

[Mr. H. W. Sample]

DUP

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

NAME OF WORKER F. W. KAUL & L. A. Rollins ADDRESS Hastings Nebr.

DATE Nov. 1938 SUBJECT Folklore

1. Name and address of informant Mr. H. W. Sample, 1614 Boyce St. Hastings
2. Date and time of interview
3. Place of interview At his place of business and our office
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant None
5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you None
6. Description of room, house,, surroundings, etc. Did not visit home, which Mr. Sample has owned and lived in for many years.

FORM B Personal History of Informant

NAME OF WORKER F. W. Kaul & L. A. Rollins ADDRESS Hastings Nebraska

DATE Nov. 1938 SUBJECT Folklore

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Mr. H. W. Sample 1614 Boyce St. Hastings Neb

1. Ancestry Father side Scotch Irish, Mother's side English, French, German

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2. Place and date of birth Sidney, Ohio, Jan. 29, 1872.
3. Family Wife and one son
4. Place lived in, with dates Sidney, Ohio — Roseland, Nebr. Hastings, Neb.
5. Education, with dates Attended school up to the 4th grade at Roseland, Neb.
6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates Farmer, railroad laborer, Newsstand
7. Special skills and interests Violin player, playing according to notes. Engages in oldtime fiddling. Has written and sold publication short stories.
8. Community and religious activities Presbyterian — not active
9. Description of informant 6 feet tall, weight 170 lbs. Structure rugged and coarse. Health good.
10. Other points gained in interview Ancestors all six foot tall. His son only one of the relations less than six feet in height. Enjoys relating past experiences.

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

NAME OF WORKER F. W. Kaul & L. A. Rollins ADDRESS Hastings Nebr.

DATE Nov. 1938 SUBJECT Folklore

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Mr. H. W. Sample 1614 Boyce St. Hastings

SNAKE STORY

The sample boys, Al and Hal, aged 14 and 12 respectively, were pround proud of the collection of snake rattles they had accumulated in the three years since their parents had

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left Ohio to settle on a homestead in Central Nebraska. Indeed, there was a cigar box full of these gruesome relics.

Now that their cousin Henry Lehman, 20, arrived from Ohio, on a visit and their parents were away for a day and night, the Sample boys took pleasure in exhibiting their trophies, with a more or less detailed lecture on certain of the specimens.

“Look at this big one,” Exclaimed Al, “Its from a four-foot snake that old man Dan Winters killed the other day.”

Winters, a much [bewhiskered?], bachelor neighbor was breaking prairie when he noticed the monster emulating cobra di-capeli tactics, repeatedly it encircled man and team, each time drawing closer. A blow from a heavy [wrench?] settled it.

“And here's the one that nearly got you, day before yesterday, Cousin Henry,” grinned Al — refering to a rattle that was stained with blood.

Rats had burrowed holes in the sod lean to which adjoined the frame part of the cabin, thus rendering the interior easily accessible to small vermin of all /# kinds. A couple of days before Lehman had seized the tail of a rattler entering one of the rat holes mentioned. “Look out there!” screamed Al. Lehman had no sooner withdrawn his hand then the snake catapulted out yards from the hole. Though [it's?] body was partly outside, the head doubled back. But the most of these specimens had been acquired when a huge den of rattlers were massacred the summer before.

Eddie Foster, a neighbor boy of twelve, was plowing with a walking plow. Barefoot and with pant-legs rolled [?] high , he whistled along behind the plow, when, without a seconds warning one of the horses stepped in a deep hole.

With frightened snorts both animals lunged forward. The lines around Eddie's waist compelled him to follow. One of his bare feet stepped on something springy and as he

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glanced down in the furrow he was horrified to behold a mass of squirming snakes right at his feet. The sharp lay had sheared off the heads of a half-dozen of the reptiles and these heads, some with several inches of neck bounced about the furrow with revengful fury mouths [?] wide open and striking viciously at everything in sight.

Eddie held a death grip on the plow-handles and quick as [?] thought, a dexterous spring carried his plump bare legs over the plow to safety. After quieting the team he began signalling frantically to his father who with some neighbors, was making hay not far away.

Noticing Eddie's wild gesticulations the entire haying crew came up on the gallop. On seeing the great den of writhing reptiles they too became much excited. "Run to the house for the spade, Eddie, quick as possible," bade his father. The reptiles were so interlaced and wound together as to appear like a huge ball.

By use of the spade and three forks the squirting mass was pried out on level ground. It weighed much as a heavy man and a bushel basket could have been dropped in the den. The entire surface of the mass fairly bristled with snake-heads mouths open wide and scores of forked, flickering tongues protruding in every direction. The combined [?] of the numerous rattles was almost deafening sounding as if the huge ball were electrified.

Numerous [charges?] of goose shot were fired into the hideous mass. Spades, tugs from harness, and several pitch-forks aided in the massacre. In all, seventy-three rattles were secured, with a possibility of some of the snakes having escaped as they detached themselves from the ball. Fully a quarter of an acre was littered with their mutilated bodies, and the rattles stuffed a cigar box. But little did these three youngsters realize that that very night they were to have the most thrilling snake [scar?] of their lives.

Feeling quite lonely, out on the wild prairie, miles from nearest neighbors, they huddled together in one bed for company. In the early hours of the morning Lehman roused his young cousins. "Boys, wake up quick. I believe there's a rattle snake in the room."

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“Strike a match,” suggested Al. But the nearest matches were in a safe on a door casing across the room and none [?] [?] willing to take the awful chance of stepping barefooted, on a live rattler.

For hours the three youths sat up in bed shivering with terror in the darkness, besieged by they knew not how many menacing rattlers. The whole floor of the little room seemed alive with them. A br-r-r would sound in a far corner of the room, to be almost immediately answered by a bz-z-z, this time perhaps near or under the bed.

“Sounds like one of ‘em is tryin’ to climb a bed-post,” spoke Lehman, after a moment of suspense, and the three boys shuddered in terror. Another short interval and Lehman ejaculated, “Why here's your dad's army musket with the bayonet on it.”

The boys had played with it while their parents were away, and although it was empty and their folks hid all ammunitions from their sight, still they felt safer with the ancient weapon near their bed. Thereafter, whenever a bz-z-z, sounded, Lehman reached out in the darkness with the long barrel and whacked the bayonet on the floor, but the buzzing would invariably be resumed with even greater energy.

The trio sat upright in bed the remainder of the night, shivering in mortal fear. At last after what seemed ages dawn began to lighten the room and the rattling ceased. Three pairs of young eyes began searching the floor from corner to corner where aware were the snakes? Lehman was first to discover the real situation:

“Judas Priest, Look at the rattles”, he exclaimed. The entire floor was littered with them. The cigar-box previously mentioned had been carelessly left open and that night, mice had indulged in one grand jollification all /# their own.

“CIRCUS IN THE CLOUDS” T'was an electrical storm in August, Loud thunder the heavens rent, In the foreground, a snow-white cloud appeared, Resembling a circus tent. This cloud soon vanished in vapor, Exposing the contents within, A boat-load of sailors

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with harpoons, Chased a whale with a monster fin. Then came a wide-eared elephant, With tusks and trunk hanging low, Followed by some horse-drawn cages, Which helped to complete the show. There were bears, giraffes and camels, Huge High apes and ring-tailed monkey, Rhinoceros, tiger and zebra, A clown, astride a donkey. Constantly the scenes were shifted, In this panoramic view, As the wild clouds rolled and tumbled, Staging every ever something new. A bold, majestic lion appeared, Preceding the circus band, His mouth seemed to open and /# it thundered, Oh, this cloud-land movie was grand.

CHASING AN ANTELOPE

Dan Winters was one of the earliest settlers in Central Nebraska, homesteading in Adams County in the year 1872.

Dan was an enthusiastic hunter and being a bachelor would often go on a hunting expedition lasting for several days. There were still a few deer in Nebraska, at that time and most every settler in the community had tasted deer meat, brought down by Daniel's trusty carbine. [More?] chose to dupe him "The Daniel Boone of Nebraska," [tho?] he was not known to [be?] an Indian fighter in particular.

So, quite naturally one spring morning when Winters cited what appeared to be antelope bounding over the level prairie in the distance his hunter's instinct was instantly aroused. A stiff wind blew from the northwest this particular morning and the antelope seemed to be headed southwest. The greater part of Roseland township named after the great fields of wild roses, which made the surrounding atmosphere fragrant with the scent in the early summer time, was quite level and Winters had no difficulty noting the course of the animal in it's flight.

It appeared to be about a mile distant. Quickly Dan was astride one of his fleetest horses and with his high-power carbine under one arm, was madly racing after the coveted game. The first couple miles, the [rave?] seemed to be about "nip and tuck" but Winters believed

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the beast was likely headed for the Little Blue River, where it could quench its thirst, and would perhaps linger round for awhile, after getting a good drink.

After racing nearly three miles, he noted the land was growing less smooth. Gently rolling small hills became in evidence as he approached the river.

While descending one of these small hills his horse had the misfortune to plunge one fore-foot into a badger hole resulting in both horse and rider getting a bad fall. Finding himself not seriously hurt, Dan quickly arose and helped his horse to its feet — for the foot which had made the mistake was badly sprained.

Unwilling to give up the chase he led his limping steed with as much [?] [?] as possible to a neighbor's place, a half mile distant,

The neighbor John McKelvie, was also a bachelor. After learning the particulars, McKelvie, too became enthused at the prospect of fresh antelope meat.

“Got a fast horse?” asked Winters, “You bet my life, two of ‘em, “ came the enthusiastic reply.

Winters quickly changed the saddle from the lame horse onto the fresh one, while McKelvie saddled a second steed. In a jiffy the two men were again on the trail of the big game. Shortly both of these frontiersmen cited the animal apparently taking a short breathing spell on a small hill a half mile away. Bang! barked Winter's carbine and the animal again began to move—soon disappearing over the hill.

On reaching the hill top the hunters saw their game barely hobbling over another slight rise of land less than half a mile distant. “I [?] believe I crippled it some,” [?] Winters shouted jubilantly, as both men spurred their mounts to greater speed. Soon reaching the next hill both hunters observed that the country beyond, for at least a mile, was fairly level and open with the exception of a small thicket of wild plum at the foot of the hill covering

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perhaps a couple of acres. But no atelope antelope was now in sight and there was no possible nook or cranny for it to hide in on this level smooth tract of prairie.

“It must have dropped in the tall grass, somewhere near after making the hill,” suggested Winters, “Probably it's dying from it's wounds.”

Both men hunted diligently becoming separated several rods apart, in their search through the tall grass. McKelvie searched about the plum thicket. Suddenly he gave a yell accompanied by a rather derisive laugh “Here's your antelope. Come on with your skinning knife.” Winters hurriedly approached to discover his companion scrutinizing a bullet hole through the heavy stem of a large tumble weed. The weed was fully as large as a hind wagon wheel,,and being rather oblong in shape had caused it when driven by the stiff wind to bound across the level prairie in such a way as to in the distance appear to be galloping.

The shot had caused the stem to split to that the huge weed was almost torn in two halves and of course didN't did'nt rool roll so gracefully across the prairie as before being damaged.

The thicket had finally terminated it's pilgrimage. Winters grinned sheepishly at the tell-tale bullet hole.

“Well, I guess I hit it, anyway.” he commented in way of self consolation, “If it'd been a real antelope, I'd have sure knocked it, wouldn't I ?” “Now don't you say a word about this to any of the neighbors. We can just tell ‘em we were chasing a sure-nuff antelope, [?] but it our ran us loped away.”

But neighbors aware of Winter's fondness for liquor, got hold of the story and guyed him a plenty.

TALL TALES

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Six hungry hoboes rode in an open coal car. Bang! Bang! sounded some hunter's guns in a corn field to one side the right-of-way, and the hungry hoboes envied the hunters their good luck in bagging several prairie chickens. Only six chickens remained of the flock and this sextette came flying straight toward the train.

Prairie chickens usually fly low so when this flock was apparently about to fly over the slow moving coal car, the entire six broke their necks on the telegraph wire. But the momentum they had acquired [by?] their frantic flight brought them tumbling into the car-a chicken for each hungry hobo.”

“Five Apache Indians were hot on Bill's trail, and gaining on him. Bill had emptied his six-gun, all but one shell, which he was saving to shoot himself with if the Indians overtook him. He well knew the reputation the Apachees have for capturing whites alive, to be burned at the stake.

Just as his fleet steed crossed a narrow stream, the Indians caught up with him. As one of his ponies hind feet struck a rock, the shoe flew off and hit the foremost Indian square in the head, killing him instantly. It then bounded to the next, and soon so on, till it killed them all.”

“MY DREAM CITY”

Ted and I are twins. Until the age of twenty we had never been apart for a whole day.

We both graduated as mechanics and worked together in the same shop in Des Moines. It was a triangle love affair that finally separated us. Sarah, a sweet neighbor girl, whom we had known since childhood, liked both of us equally. For more than a year past, off and on, we three took “Joy Rides” and attended picture shows together.

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It was Ted who one day put it up to me, to “Flip Dollars”, to decide which of us should claim our, hitherto partnership-sweetheart, for his own, for Sarah persistently refused to decide between us, but [seemed?] willing to marry either one.

Luck was in my favor, in the gamble; and for the first time in his life Ted sulked.

A few days after the wedding, he disappeared and though for weeks I made diligent efforts to locate him, his whereabouts remained a mystery for nearly a year.

Repeatedly at intervals sometimes weeks apart, I dreamed of finding my brother in a western city; working in a quite large, oddshaped brick building.

In these successive dream-trips, the landscape, buildings, etc., along my supposed route, and about my strange dream-city were always virtually the same; until they became familiar objects of memory. I seemed to be floating through the air high above the country, I passed over thus getting a sort of “Bird's Eye” view of everything I saw.

When our first birthday, since our separation was nearly due, the sad thought occurred to me it would be the first one we did not celebrate together. I planned to ignore the day; but Sarah sought to cheer me up with “Maybe Ted will surprise us with a birthday visit. Shan't I bake a two-layer cake for both of you boys?”

But her prediction failed to materialize.

However I took a holiday from my work and after our lonely dinner I lay down for a nap. Soon I was again sailing through space to find my dream city and lost brother. (Just another dream trip.)

The same, familiar [?] huge buildings, scattered about the outskirts of the city became visible as I approached — yet miles away.

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Various tall draft-stacks seemed to dot the near-by surrounding country. The dozens of church spires seemed familiar — as did the numerous green parks, and the several railroads which seemed to converge at this point.

Ted and I were having the most enjoyable, heart-to-heart talk, when our visit was suddenly interrupted with: “Ned, Oh Ned, is something [?] wrong with you?” “You've been asleep for nearly two hours,” exclaimed my wife as I became fully awake.

A few days later a traveling man drifted in the shop and chancing to glance my way suddenly became very alert and stared curiously at me.

“Aren't you the fellow I was talking with out at Hastings, Nebr., a few days ago?” he finally accosted me. “If not, he certainly is your perfect double,” he added as he approached closer.

After questioning this tranger stranger in detail, I became very much convinced that he must /# have met my long lost brother, Ted. A couple of days later I took a train for Omaha and there met a friend who informed me he [was?] about to start for Denver in his private airship/ Learning of my contemplated trip west, he kindly offered me free [transportation?] as far as Hastings, which hospitality was greatfully accepted.

It [seemed?] for all the world I was on another “Dream Trip” as we draw near the city of my destination and gazed down at faintly familiar objects, apparently almost identical with the objects seen in my “Dream Trips.”

The tall stacks proved to be mostly located at brickyards scattered around [near?] the town.

The huge buildings in the suburbs were colleges, schools, a large convent, etc.

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I soon found Ted, working in one of the several railroad roundhouses about the city. After recovering from the surprise of so unexpectedly meeting me, his first words were, "Ned, I wonder if I'm dreaming now as I was on our birthday while taking an after dinner nap? They had difficulty waking me in time to get back to my work." He then reached out playfully and pinched me. On comparing notes, it developed that our naps and dreams had been simultaneous — at the same identical hour on our birthday."

Author's Notes: This was not my own personal experience but that of a railroader friend, Ned Brown, told to me several years ago.

Everyone of the Snorz family snores, so, as bedmates they're all awful bores. The old man Snorz Like a lion roars When it's tired of it's cage And wants out of doors. The old lady Snorz Like a siren whistle Till the dogs in the neighborhood All bark and bristle. Miss Marguerite Snorz Like a steam caliope When a circus parade Goes by on the lope. Little Johnnie Snorz Like the squeal of a rat When one of it's feet In caught in a /# trap. Even Baby Snorz But so soft and low Like the squeak of wagon wheels, Crunching through the snow. When the Snorz family snores In a concert of snores Other tenants in the flat Long to throw them out doors.

Parody on "Mary had a Little Lamb" Johnnie had a billy goat, With whiskers lone and white, And wherever billy went, He'd sure got in a fight. His daily rations, usually, Was thistles and tin cans, Sometimes old shoes and clothing, Whether women's or a man's. One wash day Billy's appetite, Was feeling very fine, He strolled into the back-yard, When the wash was on the line. As a rag-chewing champion, Billy surely beats them all, For he ate both line and clothing, As fast as they could fall. So provoked were Johnnie's parents, When they saw what Billie's done, They determined to destroy him, Ere another rising sun. They dragged him on the R.R. track, And tied [his?] flat upon his back, In hopes that this would end their woes, And avenge the loss of line and clothes. But Billy heard the whistle,

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Of the fast approaching train, He struggled and he bellowed, For fear 'twould give him
pain, Soon he coughed up an old red shirt, And flagged the train, so was unhurt.