

[The Lone Wolf]

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Folkstuff - Rangelore

The Lone Wolf of Texas

Ruby Mosley

San Angelo, Texas.

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THE LONE WOLF OF TEXAS

"I was bred in England, born in Georgia, and reared in Texas," says N. L. Baugh, "The Lone Wolf of Texas". "My father died before I was born and mother died two months after I showed my face, so poor old auntie took the burden; and rolled me up and brought me to Texas to see if I was going to bark or bray. Look what I turned out to be, a red-headed toby, wearing a Vandyke, to be distinguished from all others. I want to be different, I crave difference from any human being that ever walked on two feet.

"I want you to know that I have not lost my pride and ambitions, I have four things to complete before I'm ready to die. C12 - 2/11/41 - Texas 2 First, I want to be the first and best guitar player with a little twelve inch stick; secondly, to advertise for big corporations with my talent; thirdly, to push my cart through every state in the Union and last but not least, to make an honest living without government aid.

"I am 55 years old and average fifteen miles a day when on the rood, pushing ny two wheel cart that weighs from 350 to 375 pounds. It varies according to my supplies. This cart contains all of my necessities, then some luxuries such as books, photographs, police

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cards, guitar, dress clothes, harmonica, and some sort of little horn, bazooka style. I have pushed my cart house 16,000 miles and have made all but five states in my itinerary.

“People tell me that I look like an old buzzard pushing my nest from one state to another, just drifting along with time. I guess it does look like one with those old tin cans, rags, knives, guns, etc., hanging on the sides. When people ask about my home, I always warn them that the highway is my home and I am the Lone Wolf of Texas.

“This little cart is sacred to me; it makes me sad to talk about it. I have gone off and left it for a few days; always got home-sick and returned to find my bed the more comfortable.

“I was going to see a nice, pretty woman that had a big wheat farm out in Kansas, in fact we were engaged 3 to be married. One day she said, 'How would you ever settle down and leave your cart and highway?' I said, 'It would be different then.' I guess it would because I knew it wasn't going to happen. I soon found myself pushing my house cart down that lonely road again.

“I never look back, always look ahead, let the past be past; this is good advice for anyone. I have worn out seven pairs of cart wheels, but have the same old body that I started out with.

“Several times I have been caught out in the cold where wood was not to be found but I carry old innertubes to burn in emergencies. I have been carried eight and ten miles in cars to get water, people would find me out in the desert, starving for water.

“I have pushed my cart upward six and eight days at the time to reach the tops of mountains of Colorado and I have walked twenty-seven miles backward, pulling my cart to get down.

“One time I was playing for a little party in Lynchburg, Virginia, I was to play three hours for one dollar. Well, when my time was up I quit; told them I would play longer for more

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money. Some of the boys got a little hard and tried to force me to play without pay. I took my butcher knife out of my belt and cut one guy, another ran away. I got my nose and eyes beat up. When I left the crowd was in a brawl, some fighting because of the 4 effects of drinks, some because I was leaving and others just to be fightin'. I had to walk about six miles before I came to my cart. I would not welt for them to return me in the car, as promised.

"I want to show you my butcher knife and hand ax; they are around 150 or 175 years old and once belonged to a great uncle of mine. Watch me hit my mark on the telephone pole. There it is, see that? I'm fifteen yards from the pole, I bet you can't hit that with the knife nor hand ax either. And I hit my mark the first time. You see, that's why one of the fellows made a get-away from the party.

"In Salisbury, North Carolina, I was rudely awakened by two bandits who demanded my money. Luckily I was broke, and the boys left in disgust. I never cause disturbance with officers for little things like that. I can protect myself most anytime.

"Another little occurrence kinda up set me when I was in Lynchburg, Virginia. I played two pieces at the theatre and made 10.00. This was my biggest money, playing the guitar with a stick, and on my way home I was robbed of 6.00. Well I asked the law to help me a little this time and we got back \$4.00 with about three hours' hunt.

"You may not know and I know you can't tell by lookin' but I have been a detective. I detected several 5 things while I was in San Angelo my last time. They thought I was pretty good when I caught an officer that time.

"My business is legitimate. I don't borrow, beg, nor steal; there is no other person like me, I sell nothing but music. All of my music is decent and is usually connected with children or old people. I have broadcasted from better then 300 radio stations.

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“One time I went to Abilene in 1909 and sold bananas; I pawned my shoes to buy my first stalk. I was doin' pretty well but guess I got “sorter” out of my place, though, and had to jump from a three story window with a .45 gun pointed at me; that's why I left Abilene that time. Oh yes, I caught a long freight out. I never went back to that place until about six years ago and acted as Santa Claus in a local store.

“Yes, I've been married twice, I have two children that are married and have families. They live in [East?] Texas. My boy is one of them A. & M. Agriculturists.

“I reckon the reason I travel on foot I was in a car accident in Fort worth, had twenty-two bones broken; I like to have never got over that.

“I don't like to speak of the past- about my families; We want go into that stuff. I never like the past. I have six scrapbooks that contain pictures and write-ups from north to south, from east to west sides of the United States. I entertain myself by looking them over, 6 singing, and playing.

“I like to meet nice young widows or middle aged women, have little suppers and play 42 or talk; but I ain't got matrimony in my head, no not me.

“I'm going to the World's Fair at New York in 1939. I expect to push my cart over to New Orleans and go on up to New York. I take in all them kind of things. I stayed pretty close to the Centennial most all the time it was in Dallas. I made pretty good money there playing for different entertainments.

“For protection, I have my hand ax, butcher knife and that little wooden gun you see hanging on my cart. That is a true imitation of the worst desperado's in the United States. It is exactly like it except mine is carved from white pine.

“I never carry a dog, you know it wouldn't be natural for a Lone Wolf and a dog to go down the highway together.

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“Remember to never look back, keep going forward, on and on.” The Lone Wolf of Texas,

Ruby Mosley

San Angelo, Texas.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

N. L. Baugh, San Angelo, Texas, interviewed, February 8, 1938.