

THE CHEROKEE FRONTIER POLICE OF THE INDIAN TERRITORY

By Art T. Burton

The Indian police of the Indian Territory were as heroic and brave as any law enforcement officers of the Old West. The Cherokee Nation was and is presently the largest in population of all the Five Civilized Tribes and had outstanding law enforcement officers on the Oklahoma frontier. Today they are the second largest Native American tribe in the United States in population. This paper will take a look at the officers of the frontier Cherokee Nation who served with the Indian police and the federal police. The Cherokee Nation was the most dangerous location for deputy U.S. marshals working in the post-Civil War era. The majority of deputies who were killed in the Indian Territory were killed in the Cherokee Nation.

An organization of policemen known as "Lighthorse" was formed by Major Ridge and James Vann in the Cherokee Nation in 1799. In 1808, the Cherokee Nation passed an act appointing "regulators" to suppress horse stealing and robbery, to protect widows and orphans, and to kill any accused person resisting their authority. At this time in history, the Cherokee Nation was located in Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee.

After the removal to the Indian Territory, the Cherokee Advocate newspaper, published at Tahlequah, reported on November 13, 1844, that the Cherokee National Council had passed a bill authorizing a Lighthorse Company. It was to be composed of a captain, lieutenant and twenty-four horsemen. Their assigned duty was to pursue and arrest all fugitives from justice. The first execution in the Indian Territory was of Archilla Smith, for murder in the Cherokee Nation on January 1, 1841.

The Cherokee got the name "lighthorse" from Revolutionary War hero, General Henry Lee who was called "Lighthorse Harry" due to the rapidity of his cavalry movements during the conflict. Henry was Robert E. Lee's father.

An early example of early Cherokee justice was the punishment of rape. For the first offense, the rapist was punished with fifty lashes upon the bare back and his left ear cropped off close to the head; for the second offense, one hundred lashed and the other ear cut off; for the third offense, death. Due to some circumstances the early Cherokee Lighthorse had to serve as judge, policemen and juror. After the Civil War, the Cherokee Nation had a prison constructed at Tahlequah in 1874, which was presided over by a High Sheriff, the top lawman of the nation. At this national prison was a gallows for persons sentenced to death. This was the only gallows operated within any of the Five Tribes. There were at least fourteen hangings at the Cherokee Prison in Tahlequah before Oklahoma statehood in 1907. The other Five Tribes used a firing squad for execution. The Cherokee Nation had nine districts each with a Sheriff. The districts were: Coo-Wee-Scoo-Wee, Delaware, Saline, Tahlequah, Going Snake, Flint, Illinois, Canadian and Sequoyah. After the Civil War it appears the Cherokee Nation did not refer to their police as lighthorse as did the other Five Tribes governments, although they originated the name. They had the high sheriff, district sheriffs, and deputy sheriffs and policemen for

local towns. Although some of the local population may have still referred to them as lighthorse.

In 1874, the federal government ordered the consolidation of Indian Agents for the Five Civilized Tribes. The agent for the Five Civilized Tribes moved into a new building at Muskogee, Creek Nation, close to the Cherokee Nation line, on January 1, 1876. The new office was called the Union Agency. In February of 1880, Col. John Q. Tufts, United States agent for the Union Agency organized a unit of Indian police to operate throughout the Five Civilized Nations. The official title for this group was United States Indian Police or U.S.I.P. The unit consisted of a captain and forty men under his command.

The first captain of the U.S.I.P. was the famous Cherokee lawman, Sam Sixkiller. Earlier in his life, a nineteen year-old Sixkiller had served with a Union Indian artillery company under the command of his father 1st Lt. Redbird Sixkiller, during the Civil War. In 1875, Sixkiller was appointed High Sheriff of the Cherokee Nation and warden of the National Prison at Tahlequah.

As captain of the U.S.I.P., Sixkiller's main problems were the whiskey peddlers, cattle thieves, murderers, rapists, timber thieves, land squatters, train robbers, card sharks, and prostitutes servicing the railroad towns in the Indian Territory. When Sixkiller took the job of captain, Muskogee had a population of 500 inhabitants, it was the principal town in the territory. During his law enforcement career, Sixkiller was wounded on one occasion, and he was responsible for several deaths. One of the outlaws killed by Sixkiller was a whiskey runner named Solomon Copple from Missouri. Copple was plying his illicit trade around Muskogee, when confronted by Captain Sixkiller, he resisted arrest and Sixkiller shot him dead.

The most famous outlaw subdued by Captain Sixkiller was the notorious Creek Freedman Dick Glass. During the 1880s, Glass had a gang that operated throughout the Indian Territory. He stole horses in the Indian nations and exchanged them for illegal whiskey in Texas, which he sold for huge profits. In June of 1885, Captain Sixkiller led a posse, that included the renown Choctaw lawman Charles LeFlore, to capture or kill Glass in the Chickasaw Nation. They caught the Glass gang with a wagon load of whiskey just north of the Red River. After being surprised by the lawmen, Glass decided to resist, Sixkiller killed him with a blast from a double barrel shotgun.

On January 28, 1886, the **Muskogee Indian Journal** carried the following story on Sixkiller:

"A GOOD CAPTURE

Capt. Sixkiller made a good capture last week at Weber's Falls. He was after Alf. Rushing, alias Ed. Brown, wanted for the killing of Jackson Barfield in 1877. Also for the murder of the city marshal of Worthem, Freestone County, Texas. He received information that Brown was working near the Falls and had been for several years. As the Captain and Bill Drew came near the place where Brown was staying they gathered up a bunch of cattle, and, driving them up, asked permission to put them in a yard for the night. The request was granted, and Brown was called from the crib where he was at work to help pen them. While driving them, Sam worked around to where Brown was, and throwing down on him, took him completely by surprise, and he could offer no resistance. The cattle were then

turned loose. Brown denies he is the man wanted by the officers, but they are certain they have the right party, and he is being held here awaiting the Texas officers."

It is important to note that Sam Sixkiller besides being captain of the U.S.I.P. headquartered in Muskogee, he was also a deputy U.S. marshal and a special agent for the Missouri Pacific Railroad. Sixkiller had a tough job in policing the streets of Muskogee, one of the most dangerous towns in the "Old West." There were more lawmen killed in a fifty mile radius of Muskogee than anywhere in the United States during the frontier era.

On Christmas Eve, 1886, Sixkiller was off duty and unarmed. Feeling under the weather, he made a trip downtown Muskogee to pick up some medicine. He was met by two dastardly malcontents bent on mayhem; Dick Vann and Alf Cunningham. Vann was a Cherokee Freedman with quite a reputation. Sixkiller was stepping up on the platform on the north side of the Patterson Mercantile Store. Vann and Cunningham, with a shotgun and pistol, fired on Sixkiller without notice; supposedly they had a grudge for a previous run-in they had with the lawman. Sixkiller fell to the ground mortally wounded, and Vann and Cunningham made good their escape on fast ponies.

After the death of Captain Sixkiller, the United States legislature passed a bill, signed by the President, which made assault on an Indian policeman a federal crime. The document signed March 2, 1887, stated: "...any Indians committing against the person of any Indian policeman appointed under the laws of the United States, or any Indian United States deputy Marshal, any of the following crimes, namely murder, manslaughter or assault with intent to kill, within the Indian Territory, shall be subjected to the laws of the United States relating to such crimes and shall be tried by the District Court of the United States." It was a landmark case which increased the stature of Indian police officers in Indian Territory and elsewhere in the United States.

Possibly the most important Cherokee lawman of the Indian Territory was Jackson William Ellis, born in Sweet Town, Cherokee Nation in 1849. He was known as Jack Ellis and was 5/8ths Cherokee. At the age of twenty-one, he stood six feet and four inches. As a teenager, he rode as a posseman for deputy U.S. marshals out of Fort Smith. In 1870, Ellis was appointed Deputy Sheriff of Tahlequah District and also Sheriff of Commissioners Court. In 1872, Ellis was made a deputy warden of the Cherokee National Prison in Tahlequah. In 1876, he left the field of law enforcement to go into the mercantile business. But in 1887, he was given a commission as a deputy U.S. marshal and the same year joined the United States Indian Police under the direction of Captain William Fields, who superceded Sixkiller.

On March 6, 1887, Bud Trainor, a reckless renegade and desperado who was a mixed-blood Cherokee, had been drinking heavily in Tahlequah. Trainor with his gang had rode up and down Muskogee Avenue, the main street, shooting their guns and causing the store owners to close up early. Jackson Ellis had been in the area squirrel hunting and came into town during the turmoil.

Ellis gave Trainor an order to cease and desist. Trainor responded by telling Ellis to get his gun and deposited his horse at Wilson's livery stable. Ellis and Trainor met in the middle of Muskogee Avenue "Hollywood Style." Trainor drew first and both parties got off three shots. One of Ellis' pistol shots struck Trainor in the center of the mouth and the bullet lodged in the rear of the throat. Bystanders had to turn Trainor over on his stomach

so he wouldn't drown in his own blood. He was heard to exclaim, "Oh, yes. God damn, he shot at my teeth that time." Ellis would have killed him if his pistol hadn't been loaded with squirrel shot known as bulldog cartridges. This occurred just six weeks after Ellis resumed his career as a lawman. Trainor lived to be later killed by shotgun toting black cowboys in the Cherokee Nation near Nowata on January 9, 1896. It was later learned that Trainor had killed Deputy U.S. Marshal Dan Maples, a lawman Cherokee Ned Christy was accused of killing.

Jackson Ellis moved to Fort Gibson, Cherokee Nation in 1887 and was stationed there as the deputy U.S. marshal for the town and near vicinity. While serving this post, Ellis killed the outlaw Dick Vann while trying to arrest the fugitive. Vann was wanted for the murder of Captain Sam Sixkiller. Later, Ellis was sent by the United States Indian Police to Atoka in the Choctaw Nation.

While stationed at Atoka, Ellis shot and arrested Daniel Fields, an escaped convict. Soon afterwards he shot and killed Harry Finn, an outlaw who had killed his father in Missouri and was involved in peddling illegal whiskey in the Choctaw Nation. This was followed by the shooting and capture of Charlie Carter, an outlaw and murderer whom Ellis had hunted. Next, Jackson Ellis shot and captured two men named Watson and Whitrock, both whiskey peddlers and notorious outlaws.

Ellis was given a commission as a special agent for the Missouri and Pacific Railroad in the late 1880s when that road was building through the Indian Territory. In 1890, Ellis went into partnership with D.J. Folsom to practice law in Atoka. This did not last long because he was appointed a deputy U.S. marshal for the second division court at South McAlester in the Choctaw Nation. In the 1890s, Ellis was made captain of the United States Indian Police at Muskogee after the tenure of Choctaw Charles LeFlore. Ellis maintained his home at South McAlester and held the position of captain up until near statehood when he was replaced by another Cherokee, and last captain of the U.S.I.P., John C. West.

Captain Jackson Ellis was known to be quiet and dignified in his daily discourse, but he was also known for his practical jokes. The following story gives an example of his lighter side. Captain Ellis had been given the duty of escorting the trains that carried the Indians payments. These trains originated at Paris, Texas and Captain Ellis met them at Wister Junction.

While waiting at the Wister depot for the northbound Frisco payment train, a southbound excursion train pulled into the depot. The train was full of tourist from back East. Captain Ellis struck a conversation with a young couple from Vermont. They were eager to learn about the Indians of the "Wild West." Ellis informed them that he was a Cherokee Indian, the bride screamed, the young man grabbed his own lock of hair and stepped back a few paces. Jackson Ellis exclaimed, "Oh Shucks, needn't be scared of me; I ain't savage any more; about the worse thing I do now is to eat a little dog occasionally; ever eat any dog? They keep it at the lunch stand over there. Wait, I'll get you a piece." As Captain Ellis walked away the young bride fainted and collapsed to the ground.

Ellis spent his last years in Marble City, Sequoyah County, where he was given a pistol by Cherokee lawman John C. West that belonged to the female outlaw, Belle Starr.

The most colorful and legendary of all Cherokee lawmen was Ezekiel Proctor. Son of a white man named William Proctor and a Cherokee woman named Dicey Downing. He was born July 4, 1831, in the Cherokee Nation located in the state of Georgia, seven years later his family was forced to leave their homeland. Once relocated, the Proctor lands were in the Going Snake District of the Cherokee Nation. The district received its name from a full-blood Cherokee chief who was an eloquent speaker of the old Indian tradition.

When the Civil War broke out, most of the Cherokees were sympathizers with the South since many of the wealthy mix-bloods were African slave owners. Proctor on July 7, 1862, enlisted in Company L, Third Regiment of the Union Indian Home Guard Regiment. It has been speculated that Proctor didn't agree with the institution of slavery that existed in the South and Indian Territory. Proctor also joined the Keetoowa Society, a religious order of Cherokee Indians, during the war these Indians were known as Pins and were abolitionist and fierce guerilla fighters, who believed in traditional Cherokee customs. During the war Proctor was wounded in battle on the Arkansas border but quickly recovered.

After the war ended, Proctor was elected Sheriff of the Going Snake District in 1867. He was later a Cherokee delegate to the General Council of Indian Territory held in Okmulgee, Creek Nation, on September 29, 1870.

Proctor later became involved in a family dispute that created the most deadly shootout in the history of the Old West. In early 1872, Proctor became enraged when he found out that his sister's husband, James Kesterson, a white man, had abandoned his wife and two small children without any food for several days. Proctor decided to kill Kesterson, he located his target at the Beck Mill near present day Flint, Oklahoma on February 13. Kesterson was there courting Polly Beck Hilderbrand. In attempting to shoot Kesterson, Polly stepped between the men and took a bullet and expired, Kesterson was wounded and escaped.

Due to Polly being a citizen of the Cherokee Nation a trial was set up for the Cherokee courts the Beck family wanted a federal assault charge due to Kesterson being a white man. The Cherokee trial was set for April 15, 1872 at the Whitmire schoolhouse near present day Christie, Oklahoma. The site was moved from the Going Snake courthouse near present day Westville, Oklahoma for security reasons.

Deputy U.S. Marshals Joe G. Peavy and Jacob G. Owens with a large posse were assigned to go the Cherokee trial and serve arrest warrants on Proctor and others at the event if Proctor was found innocent. Members of the federal posse included members of the Beck and Kesterson. White Sut Beck approached the front door of the school house with his shotgun in hand and told the guards to step aside. Beck and others burst into the school house with guns drawn and Beck pointed his shotgun at Proctor. Proctor's brother, Johnson, grabbed the barrel of the gun and took a shot in the chest which killed him on the spot. Bedlam then ensued with gunshots coming from all quarters in and around the school house. Proctor's attorney, Mose Alberty was also killed in the fusillade. The majority of those killed in the gunfight were with the federal posse and Beck family. The total dead came to eleven with many on both sides of the conflict wounded including Zeke Proctor.

After much negotiating between the Cherokee government and the United States government, the federal court refused to prosecute Proctor due to the 1866 Treaty between the Cherokee Nation and the United States. It was ordered that Proctor be arrested and brought before the court where a "treaty" was made with Proctor that he would be released if he agreed to become a law abiding citizen. Thus, Ezekiel Proctor had the distinction of being the only individual with which the U.S. government made a treaty.

Proctor was elected Senator of the Going Snake District in 1877. In 1891, Proctor received a commission from the Fort Smith, Arkansas, federal court as a commissioned deputy U.S. marshal. On May 4, 1894, Proctor was appointed Sheriff of the Going Snake District. The Fort Smith federal court renewed Proctor's commission as a deputy U.S. marshal on February 12, 1895. Proctor, due to his knowledge of the territory and many of its hideouts gave invaluable service to the federal court in locating outlaws and criminals in the Cherokee Nation. Many folktales and stories of Proctor's escapades persist in the culture of the Cherokee hills. Some people have insisted he killed over twenty-five men but this has never been proven or documented. But a more colorful individual than lawman Ezekiel Proctor never existed in the Cherokee Nation.

One of the most noted lawmen of the Cherokee Nation was Zeke Proctor's nephew Zeke Parris. Parris was characterized as a full blood Cherokee. For eighteen years Parris held a commission as a deputy U.S. marshal, he was also the Sheriff for the Tahlequah District. Parris was the official hangman for the Cherokee Nation Prison at Tahlequah for many years. Out of the fourteen men who were executed in the Cherokee Nation, Parris executed eleven. Zeke's wife was Susie Procter Parris, they lived in the old "Sander's House" on Muskogee Street in Tahlequah.

One of the worst characters that Parris ever had to deal with was Bald Christie, a brother of well known Ned Christie. Bald Christie was a worst character than Ned, and for a long time defied the Cherokee authorities, roaming over the same ground that later served the Wycliff gang. He was captured by a Zeke Parris and a nine man posse after he was cornered in a gorge and was forced to surrender. Christie was sentenced to hang but died in jail of a heart attack before time for his execution.

Thomas Bearpaw was a Cherokee outlaw that gave Parris a great deal of trouble. He was credited with killing eleven men. Parris tracked Bearpaw for 31 consecutive days and nights and chased him all over the Flint, Tahlequah and Goingsnake Districts before he was captured. Bearpaw was later convicted for his crimes and executed in Tahlequah by Parris.

In a newspaper interview in October of 1906, Parris stated the worst experience he had was the execution of two young Cherokee boys. Their mother had traveled by foot over 100 miles to see Chief Mays and plead for their pardon. The Chief was deaf to all entreaties and the mother saw the two boys drop from the scaffold. Parris said her shrieks were the most heart-rending cries that he ever heard. At that time he also said that the only person still living who had witnessed his uncle's shootout at the schoolhouse in the Goingsnake District was Eugene Bracken of Muskogee. Parris also said he was glad that he had lived to see the day when civilization had supplanted the bloody ways of early Cherokee history in the West. He died in the Masonic Home in Guthrie, Oklahoma in 1917, he was later buried in Tahlequah in 1937.

Cherokee lawmen killed in the line of duty during the frontier era include the following:

John R. Boston, United States Indian Police, July 20, 1881. Boston, a full blood Cherokee, began tracking a gang of seven horse thieves in July of 1881 from McAlester, Choctaw Nation. He caught with them on July 20 in the Chickasaw Nation, 20 miles northwest of Denison, Texas. Boston arrested two of the outlaws with fourteen horses and started back with his prisoners. He was soon overtaken by the other five gang members and was killed in the ensuing gunfight.

John M. Brown, Lieutenant, Cherokee Lighthorse Police, December 28, 1845. Brown was killed by Charles Smith an accomplice of Bean Starr. Bean Starr had been killed by Brown a year earlier in a gunfight after getting caught with a herd of stolen horses, he was the brother to Tom Starr. Smith was killed later by an Indian posse in January of 1846. Brown may have been the first peace officer killed in the Indian Territory.

John T. Davis, Deputy United State Marshal, August 1, 1895. Davis a Cherokee Indian received commissions as a deputy U.S. marshal on June 12, 1893 and July 1, 1895. Davis received a warrant for black outlaw Sam Butler. He located Butler at his mother's home five miles southeast of Claremore on the Verdigris River. As Davis approached Butler lying under an apple tree, Butler drew his gun and shot Davis in the chest. Davis fell off his horse but managed to shoot Butler, killing him instantly, Davis died about an hour later.

Jess Elliott, Deputy Sheriff, Cooweescoowee District, November 3, 1892. Elliott was serving legal papers in Catoosa when he got in a fight in a pool hall with Bob Talton. After the fight Talton ambushed Elliott and cut his throat. Talton was convicted of the crime and executed in Tahlequah on July 31, 1896.

William Fields, Captain, United States Indian Police, April 10, 1887. Fields was a full-blooded Cherokee Indian, he was chosen as the replacement for Captain Sam Sixkiller, U.S.I.P. He also held the positions of city marshal for Tahlequah and commissioned a deputy U.S. marshal. Fields was killed in a gunfight while trying to arrest a train robber named James Cunnius near Eufaula, Creek Nation. Cunnius was captured by Fields black posseman Crowder Nix after being wounded in both legs.

John Fulsom, City Marshal, Nowata, November 13, 1897. Fulsom was unique in that he was a Choctaw Indian hired by the Cherokee Corporation of Nowata. The town also had a government for the white population termed the Arkansas Corporation. The white government hired a gunfighter named George Goodell. After arresting and killing an Indian who supposedly tried to escape, Goodell was confronted by Fulsom. Goodell preceded to also shoot and kill Fulsom. Goodell was convicted and sentenced to federal prison but was pardoned by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1902.

Charles Hicks, Sheriff, Cooweescoowee District, December 12, 1870. Hicks, was assassinated by John and Calvin Coker, father and son, when they invaded Hicks home and killed him with double-barrel shotguns after a personal feud. John Coker died several years later in Arkansas. Calvin returned, gave himself up to Cherokee authorities. He was tried and acquitted for the Hicks murder. Calvin later killed Cherokee Chief Charles Journeycake but was acquitted of that murder in the Cherokee courts. On September 4, 1876, Calvin Coker was shot and killed by an unknown assailant in a saloon in Coffeyville, Kansas.

Sequoyah Houston, Deputy Sheriff, Tahlequah District, June 17, 1894. Houston was shot and killed by Crawford Goldsby also known as Cherokee Bill. He was the member of a posse organized by Leonard Williams, Sheriff of the Tahlequah District. The posse was led by Deputy Sheriff E.R. Gourd, who attempted to arrest the Bill Cook gang at Fourteen Mile Creek stagecoach station that was located between Tahlequah and Fort Gibson. Goldsby later became the most famous outlaw in the history of the Indian Territory. Jim Cook, Bill's brother was caught and tried in the Cherokee courts Houston killing. He received eight years at the Cherokee National Prison for manslaughter. Jim escaped in 1896, but was recaptured and served the remainder of his sentence.

Jess W. Mayes, High Sheriff, Cherokee Nation, May 10, 1889. Mayes also held a commission as a deputy U.S. marshal and was a nephew of Chief Mayes of the Cherokee Nation. After arresting a black fugitive near Bartlesville in the Cooweescoowee District, Mayes had left Tahlequah on his way to Fort Smith when he stopped in Fort Gibson. Mayes allegedly was given a poisoned drink by a man he had arrested in the past. Mayes soon took ill and died two days later without being able to identify the man who gave him the drink.

James Musgrove, Sheriff, Cooweescoowee District, June 3, 1895. Musgrove was killed while trying to serve a writ on a Cherokee named Frog Davis, north of Catoosa on Bird Creek, for illegally selling horses and cattle in the Osage Nation. Davis resisted arrest and fired upon Musgrove and his posseman, striking Musgrove in the abdomen. Davis escaped and was later captured near Tulsa the next week, tried, convicted and sentenced to death for the murder. Davis was a nephew of Deputy U.S. Marshal John Davis. Musgrove was a cousin of Will Rogers.

James Nakedhead, Deputy U.S. Marshal, February 27, 1895. Nakedhead was killed while a member of posse that was trying to capture train robbers in the Creek Nation near Checotah. Ben Hughes and Sam Baker were captured. Hughes was tried for the murder of Nakedhead but acquitted when Judge Isaac C. Parker ruled the lawmen did not have warrants for the fugitives they were trying to capture, so the men had the right to resist. James Nakedhead was reported to be the first town marshal in Tahlequah. At the time of his death he was living in Muskogee.

John Poorbear, City Marshal, Fort Gibson, September 14, 1890. Poorbear was killed while trying to arrest Tom and Jim French, Dave Andrews and John Buchanan, all Cherokees, for public intoxication. Andrews shot Poorbear in the ensuing struggle and he expired. Andrews later convicted and sentenced to hang but was pardoned by Cherokee Chief Mayes.

Charlie Proctor, Deputy Sheriff, Tahlequah District, August 10, 1896. Proctor a nephew of Zeke Proctor was killed while trying to break up a fight between two other lawmen, Tahlequah City Marshal Eli Wofford and Tahlequah District Sheriff Leonard Williams. After separating the men who had been fist fighting, someone yelled a slanderous remark and both parties went for their guns with Proctor in the middle of the fray. Proctor and Wofford were killed and Williams was wounded. The incident occurred during the annual convention of the national party of the Cherokee Nation, when much whiskey had been consumed.

Dave Ridge, Sheriff, Saline District, September 20, 1897. Ridge was a full-blood Cherokee and had just been elected Sheriff of the Saline District. Store owner Thomas Baggett was shot and killed near the Saline District Courthouse, located about one mile south of the current town of Rose. Ridge witnessed the shooting and confronted Sampson Rogers, who shortly thereafter hit Ridge over the head with a bottle or gun. Ridge died from his head wound later that night. Sampson Rogers was indicted for the murder of Dave Ridge but was freed after witnesses refused to testify against him.

Ike Rogers, Deputy U.S. Marshal, April 19, 1897. Rogers was a Cherokee Freedman, a descendant of African slaves in the Cherokee Nation. In my research I have not found any Cherokee Freedmen who became members of the Cherokee Nation Indian police. There were Cherokee Freedmen such as Ike Rogers who did become deputy U.S. marshals or worked as possemen for the deputies in the Cherokee Nation. One Cherokee Freedman, Stick Ross, did set on the Cherokee National Council in the 1890s. Rogers was responsible for the capture of the noted outlaw Cherokee Bill. He received commissions as a deputy U.S. marshal on October 4, 1892; June 1, 1893; and January 10, 1895. Bill's younger brother, Clarence Goldsby had threatened revenge on Rogers and threatened him in person. Rogers made a trip to Goldsby home town, Fort Gibson, to confront Clarence. While stepping off the train, with his back to the platform, Rogers was shot twice in the head and once in the body by Clarence, who then made good his escape and was never captured.

Jesse Sunday, Sheriff, Saline District, September 20, 1897. Sunday was a half-brother of Dave Ridge and was just completing his term as Sheriff of the Saline District, which his brother had just assumed. Sunday was guarding prisoners ten miles east of the Saline courthouse when he heard about the death of his brother. In investigating the murder Sunday was shot in the back and killed by a Martin Rowe a confederate of Sampson Rogers. Martin Rowe surrendered a month later to authorities. He was tried and convicted of Sunday's murder. Originally sentenced to death, the sentence was commuted to ten years at prison at Tahlequah by the Cherokee Chief. Three months later, Rowe escaped and went to west Texas. After working a few months as a cowboy, he joined the army, then recruiting for the Spanish-American War. After the war, he came back and settled in Stilwell, Oklahoma, about 50 miles from Saline, until he died in 1960.

Isaac "Chute" Walkingstick, Sheriff, Goingsnake District, July 29, 1894. On Saturday, July 29, 1894, Sheriff Walkingstick arrested a full-blood Cherokee for a misdemeanor charge and was in the process of taking him to jail. On the way, an intoxicated full-blood Cherokee named Johnson Cornstassel accosted Sheriff Walkingstick. Cornstassel demanded that the sheriff release his prisoner. When Sheriff Walkingstick refused, Cornstassel shot the sheriff to death. Cornstassel was promptly killed by Sheriff Walkingstick's unnamed deputy.

Frank West, United States Indian Police, December 17, 1886. West was a brother of John C. West, the last Captain of the United States Indian Police of the Indian Territory. Frank had shot and wounded Sam Starr while arresting him for robbing the U.S. mail on September 16, 1886. On December 17, 1886, West and Starr ran into each other at a Christmas dance at the Surratt farm on Emachaya Creek near Whitefield in present day Haskell County. Starr approached Frank West, words were exchanged, guns were drawn. Both men were mortally wounded in the gunfight. Sam Starr was the husband of Belle Starr and the son of Tom Starr.

The last lawman noted in this article was killed after statehood but was due to criminal activity prior to statehood:

C.C. Starr, City Marshal, Braggs, September 30, 1916. The last notable Cherokee frontier outlaw before statehood was Mose Miller, a renowned thief, robber and killer. Miller's top confederate had been a Cherokee Freedman named Bill Nail, who had been killed by federal peace officers in 1898. Miller was committed to prison in 1898 and paroled in 1912. On September 30, 1916, Miller was killed in a gunfight in Vian with Sequoyah County Deputy Sheriff Till Conley. After Miller's death a friend of his named Oce Dazzler started raising a ruckus at a bar on the east side of Braggs, upset at his killing. City Marshal Starr and Constable J.W. Marlow went to the bar to subdue Dazzler. Dazzler fired on both men as they entered the bar, hitting Starr three times and Marlow once. Marlow returned fire, hitting Dazzler twice and killing him. Starr died later that night.

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