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Interviewer, Grace Kelley,
September 17, 1937.

Interview with George Louis Mann,
Dewar.

Born .dowa, Illinois.

Parents Reared by a step-father.
 Alloo Lalloux, mother.
 Born, France.

When I came to South Canadian forty-five years ago on the train there were three stores, one of which included the post office. A man named Manners had a cotton gin; there was a blacksmith shop, hotel and a very small depot.

Aide to United States Marshal.

I rode the western part of Tulsa when the grass was to the saddlehorn and cattle were grazing through there.

Sometimes we would have two wagons when we expected to be gone for about thirty days. These thirty days seemed much longer than that for every nerve was alert. Sometimes we would be without sleep until we couldn't

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stay awake any longer. When we got that tired it was best to hunt a good hiding place and get some rest for a man's nerves don't act quickly when worn out. We would set a course, then follow the Indian trails as far as they went our way, then cut across the hills until we came to a trail that was going our way and follow that one as far as it went. We would make camp and leave a man or two with the wagon while the others looked the country over for outlaws. At night we made our beds in places where we could be near the wagons in the safest place we could find.

We went disguised all the time; I wore dresses a lot of the time. One time we made our beds under the wagons at the head of San Bois Creek. Red Rogers from Sallisaw was our leader.

One time someone started shooting at our wagon wheels, in fact, they shot two spokes out. We got out into the high grass but it was impossible to see them or to know who they were so when they left we followed them. They led us to where a bunch of Indians were in camp and

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had had their dances but were getting ready to go home. We arrested some and they were a very scared bunch for they had thought we were horse thieves and they had molested law officers.

We trained ourselves to know when anyone was approaching. I guess it is the electricity in the air. I can be asleep and someone come toward me as quietly as possible and his presence in the room will awaken me without his making any noise. I never pay much attention to names for it is so easy to change a name but I never forget a face and by studying a minute I can remember what I need to know about a person. I have studied personalities. It was part of an officer's training and work and I know human nature for by watching a man or knowing him for two or three days I can tell if he can be trusted or if he will bear watching.

The prairie dog, Indian and rattlesnake were our closest neighbors. We would ride all day and not see a person. Maybe the next day we would see one or two persons and they were likely to be Indians. A wagon would

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hold all the wire between Oklahoma City and Tulsa then, and that would be around little Indian crops or now and then a horse pasture at a ranch.

If we saw a lone tree, we would go to it for there was sure to be a trail by it as everybody used lone trees as land marks. One time we crossed a hill to a point where we could see a lone tree on Mill's Prairie, in the Choctaw Nation at the head of Bois Creek. A piece of rope was hanging from a limb. The trail there was called Horse Thief Trail and went from Texas to Kansas. There were no ferries on it, just fords. It crossed the Winding Stair Mountains and passed close to Tahina.

We always looked for smoke from a camp fire, for the person we were after was sure to make a fire for food sooner or later. Sometimes it was so small that it would be almost impossible to see but if they didn't know we were after them it would be easy to see. Sometimes it wouldn't be the right ones at all. Other times we found someone who could give valuable information to us. You could see this smoke for miles, whether small or large. Sometimes there would be eight or ten wagons with freight or supplies in them.

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I have left my horse a quarter of a mile from an outlaw's house and not have a friend around, crawl under his porch when he was in the house and listen to what he and the others were talking about. If he was not there I'd get out and look for tracks. You can tell a lot by tracks; as for example, they are leaving and whether heavily loaded as for a long stay. Sleep during the day and stay awake at night was the safest way in a time like that, but I didn't sleep under the porch. I slept in a well hidden place away from his home. Sometimes it was discouraging and I would almost quit listening but I would freeze it out and he would come home. The next morning he would get up and first go out to see if his horse was all right and feed it. I would wait until he came back but get between him and the door or house. Sometimes he would be unarmed at that hour but if he had a gun on (and I usually knew by watching him as he went to the barn) my appearance was so unexpected that I would get the drop before he could use his gun. The arrest would be made without having to shoot him or get shot by him.

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I never get excited as that keeps the mind and nerves from working properly, and ^I have seen plenty of men both good and bad die.

One time I went to a door and rapped. The door was opened and two guns were in my face. I was told to "fill that saddle." Well, that wasn't any time to talk; I couldn't get my gun out with those guns in my face, there was plenty of room in my saddle and other times to come back to get a different reception. I filled the saddle and got away from there.

I have been all over Oklahoma but mostly among the Five Civilized Tribes. They wouldn't talk much but would make signs and grunt. Some were friendly but if an Indian shook his head and threw his arm away from his place, you had better leave for he wouldn't give you any information and if he started in his house you had better leave as soon as the horse would take you for he had gone after his gun which he would use. If he told you anything you knew it was the truth, and if he promised anything he would keep his word or promise. If he liked you he would die for you; but if he didn't like you you had better leave him alone.

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Give an Indian a pint of whiskey and he will go out to the corrals and catch his best horse for you. There was a drug that was bought at drug stores in small bottles, taken to a well and a little poured into pint bottles which were filled with water and sold for so much a pint. Sometimes the Indians would have fits or die if too much was put into the water. It was dangerous. That was why the Government was so strict about whiskey being sold to Indians. Some of them would go crazy and do things they wouldn't do at any other time.

One time I was at a picnic. I went there because I had heard there was going to be a wagon of whiskey there. The boy I reared went with me and I sent him to the back while I went the front way. An Indian who had had too much to drink didn't want me there so he grabbed my saddle gun that I was carrying ⁱⁿ my hand. He was quite a bit larger than I and managed to shoot it twice before I could get it away from him. Neither shot hit me as I was holding it from me while trying to wrest it from him. I jerked it from him, at the same time giving him a shove which sent him down a small embankment and was ready to shoot when my boy hollowed

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for me not to shoot as he was "going from me." He was, but not of his own accord but by my pushing. The law is that an officer who shoots as a person is coming toward him is shooting in self-defence but if for any reason he is going from the officer he has quit and the officer is in no danger from him so his death would be called murder. I didn't need to use the gun after I had it in my hands for he was ready to be good.

Horse Thief Trail

This trail had a fork in it, one part was from Texas but I don't remember where it entered the Indian Territory. The other came from Mena, Arkansas, to Talihina, over the Winding Stair Mountains; left South Canadian Switch twelve or fifteen miles to the east and angled northeast into Missouri. Most of it was north and south but part was northeast by southwest.

I ran a ferry southwest of Okmulgee, between Okmulgee and Sharp on the Deep Fork River. There is a bridge there now. When the water was up the mail was landed on Sand Hill at Thousand Acre Lake.

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Wild Hogs.

There were lots of hogs that had been turned out and gone wild, raised their young wild until you couldn't ever tell that they came from tame stock in the beginning.

Will Roberts owned a saddle and harness shop in Okmulgee. He married an Indian which gave him an Indian Hog Right. He and a Mr. Whitecotton hired me to kill hogs for them. The hogs would weigh from three to four hundred pounds. They were called "Mast" meat which meant they were fattened on the acorns and undergrowth with no grain. The lard doesn't get hard like that from corn-fattened hogs. Their tusks looked as if they stuck straight out but after they were removed from a full grown hog the two made a six inch circle so really they were each a half circle. They cut with these instead of biting.

One time John Hanson and I were hunting hogs or tracking them. They didn't root like tame hogs do. Tame hogs root all around a small place but wild ones will root a spot, walking in one direction, take a few steps and root another spot. I went up to the mouth of Salt Creek, a little above where the bridge is now, and found some but

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not the ones we were looking for. John had an English bulldog which was trained for hunting and fighting these hogs and for that reason she was very valuable. He took Fanny and went down the river south of me. I heard her rallying the hogs and hurried down to them. We were both horseback when we started out, but when I got there his horse was tied fifty yards away from him. He was in a tree ten feet from the ground without his gun. There were two shoats, a sow and a male. The male was working on the roots of the tree trying to get John. I kidded John and asked him if he had his dinner with him. He said he would go home to dinner when I ran these hogs off as they were not fit to kill. I said we would kill them as it wouldn't do for him to come down without killing the male because he was foaming at the mouth and would come back after John before we could get away. I shot him and the dog caught the sow. We couldn't shoot her for fear of hitting the dog so we had to stick her but it wasn't an easy job. John got his horse and we heard another bunch of hogs coming to the dog. I'd rather meet a bear than a wild hog. We couldn't keep Fanny back for she had had one fight and was anxious to get into another with these hogs which were a female and

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a male. The old male made a run at John and ran through or between his horse's front legs and broke one with his tusks. I carried a single barrel shot gun which I had sawed off at both ends, stock and barrel, and could put the whole load of buckshot in a playing card at twenty or thirty steps. It was my hog killing gun. I shot the male and we skinned, cleaned and cut him in two, put him in sacks and took him back to Roberts' place. Wagons couldn't go in there so we had to carry the hogs on the horses instead of in wagons.

When we didn't have anything to do we worked on a picket fence, which was our hobby. There was good timber and we sawed and drove pickets around the yard and lot, making the fence four feet high. This hog's skin touched the ground on both sides when we threw it over the pickets. That would be eight feet stretched out and it was ten feet long. If we got a hog that was very fat we would have to work fast to save it from spoiling. We couldn't take a barrel and all the things to do a regular butchering job like we butcher tame hogs. We took a rope and pulley, our dog,

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guns and good knives. And don't forget the horses for they were very important. When the hog was killed we tied the rope to his hind feet and pulled him up to a tree and tied the rope to another tree. We started at the feet and cut strips clear down; that is, cut through the skin at regular intervals clear down, then cut across one of the strips at the hind foot, took hold of it and pulled. The fat between the skin and meat let the skin peel right off. After skinning, cleaning and cutting it up, we sacked it, put it on the horses and took it home. They weighed from two hundred to four hundred pounds. It was fast work and the first part was dangerous work.

One time Fanny got cut by the hog tusks from the chest down and her sides hung almost to the ground. I took my shirt off and tied it around her, holding the incision together until we could put her in front of me on the horse and take her home. We laid her on the perch, got some wagon grease off the skains of the wagon wheels, put it on the cut and sewed her together while it was fresh done. We put her in a shed where it was dark, used fly spray to keep the flies off her and she got well.

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Sharp.

Sharp had a grist mill and gin. The sawmill was owned by Baker and Mayberry of Okmulgee and that is where the lumber for the Honey Creek school house was made. Joe Sharp had a store with the postoffice in it. He also had two pet deer in his yard. Neal was a yellow negro who worked in the gin. His wife went into the yard and the deer cut her clothing into ribbons with its feet and she was trying to get away from it. Neal heard the commotion and ran to her, drove it off and tied it up. It didn't like her scent I suppose for white people could go into the yard and it wouldn't bother them but the negroes had to stay out. Deer also kill snakes by jumping on them with their front feet which cut like knives.

I saw a cotton patch at Sharp that produced a bale to the acre and they left enough in the field to be a good crop of cotton these days. That was on the Johnson Tiger place. Chief Motley Tiger had three sons, George, Emmis and Johnson who lived at home. One married my wife's cousin. The land was rolling prairie which had been cleared of Sumac and that was the first crop. The seasons

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were more regular. If you planted a package of turnip seed you were sure to have turnips in the cellar that winter.

Creek Law.

Motey Tiger had his law at the Council House at Okmulgee and if one did a deprecation they turned him loose and told him when to be there and he would always return.

Berryhill, who died a horrible death four years ago at Hitchita, was a Lighthorseman who did the executions. My wife was with them when he died and the thought of the persons he had executed bore heavily on his mind.

Judge Parker also went crazy, though he was a good judge. Some criminals got what was coming to them but others didn't get enough. Law officers have to be ready at all times to answer the call.

Tulsa Riot.

A negro bell-boy stepped on a white lady's foot on purpose and she hollowed. He denied he stepped on it on purpose but that caused a riot.

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I was doing blacksmith work at Collinsville for people from Bartlesville to Tulsa. I went to Tulsa to get information for the Pinkerton Detective Agency at Chicago. I was given the right to arrest all kinds and colors.

There is always someone ready to take advantage of a riot or commotion to rob. During the riot, when they ran and shot the negroes, their homes were unprotected. They cleaned these houses out, sold the stuff in them and burned the homes. Some of the negroes came after me to go to Tulsa to help the Pinkerton boys. Almost everything was located and brought back.

Dick Farr was sent to arrest a negro for having a pint of whiskey. This negro went into the house and told Dick not to come in. Dick tried to bump the door open with his shoulder. The negro shot through the door and hit him in the arm, so Dick went back to the Sheriff's Office in the Council House. Sheriff Edgar Robertson got a saddle gun, put his hat on and started up the street. We

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knew where he was going. I asked him if he wanted any company. We went to the negro's house where we saw a curtain shake. The Sheriff shot through the curtain but didn't kill the negro. The next shot was by the negro and it hit Edgar in the center of the forehead. He went down like a hog, never knowing what hit him. That turned Okmulgee upside down.

The negro, Steve Grayson, took sides with the whites and you couldn't tell from his actions that he was black. He later ran for sheriff but wasn't elected.

E. T. Hensley was a doctor at Okmulgee and one of the bunch that went with the sheriff to the negro's. We set the house on fire and were watching for him to come out. The blinds were all down so we couldn't see in the house. Hensley and I started around the house to the door, he in front. He had a double barrel shot gun. I had my side arms. We were expecting him to come out but when we got around there he had the door open about two inches and was on the floor to keep from suffocating. Hensley shot both barrels into his face blowing it to pieces and we came home leaving him to burn with the house.

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A negro was charged with rape of a white woman and I had been looking for him for four days and nights without sleeping. My leads took me to Eoley which was and is a negro town. They had a sign and law not to let the sun go down on a white man in Eoley. I went there and introduced myself to their sheriff, told him my business and that I had reason to believe my man had come to Eoley. He asked if I had any papers and I replied that I had my gun. He said that as this was a negro town he would send a man with me so there would be no trouble. We looked the town over but my man wasn't there. I received a telephone call that a colored man had begged breakfast six miles east of Eoley, that answered my description, so I started out there. When I got two miles east of Eoley, where the roads crossed, I saw a hack coming. I got down from my horse and it started eating grass. I thought I might get some information. When they got close I saw there were three white men who had a negro chained to the back seat and they were bringing him to Eoley. When I asked what charge they had against him they said they were holding him for the Okmulgee sheriff. I told

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them that I had been after him for four days and was worn out, that there was a scar on his head in a certain place. He had been eating breakfast at the constable's house and they were bringing him in in answer to my telephone call. I paid them for their trouble and told them to take the chains off him that I wouldn't let him get away.

We went upstairs with him in front. All the officers were black and I got a transfer. I called Edgar Robertson, told him I had the negro and asked the best way to bring him home. He told me a hunter always got home the best road. So I knew not to come the dirt road as I had planned but to take the train. I paid a man to take my horse back to Okmulgee for me. At Henryetta a Federal man got on the train. The day before a negro had killed Bates at Henryetta. They had strung him to a telegraph pole and riddled his body with bullets. Before I got to Henryetta I handcuffed the negro to the chair so they couldn't take him away from me without taking my keys, as I was supposed to protect a prisoner. The negro was surely nervous. His face would get

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spotted. He was a black colored negro, not brown nor yellow. Where a white person would get red in the face he got purple. I didn't take him off at Okmulgee, but Vance, another deputy, got on and took him on to Vinita for we decided our jail would get blown to pieces and good citizens killed. "We wouldn't let them have him even if he was no account." We were officers and he was our prisoner. He said he would feel better out of Okmulgee County.

He was brought back for trial in a covered wagon dressed as a woman. The judge asked him if he had anything to say. He said he wanted to get out of Okmulgee County as quickly as possible. The judge said that he would have to have a trial but they would get it over as soon as possible. He said he was guilty of attempted rape. The judge gave him the limit, which was six years at McAlester. It was the quickest trial I ever saw, but handled in such a way that no blood was shed.

When I got to Okmulgee I was told that there was a mob waiting for me and my prisoner at the Sharp Ferry and if I had returned from Boley with him that way they would have hanged him.