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BERRYHILL, ALEC. INTERVIEW.
& DICKY STAKES

THE BUCK GANG # 6535

Interviewer,
Jefferson Berryhill,
June 28, 1937

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Interview with Dacey Stakes & Alec Berryhill.
June 28, 1937.

THE BUCK GANG

The Creek Indian Tribe did not have many outlaws, but there were a few. Among these was a band known as the Buck Gang, which was headed by a mulatto named Rufus Buck. The other members were: Meome July, a full-blood Creek Indian; Louie Davis, full-blood Creek; Sam Samson, full-blood Creek; and Lucky Davis, a negro. These men began by robbing ranches of cows, horses, or anything of value. After a few months they started robbing grocery stores in and around Okmulgee. John Buck, the father of Rufus, lived near the old Indian Mission of Wealaka Boarding School, and the gang used his home as a hide-out.

Mr. Berryhill said he and another man were standing in the drug store, which is now the First National Bank, when they heard a shot and a loud whoop. They stepped out of the drug store to see what had happened, when a man came up and called for Dr. Bell, the proprietor, saying for him to hurry to

to the grocery store, as the town marshal, John Garrett, the freedman, had been shot through the chest and needed attention. The grocery store was located on Seventh and Morton Street. When Dr. Bell got to the wounded man, he told him he had been shot by Rufus Buck; then he went into a coma until he died. The Gang was just starting to rob the grocery store when Garrett saw them and commanded them to raise their hands. Instead, Rufus Buck drew his gun and shot him.

After that they stole and robbed as they went. They were four in number then, but when the officer was killed, Sam Samsen was persuaded to join them as a decoy, and he committed crimes as the others did. The gang had an oath to commit any crime that one of the gang committed and if one backed out, the penalty was death by his own men. After they had killed and escaped, they left a trail of plundering as they went. After being at the home of the leader's father for a while they came back to Okmulgee, Oklahoma. As they were roaming around near the little town of Natura,

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they came upon a white woman who had had a baby recently and wasn't well. They took her down and attacked her, one by one, as was the agreement. From there they went west of Okmulgee and came to a grocery store, operated by a man named Knobble. There they went in and were looting the store of food, clothing, and ammunition, when an Indian came to buy coffee. The gang waited on him; they got two gunny sacks and stuffed it with coffee, meat, canned goods, and anything they could think of, loaded his horse, and sent him home. After they had looted the store of its ammunition, they put it in boots and slung them across the back of the horses. From there they went to the northwest of Okmulgee and camped in the hills, about a mile and a half southwest of Preston.

They were dividing the loot, especially the ammunition when they were surprised by the Lighthorsemen, who had come after them. The captain had borrowed more men as he expected the gang to put up a fight. When they surprised the gang, they started shooting ^{and} many

thousands of rounds of ammunition were shot. As the battle was going on, the captain of the light-horsemen was riding on his horse to and fro to encourage his men. As he was riding back and forth he fell from his horse as if shot, for he was exposed to the enemy all the time. Seeing the captain fall, his men became enraged as they thought he was killed so they charged the enemy. The gang fought desperately but Louie Davis got excited and started to run. The gang leader looked around and saw him running toward his horse to escape and he shot him in the leg as he was deserting. He escaped capture by hiding in the ditch. Some were captured there, others got away, and they captured them by waiting at their homes at night. Louie Davis was captured later.

After all were captured, they were taken to Fort Gibson for trial. During the trial the white woman who they had attacked was brought as a witness. She was not able to walk but she lay in bed and identified every one. When the negro, Davis, was

brought before her she screamed and fainted. They were all sentenced to hang. The Indian, Sam Samson, who had joined the gang as a decoy appealed to the man who had persuaded him and asked about the agreement but the man would not answer his call, so he was hanged with the rest. This man is still alive but I will not expose his name.

This was the end of the Buck Gang. The captain of the Lighthorsemen was not killed, but knocked out of breath by a bullet.