

[Earl Horne]

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Beliefs and customs - occupational lore

Mrs. Annie McAulay

Maverick Texas

Runnels County

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COWBOY LORE

EARL HORNE was born in Travis county Texas, Sept. 7, 1883. He came with his parents to Runnels County in 1895. His father, A. A. Horne was a Range Rider before him. He had punched cattle in Hayes and Travis counties before coming to Runnels County.

Mr. Horne says, "I learned to sit on a horse when not more than six years old. I began riding and helping work cattle when fifteen years of age. My father was working for W. L. McAulay and I was given a job with the same outfit.

When I was about grown I went o work for Jake Stubblefield of Norton. He had ranches and leases scattered over Runnels and some other counties further west. I did the usual job of riding branding and so on. After I had worked awhile for Mr. Stubblefield, I decided to try my hand at a cooking job and so I went to cooking for one of his outfits near Midland. I was on the trail quite a bit then too. They always carried the cook and wagon along on the drives. I remember one stampede we had at Big Springs.

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It was in 1905. Our outfit was driving two or three thousand head of cattle from Midland to a place north of Big Springs. When we got to Big Springs they refused to cross the railroad. C12 - 2/11/41 - Texas 2 The boys worked and worked to try to cross with them but they finally got so disturbed and scattered for miles around, we had to get extra help and then finally crossed the track several miles below the regular crossing. It took all day to get together and across that track.

I was with another trail driving outfit in 1903. This [t?] time I was riding. Mr. McAulau McAulauy' outfit was driving 1000 head of steers to the Texas plains. We left his ranch at Maverick. We had camped [?] think it was our second night out not far from Mt. Chadbourne. A rainstorm came up around midnight and frightened the herd and threwed them into a panic. They began to run and ball, and of course we rode like mad to stop them. And dark, that was the blackest night I ever saw. We never could get them dadblame dogies to milling. They just scattered everywhere. It took us all the next day to get 'em all together agin.

I worked three years for Hill Bros. Cattle Co. of Midland. I had a cooking job part of the time. That was the worst bunch for razzing new riders I ever saw. I felt real sorry for those old boys sometimes. They did treat em plum rough at times. They'd play practical jokes on them and try to put [te?] dirtiest work possible on and give them the toughest horses in the outfit to ride, if tey could work em [intto?] mounting them. But it didn't hurt 'em none I guess.

I went to work in 1917 for R. R. Russell of San Tonia. I worked on The Grape Creek ranch in Texas and also on a ranch in The Osage country in Oklahoma.

I was feeding steers most of one winter while working 3 in Okla. I remember I had to go out and feed a big bunch eight days straight, while the temperture was fourteen degrees below zero. We never lost a head during that spell but I shore thought it never was going to thaw out agin.

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Billy O'brian was the best woman rider I ever knew. She was the daughter of my foreman while working for Hill Bros. of Midland. She'd catch her mount in the mornings same as the other riders. She was shore a good hand too. However she never did any stunt or bronc riding while I was working there.

I never could ride shore nuff bronco much. I used to try it once in awhile. I got throwed so much I quit.

I knew some good busters though. Mitt Castlebury of Maverick was one. I never saw him quit a horse. Bob Bingham who was with The Five Well Outfit for a number of years was a humdinger. Thats all he did then and he could create more fun and entertainment than a movie actress.

I knew a short legged guy, name of Jimmy Cain. Worked on the Bar ell (md). He could shore ride. Boy he was like a natural hump on a broncs back. He was a funny sight but he shore could stick.

I've worked cattle in Texas. New Mexico. Oklahoma and Kansas. It's a great life. But it can also be a hard one sometimes. Bibliography Earl Home. Norton Texas, Pioneer citizen, and old cowhand. Interviewed Feb. 14, 1938.