

ROSS, ELIZABETH

WILD CATTLE

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Wild Cattle

The Cherokee National Council once enacted legislation concerning wild cattle. The time was less than two years after the close of the Civil War. In connection with that conflict in the Cherokee country the assertion has often been made that livestock, cattle in particular, disappeared during the years of the war-time period. But as was revealed in 1866, the cattle had become so numerous in some sections that measures were taken for their elimination.

According to the Cherokee law-making bodies in session at Tahlequah, information had been received to the effect that there were herds of wild cattle in the Illinois, Cooweescoowee, Saline and Sequoyah Districts. So numerous were these cattle that they were considered a menace, the consequence being that they became the subject of an act of the council.

On the 16th day of November, 1866, it was enacted by the National Council, that the sheriffs of the several districts in which were the wild cattle, be duly authorized to employ a number of men to construct large pens or corrals, and then to pen, or imprison the

cattle therein. After such had been accomplished the wild cattle were to be advertised for a period of ten days; such notices or advertisements to be posted at three different places in the cattle infested districts, and then sold to the highest bidder or bidders.

It was further enacted by the National Council, that the men employed in building the pens and in placing the wild cattle therein, should be allowed as compensation for their services the sum of one dollar and fifty cents each, per day, while in actual service.

After the act had passed the Cherokee National Senate it was taken under consideration by the House of Council, and was by that body favorably considered and concurred in, with one amendment. The amendment was to this effect:

"Concurred in with the following amendment: In case the sheriffs of the districts mentioned are unable to pen the said wild cattle, they are hereby

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authorized to have them killed."

The act passed the Senate November 16, 1866, and it was concurred in by the House of Council on the 20th day of the same month.

James Vann signed the act as president pro tem of the National Committee or Senate, while on behalf of the Council Ooyon-suttah signed as speaker pro tem. Smith Christie, president of the Senate, being present on the 20th, signed the act, which became a law upon receiving the signature of the Principal Chief.

Authority: Laws of the Cherokee Nation, 1867.