

WARREN, CLARENCE O.

INTERVIEW

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Interview with  
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TIGER JACK, "TRAILER"

Speaking of unusual characters, I am reminded of Tiger Jack, Cuchee Indian trailer, or scout.

I knew Tiger Jack while I was working in my uncle's store at Kellyville, my uncle, Jim Egan, owned a store at Tulsa, and one at Kellyville and another at Sapulpa. He sold general merchandise and I went there from Tulsa in 1896. Tiger Jack hung out around and in Kellyville, and was used as a trailer by the U.S. Marshal. He had an uncanny way of trailing men, much more efficient than the white man, as he could ride along on his pony, apparently not noticing anything, for to the white man no trace was visible; however the Indian was on the right trail.

The marshal used him in trailing the Cook Brothers, Bill and Charlie, who by the way were partners of Cherokee Bill. So on one particular day, the marshal, Scott Ruffvane, and a deputy or two, got Tiger Jack to help them locate the hideout of these outlaws. At first, the trail, horse tracks were visible to all, and they rode right along, making good time, but after they had ridden some few hours, the trail

seemed to fade out, at least to all but Tiger Jack, who kept right on riding. They were in the timber then and in the leaves, no tracks could be seen at all. The Marshal called a halt and riding up to Tiger Jack said, "Tiger Jack, there is no use to go further, we've lost the trail, and you don't know where you are going or taking us". So Tiger Jack replied; "Ugh! Tiger Jack him not lost, him knows where he is and where he is going". "How", he was asked, "Ugh", he said, reaching out and pulling a small bunch of gray horse hair off a limb. "Bill Cook, him ride a gray horse, me see gray hair all along, me on right trail". So it was, he had been able to trace them in the woods by particles of hair rubbed off the horse while going thru the timber.

They failed to find the outlaws on this trip; however, they found where they had camped, but they had gotten out of Tiger Jack's territory, anyhow, so they returned to Kelleyville.

Sometime after this incident but before the capture of the Cook Bros. or Cherokee Bill, Tiger Jack was asked to do some trailing alone, they thought maybe they -- or he, could do better alone, than with a party,

could probably slip upon them in their hideout. Well, one day he was on just such a mission, and had gone some distance from Kellyville, and had penetrated the hills and timber, where he thought they had their hideout, where, to his surprise, and horror, two men, one on each side of the trail, stepped out with their guns on Tiger Jack, and commanded him to "stick 'em up" this he readily did wondering just how long he had to live, and wondering too if they knew him. He was some relieved as to the latter, for they said, "Tiger Jack, I guess you have reached the end of your trail. We know you and know you have been trailing us for sometime, and with the Marshal most of the time, but you know all trails have to end somewhere, so why not yours right here. What have you to say before we shoot you?" Well, Tiger Jack had a plenty to say, mostly pleading with them to let him go, and not shoot him. So after sometime, all of which was passing swiftly, and to what looked like certain doom to Tiger Jack, they talked to each other in a low tone, and then turned to Jack and said, "Tiger Jack, we don't hate you personally, you have just been doing what you were told to do and what you were paid for, so we have decided to let you go, give you another chance at life, but under one and only one condition, that is that you are never again to help officers trail us or to trail us alone, or in any way assist in our capture.

So, if you are ready to agree to this and give us your promise, we will let you go, you understand, if you break the promise, we will hunt you up and the next time will be the last time" Tiger Jack readily agreed to this, and was released. A while after this, and after reports of mischief done by who they thought were the Cook Bros. the Marshal called Tiger Jack to him and told him what had been done and that they wanted him to help them again, "Ugh, me trail no more, make promise, wont break, they kill me if I do". So he told them of the meeting with the Cook Brothers and the sparing of his life and his promise. He stuck to it too, for they never again had the help of Tiger Jack, for he had promised.

Tiger Jack gave me the old spur I was telling you about.