

JACK LONGSTREET AND HIS LOST EAR

by
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Bob Tubb wondered about the ears of the long haired man who lived near the family ranch at Ash Meadows.

It was 1912 and although Bob was but a lad he knew the

fearsome looking man was an outlaw and was missing an ear. But which one? He knew Jack Longstreet was an outlaw, not only by the six guns he wore, but by the way people acted in his presence. Sort of respectful and nervous. But no one knew which ear Longstreet had lost when he

had been caught cattle rustling in Texas. And no one was ever to find out.

Jack Longstreet, one of Nevada's most notorious outlaws was over 70 when he settled on the Amargosa. But little Bob Tubb could not pluck up the courage to blurt out: "Which ear

got cut off by the vigilantes?" "I looked into those cold grey eyes and saw those notches on his guns and somehow I couldn't ask", Tubb recalled. "It's just as well. Jack was kind of touchy about his ears."

Longstreet's companions in Texas went as guests to attend a

necktie party, but because he was only 14, Jack was let off with a cropped ear—or two—and told to head West. He did promptly. To Nevada.

It was in the early 1870's when Longstreet first turned up in the Moapa area of Nevada. Disposing of Alexander Ori, he

took over his ranch on the Upper Muddy. Longstreet's activities in this area did not endear him to other residents. When another outlaw, Black Jack Kellet horsewhipped him in the streets of St. Thomas, Longstreet moved to the less populated and

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Longstreet Liked The Amargosa

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friendlier clime of the Amargosa. Here he married an Ash Meadows Indian, named Fannie. She was renowned as a superb horsewoman and horseshoer. Longstreet settled at the stone cabin once owned by Aaron Winters, one of the early discoverers of borax.

In the early 1900's prospectors and freighters flocked across the Amargosa desert on their way to the camps of Death Valley and to Tonopah and Goldfield. Longstreet established a way station and hostelry. Those who stayed there often paid an unexpected price in loss of possessions and livestock. The sight of the grim proprietor and his hardware convinced most it did not pay to argue about a few missing items. Longstreet prospered.

In his 93 years of life Andrew Jackson Longstreet did nothing to detract from his reputation as horse thief, murderer, robber and gunman. So sometimes he found life too quiet in Ash Meadows and hired out as gunman or shotgun rider.

Jack took Fannie along to the battle of the Johnnie mine in 1898 in Pahrump Valley when together with notorious gun fighter Phil Foote, Longstreet was hired to take possession of the mine by fire.

There was much shooting and after a running gun battle, Longstreet and his men, several of them wounded, took cover in a mine shaft. Foote was shot through the lung and after a short siege Longstreet decided to throw in the towel. Although a gunman of considerable fame, Longstreet was always cautious and experienced enough to know there was no point in trying to win a losing battle.

He hoisted Fannie's long white petticoat on a stick and the battle was over and lost. Just to make sure, Longstreet pushed Fannie out of cover first. He was

LONGSTREET WAS KNOWN AS A HORSE THIEF, MURDERER, AND ROBBER—BUT NOTHING SO BAD AS TO PREVENT HIS QUIET RETIREMENT ON THE AMARGOSA.

ever a prudent man, which is perhaps why he lived so long.

Sam Yuont of the Pahrump Ranch rushed in with medicine for Phil Foote but that particular gun fighter died with his boots on. Jack Longstreet did not lose often, if one is to judge from the notches on his gun which was on display in Tonopah for some years after his death. It is not known exactly how many men Longstreet killed but doubtless the outlaw knew. And knowing made him careful. On the trail in the Amargosa desert he would dismount and take cover whenever he saw a stranger riding his way.

Sometimes Jack rode shotgun on the stage lines between Tonopah and Goldfield. He was as quick as ever on the trigger and people respected and feared him. No stage on which he rode shotgun was ever held up.

Jack Longstreet was not just another gunslinger. "He was a sharp businessman" recalled Bob Tubb who knew him until his death in 1928.

"Promoters wanted to use his name to sell real estate at the



REMEMBERS OUTLAW—Bob Tubb and friend are pictured here on his Ash Meadows Ranch on the Amargosa. He recalls that Jack Longstreet commanded neighborhood respect.

town of Longstreet some 40 miles from Tonopah. He let them for a steep price."

Longstreet may also have been of noble birth. He not only claimed kinship to the famous Longstreet family of Virginia but said that General James Longstreet, the Confederate commander was his brother.

"These claims might well have been true", declared Tubb. "In spite of his rugged looks and desert ways he had somewhat of a regal air, especially if you argued with him. Not that many did," added Tubb.

Jack Longstreet was not a popular man on the Amargosa. But he did command fear and respect which is all he ever seemed to want. Carl Glasscock, who edited the "Greenwater Chuckwallas" in 1905 knew Longstreet well and wrote this contemporary opinion of him. "Violent, morose and vindictive he was feared and hated on the desert. He was generally looked upon as a cattle and horse thief but with a reputation for such efficient gun play that few dared make trouble for him."

Bob Tubb at his ranch in Ash Meadows nodded and said: "I guess that's a fair statement. He was said to be Nevada's most famous outlaw and no one loved him for sure. Still he was always good to us kids at the ranch. Mind you, not so good as to tell us about those ears. He took that secret with him to his grave at Belmont, Nevada."



RETIRED GUNMAN—Longstreet was one of Nevada's most notorious outlaws but in his later years he appeared quite settled. He is shown here with his wife, Fannie, right, and visitors at a Nevada mining camp, probably Belmont.

Longstreet

Longstreet

Dr. Scholt and Kangaroo Pat