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BIOGRAPHY FORM  
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Field Worker's name Merrill A. Nelson

This report made on (date) April 17, 1937

Name Mr. H. H. Champlin

Post Office Address 110 $\frac{1}{2}$  East Randolph St, Enid, Okla.

Residence address (or location) 419 West Maine, Enid, Okla.

DATE OF BIRTH: Month January Day 28 Year 1868

Place of birth Rockford, Illinois.

Name of Father Charles A. Champlin Place of birth New York State.

Other information about father Soldier in the Civil War. Wounded

Name of Mother Alice Pickard Place of birth Freeport, Ill.

Other information about mother \_\_\_\_\_

Notes or complete narrative by the field worker dealing with the life and story of the person interviewed. Refer to Manual for suggested subjects and questions. Continue on blank sheets if necessary and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached 5

An interview with Mr. H. H. Champlin.  
By - Merrill A. Nelson, Field Worker.

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( From Farm Boy to Head of Largest Independent Oil Refinery.)

I came to Oklahoma on the 23rd day of April, 1889. This was the day after the opening of Old Oklahoma as I may be said to have been in the original run. When first I came to Old Oklahoma I went from Guthrie to Kingfisher. There were no railroads or houses anywhere. From Kingfisher I went to Oklahoma City a while. But I did not stay, I went back to Kansas and the next time I came to Oklahoma, I came to Enid and have stayed here ever since. This was forty-four years ago this fall. By going about the first time before settling, I had a chance to acquaint myself with the country which doubtless made me satisfied with my present location.

I never had any idea when a boy that I would be in the oil business. I was reared on a farm where I remained until I was about twenty years of age, when I went to Wichita to a business college. I got a position and worked in a bank a few years and then came down here and started a bank. I was in this bank about three years before coming here. I was here at the time of the opening. I started my bank in 1893, in October.

My business associates were Worth Cannon and Sam

Evans, who is still here as a druggist. M. Gedschalk, the clothier, was another of the old timers who is still doing business here. This Werth Gannon is C. E. Gannon, the money lender. His name was Elsworth but we all called him Werth.

After I had managed the bank a while I started a lumber business. I was twenty-five years old at that time. My brother Fred came down with me and we started the bank together. I resigned my position in the bank in Kansas before coming here.

My bank was located at the corner of Randolph and Grand. My capital was \$10,000. My present capital is \$500,000.

About 1899, as I said, I sold the bank and went into the lumber business. This was not a very large lumber business. We operated, however, six or eight yards. My yards were located at Pond Creek, Mennessey, Madford, Lawton, Duncan and Anadarko.

J. Slean started the Refinery in 1917. I took it over in the latter part of '17 or early '18. All my raw material comes from Oklahoma but about 90 percent of my retail sales are outside the state. We refine about 10,000 barrels daily.

The reason I located here rather than closer to

the oil field was that I was already here. I drilled a well at Garber and piped it here to Enid where it was refined.

I had almost no one besides myself in the lumber business and it was the same in the oil business. I still have very few persons as directors with me. Our present board consists of myself, my son Joe, and Mr. Cotten, my son-in-law.

My folks were quite poor but we always had plenty to eat. We lived in a frame house, small but comfortable. I had to work fifteen hours a day. However, I never felt discouraged. I worked because I wanted to. Now I take it easy. I only work from eight to ten hours a day.

At the time of the opening I secured a claim. I went to a land office and filed on a piece of land that was not claimed by any one else. It was probably overlooked on the day of the run, as this was after that time.

There were several other banks in Enid when I started mine. They were the bank of Enid, The Farmers and Merchants Bank and Fleming's Bank. They nearly all went broke except Mr. Fleming's. He was my competitor as long as he lived. We had the greater business of us two. His bank was called the Enid Bank and Trust Company. My lumber business was the leading business in town; however,

There was the Long Bell Lumber Company, which came and went. Thompson was another lumber man. The Antrim was a later arrival.

When I first started up I did a refining business of 200 barrels a day. Now we do business in twenty states

My people were, I suppose, French. During the Crusades, they went to England and from England they came to this country. About one hundred and fifty or one hundred and seventy five years ago, they came to Providence, Rhode Island. My parents are buried in McPherson, Kansas. There were six children in their family, all boys.

There was Joel who is in the hardware business in Canton, Kansas, H.H., or myself, the second son, Alfred R., in the telephone business in Newton, Kansas, sold out and went to California; Fred C., who was formerly cashier in the Champlain Banks, also Vice-President, now dead; Roy R., in the Lumber and Oil Business at Lawton; and Robert A. Champlin, who runs a lumber yard here in Enid. He began in 1901 or 1902 a little after I left the lumber business.

The Champlin family have made a success by working hard and minding our own business. I have several children; They are; a son Joe; a daughter, Mrs. J. Owen; and another daughter, Mrs Doyle Cotton. We also had a boy who died.