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WINTERRINGER, CLARENCE O. INTERVIEW

#5970

Interview with Clarence O. Winterringer  
774 North Denver Avenue, Tulsa.  
Field Worker, Heuben Partridge  
May 25, 1937

After working for the "Spike S" or Sanger  
ranch, in 1889, when Clarence Winterringer first  
came to Tulsa Town, where the cow-boys nick-named  
him "Woosie," he had a most memorable experience  
when he was enroute home, on foot, to Kansas.

Crossing the Arkansas River at the Wealaka  
Mission, he passed Berry Hogan's place. When  
crossing George B. Perryman's pasture, near the Bald  
Hills, southeast of the County Farm, he had to  
pass several thousand head of Texas Cattle which  
were gathered there, some of them drinking from  
the lakes called water tanks, which George Perryman  
had made for his cattle. Clarence tried to slip  
past the cattle unobserved, but one steer saw him  
and bellowed, which aroused the whole herd, and they  
started after him. He ran for some trees about one  
quarter of a mile away, waving his coat at the steers.

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This did not frighten them at all, so he finally threw his coat at them, and made one final dash for the nearest tree and climbed it just in time. The cattle bellowed around the tree for an hour, but at last they went to grazing, and when they had seemingly forgotten him, he got down and by traveling down the creek a long way, succeeded in escaping, but left his coat behind.

When Clarence Winterringer and his father were selling pianos, organs, and sewing-machines, they worked for about a week around Vinita. Going by Catoosa, they learned that a man by the name of Frost had been killed and others cut up. A few minutes after they had camped that night, where the Frisco Railroad crosses Mingo Creek, a white man stopped and told them to guard their teams closely, as the killers were on the lookout for horses with which to get away.

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After the white man had gone, a negro came walking down the railroad track, and over to the Winterringers with his revolver in his hand and asked the way to Frost's place. When Clarence said they didn't know, he called him a d---- liar! About that time, Clarence's father got his shotgun and told the negro to "hit the road," which he did. This negro was a United States officer, they learned next day, and upon reaching a section house he secured help, and when the negro and the section hands reached Dawson, they got horses, and all that night the negro officer, the section hands, and Bill Burgess, a Cherokee government policeman, searched the Osage Hills for the Winterringers, who had broken camp and gone home. Some time later, Clarence was telling Bill Burgess about the negro coming into their camp, and Bill said he sure wished he had known it, as it would have saved him from riding all night.

When the Locapoka Indians held a festival and stomp dance, Clarence had a cold lemonade stand, in

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front of which Sam Childers and two other Indians, who had been drinking too much whiskey, started shooting at each other. Clarence walked out and gave them the stand until they were through. Late at night one of the Childers boys and another Indian whooped it up again. The Childers boy pulled out a pocket knife with a long blade, but his wife, with her apron wrapped around her hands, broke the blade in two, and Childers had only a broken blade with which he scratched up the other Indian's face.

At one time, C. W. Mosier, Superintendent of salesmen of the Singer Sewing Machine Company with headquarters in St. Louis, came down to Tulsey Town to check up on Clarence Winterringer's sales, and to recover some of the machines he had sold, or get the money. Clarence took him to the home of Cherokee Bill's sister, seven miles west of Talala, at the bluffs near the Caney River, and warned Mr. Mosier to be careful, as the woman was a dangerous negro. Mr. Mosier remarked that he was not afraid of a negro.

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Upon their arrival, they found that she had sold the machine to a neighbor, and Mr. Mosier demanded that she get in his buggy and go with him to get it. She refused, and when Mr. Mosier again demanded, saying "You must, I won't fool with you any longer," she swore, and said, "You old grey headed -----, I will kill you, if you don't get away from here." Then she started for the house, but Clarence was between her and the house, and pulled out his six-shooter, saying he wanted no trouble with her. She told him to take the grey headed man off the place, then. Clarence asked her if she was woman enough not to shoot them in the backs as they were leaving. She reluctantly agreed, and Mr. Mosier was so nervous and scared that Clarence could not drive fast enough to suit him, and as soon as they reached Talala, Mr. Mosier boarded a train for St. Louis, saying he never would come to Indian Territory again.

Ike Rogers, a negro Deputy United States Marshal, captured Cherokee Bill (whose real name was Crawford

Goldsby) in rather an underhanded manner. Cherokee Bill was going with Rogers' sister, and gave money to Ike Rogers, but nevertheless, Rogers waited until he had a good chance and hit Cherokee Bill over the head with a piece of stove wood, and while he lay senseless, hand-cuffed him, and took him prisoner. When Ike Rogers went to the Freedman payment at Hayden, near Chelsea, Indian Territory, he met Clarence Goldsby, the half-brother of Crawford Goldsby (Cherokee Bill), who had told him never to set his foot in Fort Gibson or he would kill him. But Rogers did go to Fort Gibson, and Clarence Goldsby, who was blacking shoes at the store, heard the train whistle,

jumped up and ran to the depot and as Ike Rogers stepped from the train, Goldsby shot him dead, then crawled under the train, escaped, and never was captured.

Nancy Silk was the name of a Cherokee girl with whom Clarence Winterringer used to keep company.

At one time they attended an all night dance which was held near Claremore. Toward morning, when Clarence and Nancy were going to dance, a fellow named "Frog" Davis came up and said he was going to dance with Nancy. Clarence told him, "No", whereupon "Frog" jerked out his pistol. Clarence knocked it down, and it went off in the sole of Clarence's shoe. Then Clarence took the revolver, and with Davis begging for it they walked outside where Clarence gave it back to him after Davis had promised to be good. No sooner did Davis have the gun, than he backed off into the woods, shooting at the house

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and lights. Some time afterward, Davis went into Claremore and killed Sheriff Saunders, but it was not

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long before he was captured, convicted, and hung, under the Cherokee laws.