A mustang is a wild horse, a broomtail, a cayuse, a fantail, or any of several other terms cowboys use to describe this tame animal gone wild. To you, my children, and your children and theirs, I give this book of stories about mustangs. The action and excitement I experienced while capturing mustangs are described here.

Using helicopters today to run down wild horses removes both the thrill and sport in their capture. It was surely more exciting and certainly a greater challenge to pit a saddle horse and rider against the fear and speed of a wild horse. The better conditioning of the saddle horse and the knowledge the man had of his quarry were the main advantages the cowboy had over his wild friend, the mustang.

I call the mustang a friend to the cowboy because hundreds of these animals were captured and, after breaking, became fine saddle horses. When I rode for the Utah Construction Company, we had nearly two hundred saddle horses in the cavy during the summer work season until the cattle were on winter feed grounds or desert range. Over half of these horses were captured mustangs.

Nearly sixty mustangs-potential saddle horses-were captured each year, animals ranging from four to seven years old with few exceptions. A mustang stud was not considered too old to break to ride until he was past seven, and then only because his useful life span was shortened by age. The prime of life for a working saddle horse ranges from about seven to twelve years.

I hope you can feel some of the thrills I experienced with the mustangs as you read the following stories.
Wild mustangs have captured the thoughts and imagination of almost everyone at some point in time. From pictures of wild horses silhouetted against the sunset, to visions of the Wild West and the Cowboys and Indians that rode the wild mustangs and ponies. But how much of these stories are true and what part is pure imagination?


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