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INDEX CARDS

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Ranching--Oklahoma Lands  
Outlaws--Oklahoma Lands  
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Depressions  
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Sorghum Mills

Field Worker: Merrill A. Nelson  
April 7, 1937

Legend was told by

Mr. Evan G. Barnard (White)  
Mr. J. L. Miller (White)  
Enid, Oklahoma

These cowboys got together and started telling stories, while they were talking only the truth to each other as they knew it. They talked so fast, and my arrangement compelled me to change it a little, hence I call it stories.

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#### REMINISCENCES.

Tales by two cowboys in dialogue form, Evan G. Barnard (Person) and J. L. Williams.

Said Barnard: One time I was out of work. I left the Circle JH ranch or out fit and came to the Long Seven ranch across the Canadian, near where Oklahoma City is now. They had nothing in the line of work except they wanted some one to do the cooking.

#### Cooking Experiences

I have never knew how before to cook even boiled water and was afraid to try the job but I was against the wall, and a long ways from no place. They said, "Go ahead, we'll help you." "All right, I said and see that you do." Four wild bronchs were hitched to the cook outfit. It took 6 cowpunchers to pull them with lariats. When they did break lease, the wagon started with a jerk that sent kettles and kitchen utensils agoing and making music in all directions.

Came the first meal. True to their word, the boys unhitched my refractory team, got me weed and water. And then it was up to me. I bungled around. Up set the coffee pot, made some sour dough

biscuits, which were with streaks as yellow as saffran. When night came I lay awake, studying how to master that job. I studied out a system where by I could have every thing ready and cook 60 minutes from the time we stopped and ready to go again. Here John L. Miller broke in:

"Did I ever tell you how I cooked for old Joe Miller? I started to work for the 4 D camp for a man by the name of Hutton. He had a mule, and mules are always doing what they should not ( Sayyen Hutton born after this, till kept his father's brand books. I worked for his daddy.) The mule strayed.

I was told to take a trail that led over to a side camp. I started out on a trail looking for the mule. After I had rode about 18 miles the trail got thinner and played out. Pretty soon I realized I was lost. I cruised around for a token, but everything looked alike."

"That's the way it does when you are lost," chimed in Barnard. Pretty soon I saw two horse back men heading a mule. (Not my mule). I asked if they had seen a mule. "We'll find your mule if you go back with us and cook supper. If you can afford to eat it I can afford to it I decided. These men were George Miller and Tom Snow.

It was only a short distance to where I wanted to go from their camp. My mule was at this camp. They had been riding lines and found it.

Dover Hold up.

Involved in the Dover Hold up were "Tulsa" Jack, Bill Choate, Jack Peter. Tulsa Jack belonged to Slaughter Kid, Slaughter other name was George Newsomb. Broke in Barnard "Did you say you worked for

Circle J.?" George worked near Caldwell. Newcomb ran the 4 D. of Edmond, the cattle belonging to the White Company of St. Joe, Missouri. There was a bunch of renegades from the various camps got together near there. They started in stealing Indian horses. They claimed they were working for the government. They had quite a system. They would relay these horses on from one place to an other until they got them to Arkansas City where they were sold.

They went from that to robbing trains and holding up banks. I was working for Dunn Brothers east of Guthrie. They were congregating at the ranch of White horse John Before the hold up at Dover.

"Hell's going to break loose, I thought," but I kept my mouth shut.

A small boy said, "I saw a bunch of men over to the neighbors and what a lot of big guns they got", Mamma?"

When the marshalls and detectives had caught Slaughter, they asked me if I knew him. "I've seen this man but I can't tell who he is". They questioned me again. I told them that when I knew a man I said so.

Said Millard: "Tom Slaughter was a man I knew, do you think he was any way connected with the man you are talking about?"

"I don't think so", said Barnard.

"Well, anyway", said Miller, there was a man near Overton by the name of Henry Slaughter, they were a bunch of cattle thieves who had stolen 1800 head of cattle."

"One time Slaughter Kid sent a man by the name of Ben Grant to kill me." said Barnard. "Of course I did not know this when I welcomed him into my shack." "Why did not you do it?" I

asked later. "Well you looked me straight in the eye with that eagle look of your and never flinched. I did not have the heart to do it."

#### Depression

"You knew", Said Miller, "I think the people now even in the depression are not such worse off than we were then".

"I can't agree with you," said Barnard "It is true we were short of a good many things but I never saw conditions since I have worked as charity worker recently. I saw one baby waiting while another child older was nursing it mother standing up."

"Yes, that's right", admitted Miller. "In those days we knew were what to do when you were up against it and you could always go to the creek and cut and sell some wood. This you could sell for \$1.75 and get a sack of flour for fifty or seventy five cents. Now if you are hungry you could not kill a prairie dog."

"I can remember" reflected Barnard, when they would take sand plums, take out the seeds and fix them in a pan till they dried in sheets, or roll them out. They would take off a chunk of this dried fruit, wafer and eat it."

"Old man Murphy, brought a sorghum mill near Hennessey, It took the place of sugar and was popular. He put a piece of brown paper in the mixture and started a mother of vinegar. Every body for miles came to get some of that mother of vinegar so they could start some. Said Miller. "You could go out in the field and get roasting ears. Now they join field to field. There was good grass too. The Bermuda grass never was eaten off by range cattle. The poor have less chance. Our government and administration have done

a great deal but there is need of further reform for the poor".

One day I was asked to speak down at Chickasha at the women's college. There were a lot of dignified college fellows there and the President of the college was on the platform.

Although some worse things did not make me afraid, when I was riding the range, I remembered that I had traveled right by there in the early days as a cowboy, and I almost had stage fright facing that vast student body.

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