

Cst. Davies F.W.



DAVIES, FRANCIS W. - CST. Regimental No. 4837

June 3, 1912 - Brooks, Alberta Age: 23

Cst. Frank Davies was killed while attempting to arrest a Blackfoot Indian named Jim Harn (alias Mike Running Wolf). On Monday, June 3, 1912, two citizens of Brooks, Alberta complained to the RNWMP detachment that they had been shot at by three natives who were under the influence of alcohol. One of the complainants, Emil Peterson, said two native men and a woman with a papoose were riding in a democrat and offered him a ride towards the town of Bassano. They had been drinking and wanted Peterson to procure more liquor for them at Bassano. When Peterson told them he couldn't do that because he was under age, they kicked him off the wagon and drove away with his valise and all his belongings. The wagon driver also shot at him three times with a rifle.

Peterson reported this to Cst. Davies and was able to identify the driver as Mike Running Wolf, a tall slim Blackfoot. He knew that all three in the wagon had been drinking and that Running Wolf had a bottle of whiskey in his pants pocket. Davies rode out after the trio and traced their tracks to the CPR station. There the railroad agent said that the other two in the wagon were Running Wolf's brother, Pretty Young Man, and a native female known as Red Face. The papoose she was carrying was the son of her friend, Vincent Yellow Old Woman. The CPR agent said that they had turned off the track and taken the main trail towards Southesk. Davies rode after them.

When he caught up with them, Running Wolf was handling the reins of the black and bay team. Red Face sat beside him. Pretty Young Man was lying drunk in the back of the wagon. No one but the natives actually saw what happened next but, according to Red Face, Cst. Davies told Running Wolf to turn the wagon around and go back into Brooks. When Running Wolf ignored him, Davies fired his gun. Then Davies galloped ahead of the wagon team, circled in front of them and came riding back towards the rig on the left side. Running Wolf shot him with his rifle. Davies remained upright in the saddle, and Running Wolf shot again. The second shot knocked the policeman off his horse and killed him.

Running Wolf jumped down from the wagon and took the officer's belt and gun. He also took Davies' white chaps off his legs and put them on. He grabbed the policeman's hat and wore that too. Then he climbed on Davies' horse and followed the wagon back to the reserve.

When Running Wolf, who was still very drunk, bragged about what he had done to Cst. Davies, many of the Blackfoot were appalled. They waited until he calmed down and then Vincent Old Woman took Running Wolf's guns away and some of the other natives tied the killer up and drove him, Pretty Young Man and Red Face into town and turned them over to the police.

The evidence against Running Wolf was overwhelming. He was still splashed with Davies' blood, he was still in possession of Davies' horse, his chaps, hat, belt and revolver. He was

charged with murder and tried in Calgary in October 1912. The only argument the defence could make on his behalf was that, at the time of the killing, Mike Running Wolf was severely intoxicated and didn't know what he was doing. The jury deliberated for four hours and brought in a verdict of manslaughter. Judge Simmons sentenced him to a term of life imprisonment in the Edmonton Penitentiary.

Cst. Frank Davies was born in Hampstead, England, and had emigrated to Canada when he was not yet 15. At 20, he joined the RNWMP at Regina. At 23, he was buried in the Mounted Police plot in the Calgary Cemetery.

His mother and father, upon hearing of their sons' death, wrote a poignant letter to Commissioner A. B. Perry.