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## STRANGE EXPERIENCE

Some of the strangest experiences imaginable have been related concerning persons who lived in various sections of the Cherokee Nation during the decades preceding the Civil War period.

Two men of the Cherokee Nation had a "falling out," but in course of time became friendly again, although they lived some miles apart and did not see each other often. One day one of the men, whose surname was England, had occasion to make a trip some miles distant. On his return trip the sun set when he was yet far from his home. The road over which he traveled led through the timber. Just as dusk was about to be resolved into night, he saw a dark object in the distance moving with great speed along the roadway. Soon he noted that a small dog--so he supposed--was drawing near, but paid no attention, as roaming dogs were often seen along the roads and trails. But greatly to the surprise of the horseman, when the "dog" was just opposite the horse, it suddenly sprang forward and clung to the saddle horn. England tried to push the "thing," as he now found it to be, from the saddle, but without success, as it clung most tenaciously. The horse, seeming to feel that something unusual was occurring, reared, snorted, and plunged. All efforts failed to dislodge the weird "thing" and England then drew his long-

bladed hunting knife and plunged it again and again into the body of the creature which then lost its hold, fell to the ground uttering terrible cries, shrinking in size, and soon disappeared. England loosened the reins and the horse galloped away. When he reached his home he noticed that the bright blade of his knife bore spots as of human blood, but he was not a nervous individual and thought little of the matter.

Months passed and again England rode along the same road in the early gloom of night with the stars twinkling from a clear sky. The weather was rather cold and he rode briskly, when suddenly there rode in his direction a horseman, who proved to be the man (his name is not recalled) who had disagreed with him in other days. The men greeted each other in friendly tones and halted for brief conversation. Some remark by one of them served to bring up the subject over which they had once disagreed, and soon they quarreled bitterly, dismounted, and began fighting. England lost control of his temper, drew his knife, and fatally stabbed his antagonist. Several hours passed.

Neighbors of the slain man set out to carry his body home.

England, having reached his own home, made hurried preparations for flight, intending to scout, or evade apprehension by officers of the law. As the slayer was riding through the lonely forest he suddenly heard in the distance the sound of terrible cries and lamentations from the relatives of the slain man, his

corpse having reached his home. The cries were counterparts of the cries which had emanated from the "thing," which had clung to his saddle in the woodland, and which he had thrust with his knife.

AUTHORITY: Benjamin King, once judge of the Tahlequah District.