that that was the day on which Dr. Samuel Kennedy and his brother, Dr. Charley Kennedy, reached Tulsa. We all

ate at the same table. Colonel Moore was postmaster at that time. The postoffice was in a frame building in the west side of Main street between First and Second streets.

I began to work for Jay Forsythe on his ranch, in the fall of 1892. His ranch was about sixteen miles southeast of Tulsa and near where I lived. In fact, Mr. Forsythe rented the Hogan land of one thousand, two hundred and eighty acres and after Mr. White went back to Missouri, Mr. Forsythe bought the Hogan herd of cattle, numbering four hundred and twelve head of cattle. This was in 1892.

Forsythe began to spread out; he rented and fenced more land near the Hogan tract, and in 1894 rented five thousand acres of land northeast of Tulsa on Mingo Creek and brought in twenty-five hundred head of Long Horn cattle from Texas to graze on this land. The same year, we grazed seventeen hundred head of cattle up in the Osage Country, north

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of the Delaware creek. Then in 1895, he rented and controlled practically all land between Tulsa and Broken Arrow. He had a thousand head of native cattle, and bought three thousand more from ranches in Texas, and in addition he grazed for these Texas owners twelve thousand eight hundred head of cattle, Mr. Pierce was the owner of most of the Texas cattle grazed by Mr. Forsythe. He was a very wealthy man, owning all his cattle and operating on his own capital. I remember, I think it was in 1894, when we all had cattle to ship and they were fat and ready for the market, but there were threats of a railroad strike and the railroad would not guarantee delivery of cattle; of course this caused delay with most of us, especially those who were operating on borrowed money, as they couldn't afford the risk of delay of delivery should the strike materialize, but Pierce was not delayed. He told the railroad officials to take his

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cattle out, as they belonged to him and he didn't owe any man, so, out went his cattle. During this time of trouble on the railroads, cattle receipts were short in Kansas City and St. Louis, so Pierce's cattle went there without any trouble and hit an "Up" market.

The price he got there for his cattle, or the total sum received, was just twenty-two thousand dollars more than he was offered for the same cattle at Tulsa.

In the winter of 1894, Mr. Forsythe fed out three thousand head of cattle and twenty thousand/ in the Spring of 1895 we bought twenty thousand bushels of corn and fed this corn to our cattle in addition to tons of hay. Mr Forsythe got a good price for these cattle or what was considered a good price at that time. The price was three dollars and seventy-five cents per hundred pound. These cattle were shipped out in June; earlier of course than grass fed, cattle and brought a better price than the grass-fed

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cattle. The usual price for grassed cattle was two to two and a half cents per pound.

Mr. Forsythe had at one time leased several thousand acres of land, southeast of Tulsa, I really don't know the extent of his ranches. At one time he had grazing about eighteen thousand head of cattle. About four thousand head belonged to him and the others belong to Texas, principally to Mr. Pierce.

My part in the business was that of foreman and bookkeeper. Mr. Pierce employed several hands, of course, his brother, Charles, West Kennedy, George Lundy, George Bingham, Sam Blair, Spat Childers and Jim Childers were the regular hands. Their pay was thirty dollars per month and board. They were cow-hands ^{W.H.C.} rode the range and were "line riders", that is, these boys would ride around the range fences to see and keep up any breaks they might find. We never lost any cattle through theft, although we lost a

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team of mules and two saddles one night. We never heard of the team but we did locate one of the saddles afterwards.

A United States Marshal was chasing "Cherokee Bill" one day and shooting at him, when he hit Cherokee's horse and dropped him. "Cherokee Bill", of course, fled on foot and escaped. The horse was not injured fatally—the shot had just creased his neck and caused him to fall. "Cherokee Bill" had one of the stolen saddles on his horse. We never heard of the stolen team.