

ROSS, S. W.

A. POWERFUL HORSE..

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Elizabeth Ross  
Investigator  
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Interview with S. W. Ross,  
Mark Hill, Oklahoma.

### Powerful Horse.

In relating anecdotes concerning wild game and hunting in old Indian Territory days some of those who once visited the unbroken forests and sparsely settled regions in quest of deer related some very interesting stories. One of these stories concerns a horse which exhibited remarkable strength.

In the time of inter deep snow having fallen, several hunters decided to return to their homes and in the vicinity of the town of Fort Gibson. All went well until a stream with a muddy bottom was reached. When about half way across, the mud being rather deep, the pair of mules hitched to the wagon suddenly decided to come to a halt. The weather was quite cold and the men in the wagon wished to reach their homes as soon as possible, but nothing could induce the mules to go forward and they stood stubbornly in the icy water. The situation became very uncomfortable to the men in the wagon and there was much speculation as to what might possibly induce the mules to proceed. But nothing worthwhile was suggested, so it seemed that the men might be compelled

to leave the wagon and wade to the opposite bank. Unknown to them, however, relief was soon to be realized.

A member of the hunting party who rode a horse and had ridden in the rear of the wagon after ascertaining that the mules would make no effort to move the wagon, remarked that his horse could be depended upon to cause the mules to move on. The horseman then dismounted and tying a rope very securely about the tail of the horse, near to the body of the animal, tied the other end of the rope to the iron loop in the end of the wagon tongue, and then commanded the horse to go. The animal was strong and broad-bodied and immediately obeyed its master's command. The front end of the wagon bed struck the mules, whereupon they began pulling, and together with the horse, which had never paused an instant drew the wagon forward and up the steep bank on the other side of the stream. Almost at running speed the powerful horse exerting its strength, with aid of the now willing mules, pulled the wagon to level ground. The horse was disengaged and carried his owner along the road. The mules moved away at a fair rate of speed and during the remainder of the trip gave no trouble whatever.

The horse, one of the old hunters long afterward declared, was about the most intelligent animal he had ever seen. Until

the horse, unaided, brought the heavy wagon forward and caused it to strike the mule. With a thump, the latter animals had not moved. Consequently the horse alone started the wagon forward.

The account was related by E. G. Ross, a member of the hunting party, probably in 1879 or 1880.

Mr. E. G. Ross was raised at Fort Gibson and was a cousin of the Investigator, Elizabeth Ross and of S. . . Ross who gave the above account. In 1879 or 1880, he was a member of the hunting party when the horse pulled the wagon out of the river. Mr. E. G. Ross is now deceased.