

Bud Ballew Killed at Wichita Falls, Texas

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BUD BALLEW KILLED

AT WICHITA FALLS BY THE POLICE CHIEF

OF THAT CITY; DID NOT HAVE A CHANCE

HIS FRIENDS CLAIM

Bud Ballew, former deputy sheriff and stockman of this county, was shot to death at Wichita Falls last Friday by J.W. McCormick, former Texas Ranger, and now chief of police of that City.

The chief had been called by phone to come to a domino parlor on Ohio street to quiet a disturbance, the press dispatches state, and went there accompanied by his chief of detectives and probably another officer. He found Bud Ballew in front of a bar in the place, joshing with a couple of boys who at one time lived at Lone Grove, and who now run the Denver Domino parlors. One of the Wichita Falls papers says that Bud had one of these boys sitting on his knee, and his arm around the other one, and was joshing and laughing with them when the police chief entered. The chief, the same authority says walked up to Bud and the detective walked around the other side of him. Chief McCormick told Bud that he was under arrest, to which Bud is quoted as having replied, "You are out of luck," or words to that effect, and to have removed his hand from the waist of the boy with him and- so McCormick claims- started to reach under his coat toward his pistol. McCormick says he then began shooting, and that five shots were fired into Bud's body before it reached the floor. Those who examined the body at the undertaker's parlors here say that all of the shots entered Bud's body and head from the side and back. At any rate, by the time he reached the floor he was dead. None of the stories we could get from the press dispatches or the Wichita Falls papers mentioned any one else having shot Ballew except McCormick, but it is undoubtedly the belief of Bud's friends here that he was shot in the back, and that McCormick was in front of him, or at least at his side.

The foregoing is the straightest account of the killing that the representative of this paper could get from both sides to the fatal affair.

Went to Rodeo

The occasion for Bud being at Wichita Falls seems to have been, that he, his 18 year old son, and Bert Tucker of Healdton, had gone to Wichita Falls by train last Tuesday to attend a much advertised Rodeo that began there the middle of the week, at which Bud, and probably his son,

intended to enter in the riding contests. The next day Bill Whitson and Horace Kendall also went to the Falls to attend the Rodeo. So far as could be learned none of this party was in the domino parlors when the shooting took place.

Body Brought Home

Ballew's body was removed to an undertaker's establishment at the Falls, where it was embalmed, and, in the mean time, his friends were communicated with here in Ardmore. The tragedy took place at 1:35 o'clock on Friday afternoon, all parties agree. On word of the killing reaching Ardmore Ballew's friends secured the use of the ambulance plane of the Hardy Sanitarium, and in it Pilot Askew and Undertaker Herbert Harvey flew to Wichita Falls, leaving here at 3:15 Friday afternoon. The remains had been brought to the landing field there, and a good sized crowd had gathered to witness the unusual method of transporting a corpse. The remains were placed in the cock-pit of the plane where patients are placed to be brought to the hospital and the return flight was made, the party arriving at Ardmore at 8:00 o'clock, being just about dark. The body was taken to the Harvey Bros Undertaking Parlors and at once a stream of people filled the institution for purpose of viewing the remains. This crowd continued to visit the undertaker's rooms all day Saturday, and even during the rain of Sunday morning.

Burial

Arrangements had been made for burial of Bud at Lone Grove, where members of his family had been interred. The funeral had been set for two o'clock Sunday, and the hearse, accompanied by cars loaded with friends of the deceased and his family, went thru the rain to the Grove, but on arriving there it was found that the floods had washed out a bridge between the town of Lone Grove and the cemetery; hence the funeral had to be postponed, and did not finally take place until Tuesday afternoon. The services were conducted by Dr. J.F. Young, a well known retired Baptist minister of this city, who is himself a pioneer of Carter county, and was an intimate friend of the Ballew family. His funeral oration is said to have been very eloquent and interesting, and will probably be published by the family.

Thus ended the career of one of the most widely known men of Carter county. During the past six years Bud Ballew had built up a very unenviable name for himself, and a reputation as an "old time bad man." In fact it is more to this phase of his career that the newspaper reports direct their handling of the tragedy, than to the facts surrounding the killing.

Bud Ballew first broke into the newspaper headlines when he killed the boss bad man of Wirt, Pete Bynum, on Nov. 18, 1915. Bynum was staging a hold-up of a joint in Wirt when Ballew, then a deputy sheriff, and who was in "Rag Town" heard of the transaction and went to investigate it. As he entered the room Bynum, who was masked, shot at Bud, the bullet striking his stomach on the left side; Bud responded with a shot that put Bynum hors du combat.

He then pursued the companions of Bynum, who had fled in the dark, but they got away. Returning he found Bynum badly shot, and also discovered that in the shooting a man named

Allison, sleeping in an adjoining room, had been hit by a stray bullet. Both Bynum and Allison were brought to Ardmore where they died at the hospital during the night. Ballew's wound, while frightful to look at, did not prove serious.

Following this Ballew killed Steve Talkington, a noted gunman and law breaker, whom he had been sent to arrest. Again Bud had a close call, but got in the first shot, which was generally all he required. Then came the killing of Hignote at Wirt, Dow Braziel and Dusty Mills, all of which are of comparatively recent occurrence and will be recalled by the readers of this paper. Each killing was done when seeking the arrest of the part (except in the Braziel case) and in each instance the man killed was seeking to kill Ballew.

It will be remembered that Dow Braziel was shot to death in a cafe here in the city, both Ballew and Les Sigler shooting at him, and the certainty of which fired the fatal shot has never been judicially determined.

Dusty Mills was one of the two highwaymen who held up and robbed Jim Taliaferro, west of town, and whom Buck Garrett had overtaken east of the city and was engaged in a tussle with. Garrett and Thomas were clinched and fighting, and Mills was circling them seeking a chance to kill Garrett without hitting his pal, when Bud arrived. Mills whirled on him, but a fraction of a second too late, as Bud shot first. This is the record of Bud's killings, except that both he and Fred Williams shot at the fleeing negro James Perie, whom they had under arrest, who jumped from the train at the Santa Fe depot and ran, both officers shooting at, and killing him. Bud was involved in the fight between Arch Campbell and the police, in a Main street barber shop, when Campbell was killed, but one of the other officers admits having fired the fatal shot.

From reading this summary it is not easy to see where the daily press get their "one gun bad man" business. Ballew was a fearless officer and a dead shot, but he killed no man except in a clear case of "him or me."

The chief trouble with Bud Ballew was, that he would get drunk and ride thru town yelling and shooting off his gun. He never killed or hurt anyone in any of these tantrums, altho he sure made the public nerves tingle. In fact, he never acquired this reprehensible habit to marked degree until after the sensational writers who reported the Clara Smith trial advertised Buck Garrett and Bud Ballew from Peking, China to London, England as the two remaining specimens of the "wild west sheriffs of the movie reels and yellow back novels." Bud and Buck's pictures, underwritten as "the last of the wild west bad men," seemed to get under Bud's shirt, and he felt more or less called upon to live up to the character.

Bud Ballew was raised in this county, to which he came from Texas when 14 years old. He practically grew up on a cattle ranch, and was reputed an experienced and capable handler of livestock. He owned a well equipped ranch at Lone Grove, where he fed cattle for others and of his own, an ranged them on lands in the south part of this county and in Love county. He made money trading in the stock business and had, it is said, also made some money trading in oil leases. He leaves a widow and one son, 18 years old. His wife was Miss Fannie Harper, to whom he married in 1901. She resides in Wilson, or on the Lone Grove ranch.