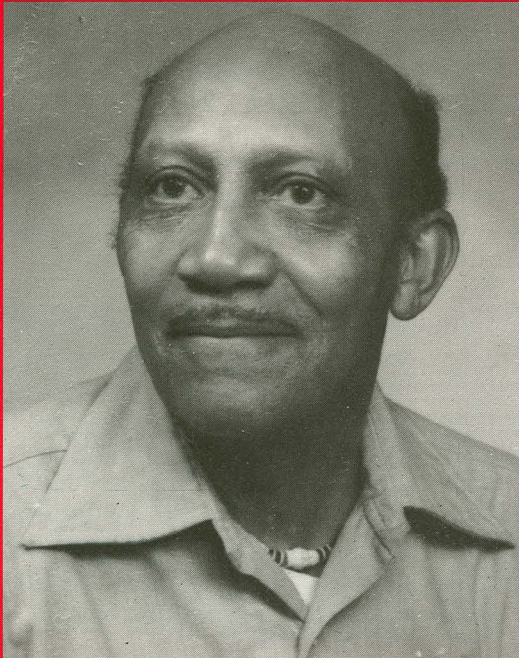


*The "Buck"
stopped here
...sometimes!*



JAKE REDMAN

Roy H. Redman, better known among his ex-associates at the Luke mill as "Jake," disagrees with the persons who believe there is nothing like your first horseback ride to make you feel better OFF. His view is understandable because Jake, a longtime resident of Piedmont, apparently was born to ride.

"I was only five years old when I had my first ride on a horse," he said. "I lived on a farm in Petersburg, West Virginia, where we had both horses and bulls, and every time I fell off my daddy would put me back on. I had four brothers and three sisters and we always had a lot of fun on those horses."

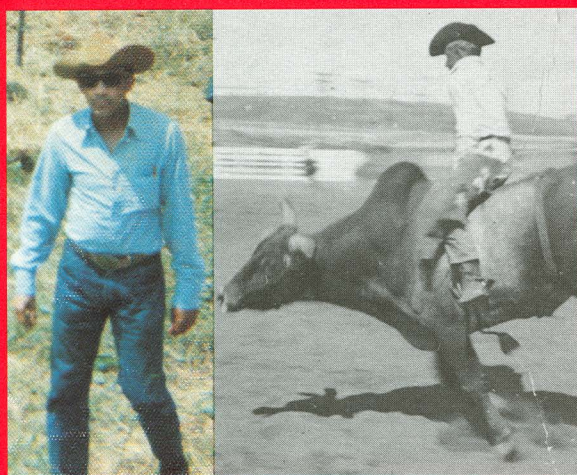
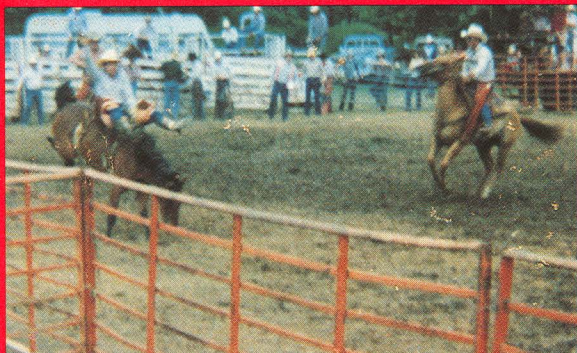
Redman, who retired January 1, 1988 as a Westvaco trucker-loader, was obviously as much at home on a bull as he was on a horse. He took advantage of that contentment by "bucking" his way to a satisfying pastime of more than 15 years as a rider in Wild West shows.

Jake started breaking horses on the farm at the age of 15 and enjoyed it so much that he began to take in Wild West shows when they played at county fairs around the area. "I picked up some pointers by watching those cowboys, but I also felt I could ride as well as most of the ones I saw. I felt I would enjoy it and finally I got up enough nerve to try bareback riding."

He rode in his first Wild West show at Meyersdale, Pennsylvania and was bucked off, meaning he failed to stay on his mount for eight seconds, the time required to be counted as a successful ride. The buckoff didn't discourage him. If anything, it made him eager to continue to ride. And ride, he did!

For the best part of 35 years Jake had a life of "ups and downs" on horses and bulls. He estimates that he rode in 75 Wild West shows as a participant, the last of which came in 1973, when he was 48 years old, at Burton, Ohio. "I stayed the eight seconds that day and that pleased me," he said. "But it was tough. It rained and we had thunder and lightning during the show. How I ever managed to stay eight seconds is still a mystery to me because the hide of a bull gets mighty slippery when it is wet."

Redman admits that a participant in a Wild West show or a sanctioned rodeo takes considerable risks when he mounts a one-and-a-half-ton Brahma bull. "You know darned well that you can get killed in this sport and just about every rider has butterflies in his stomach and sweat in the palms of his hands when he mounts one of those devil animals."



In the top photo, Jake does his eight-second thing aboard a bucking bronc in a July 1958 show at Moundsville, W.Va. At left, Jake walks toward the camera while visiting the Diamonds Rodeo in Bradenton, Florida. This is the perspective Jake had aboard a Brahma bull (right photo).

While Redman frequently left a Wild West show battered and bruised, only once did he suffer a serious injury. That happened at Meyersdale when a bull messed up his arm and kept him out of action for a while. "Getting off a bull after completing your eight seconds is sometimes harder than if you are bucked off," he said. "You get bumped around and you can be in danger of being trampled."

On another riding occasion he broke his ankle. But he was on a horse that time, not a bull, and the incident occurred while he was pleasure riding in Westernport. "I fell off the horse and it fell on me," he recalled.

Redman, who preferred riding bulls, professes to having had a unique bareback style. While riding in the Border Legion show in his hometown of Petersburg, he was impressed by the

manner in which Garr Toolhouse, a full-blooded Indian, handled his mounts. "I couldn't keep my eyes off Garr while he was riding. His style was different; he made everything look so easy and I copied him. Bareback riding was second nature to Indians, you know."

That might explain the mishap Redman had while pleasure riding on his horse at Westernport. A *Century of Sports*, a book compiled by national sports writers of the Associated Press in 1971, told about how a cowboy on the pro rodeo circuit who was considered one of the country's best bareback riders, had such an unusual style that he was not permitted to take part in rodeo parades for fear he would fall off his horse. It was pointed out that he was accustomed to holding onto the bareback-bronc rigging a certain way. "It's not like sittin' on a horse, that's for sure," Redman remarked.

Redman still carries his bareback rigging in the trunk of his car after an absence of 15 years from the Wild West scene. "It looks like a handle on a suitcase," he noted in explaining its purpose. "I held on to this handle with one hand and had to have my spurs over the break of the shoulders when the horse's feet touched the ground on the first jump out of the chute. When I rode bulls I had to tighten these spurs with a screwdriver because of the slippery hide on a Brahma."

Redman's pastime took him throughout West Virginia and into the neighboring states of Pennsylvania and Ohio. "I couldn't venture too far away from home because of my job at Westvaco," he pointed out. "When I retired from the mill I had 42 years and nine months of service."

Jake's favorite state for riding Wild West was Ohio, although most of his appearances took place in his home state of West Virginia. One time, while taking part in a show at Moundsville, the riders were taken on a tour of the West Virginia Penitentiary. "That was a scary place," he commented. "I was happy I wasn't invited to stay; I was glad to walk in one door and out another."

Redman, who dropped out of school at Petersburg after the seventh grade in order to help on the farm, moved to Piedmont in October 1944. On April 18, 1945 he married the former Juanita Washington who presented him with three sons--Terry, William and Timmy--and a daughter, Margaret. They also have three grandchildren. All three sons played high school basketball, Terry and Willie at Piedmont and Timmy at Keyser.

Many persons in the Tri-Towns area aren't aware that Jake's real first name is Roy. And, while Jake isn't quite sure about how he got his nickname, he says he likes it a lot better than Homer, which is his middle name.

Which of those names, he was asked, does Juanita call you? Without blinking an eye, he replied in somewhat prideful fashion, "She just calls me Honey and sometimes Daddy."

Jake, who owned a horse in Piedmont for 18 years, admits that he found his riding hobby quite satisfying. But he does have one regret--not having had an opportunity to ride as a member of the Rodeo Cowboys Association. They are the guys who gamble an entry fee to compete and often wind up with little or no financial reward. Wild West riders, on the other hand, get paid for every mount--win or lose.

There was--and still is--a lot of money to be made in professional rodeo. The sport has become big business, with the National Finals, considered the Rodeo World Series, being held annually in Oklahoma City. The top stars' yearly earnings are in six figures.

The Rodeo Association of America is the governing body of the sport, having been formed in 1928.

"I think I rode well enough to be a winner on the pro circuit," reflects "Daddy" Redman, "but I

had a good job at Westvaco and just didn't want to take that big of a gamble."

"You have to have confidence in yourself in anything you undertake," he continued. "I had that confidence but I had a family to support and couldn't take a chance on missing any paydays."

He apparently fooled a lot of people because some of his friends snickered when he told them that he was going to be a Wild West performer. He weighed only 110 pounds at the time and they considered him too small and therefore not strong enough to conquer a bucking beast.

The sport, as you might have guessed, is still in his blood and his retirement from the mill provides him with the opportunity of traveling to a lot of Wild West shows as a spectator. He subscribes to *Rodeo News*, the sport's official publication, to keep up with all of the bucking going on around the country.

"Daddy" Redman thus is able to do now what he couldn't always do while riding Wild West. There were times then when he would see the world upside down after being flipped from a bucking bull or bronc. Now he finds himself sitting on top of that world. □

The above story was written exclusively for the Luke Mill Report by J. Suter Kegg, retired sports editor of the Cumberland Times-News.