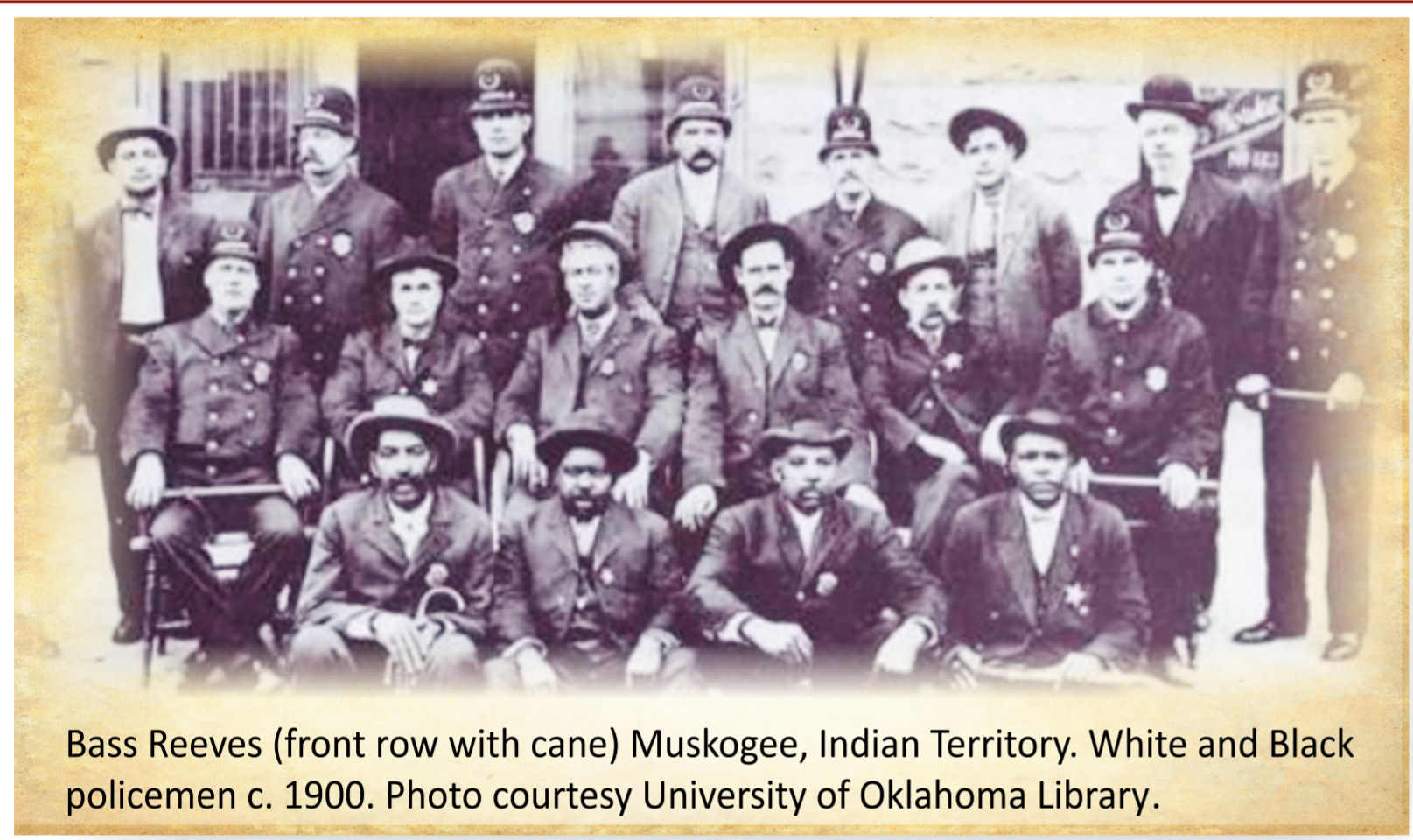


# A Jail by Any Other Name ...

hoosegow, big house, slammer, calaboose, cooler, joint, pen, pokey

In the early 1800s, the Cherokee Nation law provided for a company of light horse, consisting of six men, one captain, one lieutenant and four privates. These men were charged with carrying out the law. They determined the innocence or guilt of every person, and when there was no precedent or custom to fit the case, they made one, and administered the punishment right on the spot where they captured the person.



Bass Reeves (front row with cane) Muskogee, Indian Territory. White and Black policemen c. 1900. Photo courtesy University of Oklahoma Library.

**Deputy U.S. Marshal Bass Reeves**, born as a slave in Arkansas Territory, grew up in Texas, where he belonged to Col. George R. Reeves. As a young man Bass Reeves escaped north into the Indian Territory, and he became acquainted with the Cherokee, Creek and Seminole.

It is believed he served as a soldier with the Union Indian Home Guard Regiments during the Civil War. After the war Reeves settled down in Van Buren, Arkansas, as a farmer. On occasion he would serve as a guide for deputy U.S. marshals working out of the federal court at Fort Smith, Arkansas. As a result of his skills and knowledge of Indian Territory, he made substantial money as a scout and tracker. In 1875, when Judge Isaac C. Parker took over the Fort Smith federal court, Parker commissioned Reeves as a deputy U.S. marshal. He is believed to be one of the earliest African Americans to be appointed as a deputy U.S. marshal west of the Mississippi River.

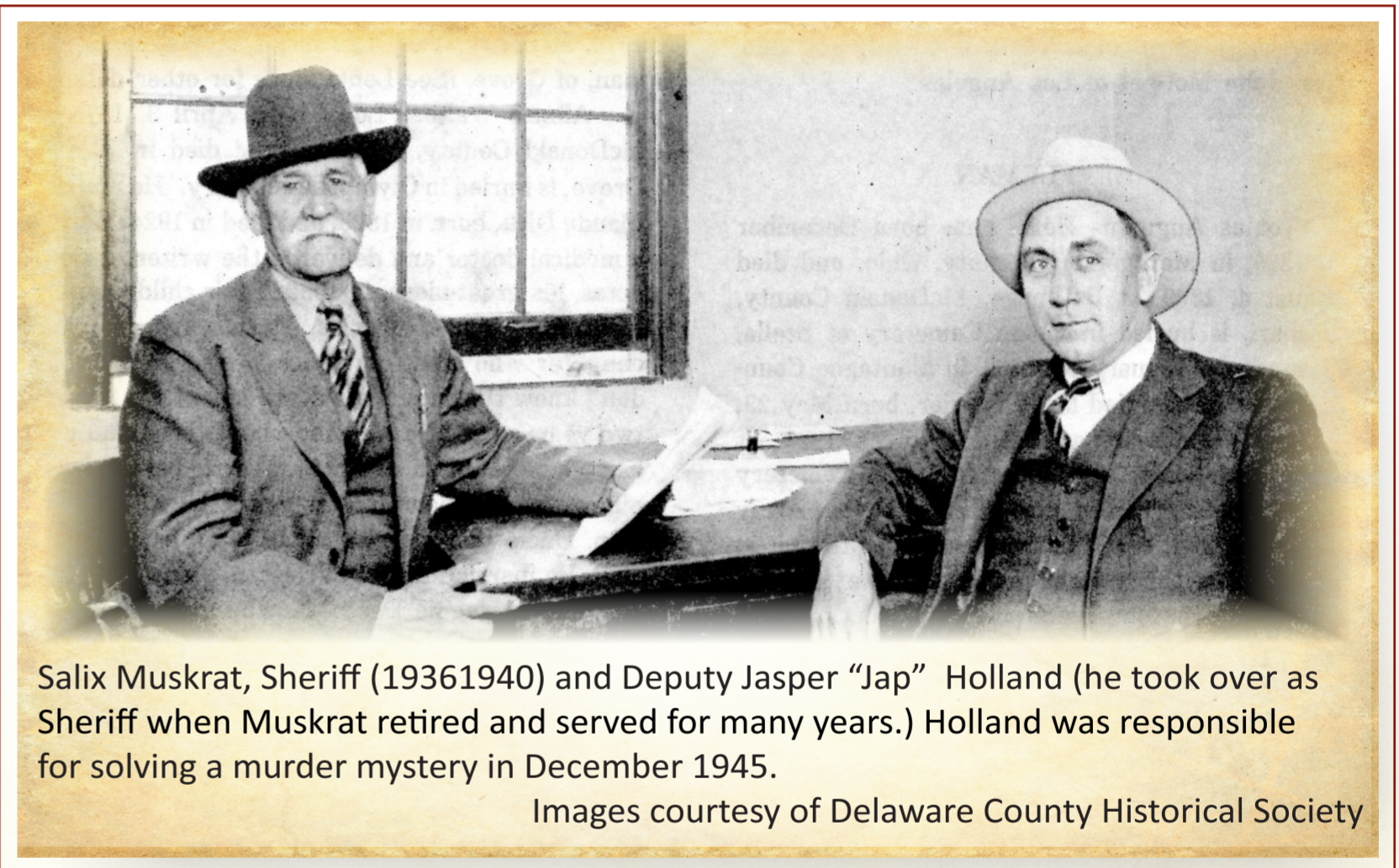


Reeves, standing six feet, two inches tall and weighing 180 pounds, became a celebrity during his lifetime in the Indian Territory. Muskogee Police Chief Bud Ledbetter said about him, "The veteran Negro deputy never quailed in facing any man." Reeves became an expert with pistol and rifle. Territorial newspapers stated that he killed fourteen outlaws during his career as a peace officer. The greatest testimony to his devotion to duty was the fact he brought his own son in for murder once he received the warrant.

SHERIFF AND CONSTABLE FEES	
CIVIL AND CRIMINAL	
31-13	
For serving and returning any writ, order, process or notice	Posting each notice .10
(a) First person .50	Executing any order or command not otherwise provided for .50
(b) For each additional person .25	For advertising property for sale 1.00
For serving warrant for collection of delinquent taxes on personal property, provided the county shall not be liable for such fees or mileage 1.00	For each mile actually and necessarily traveled in his county in serving or endeavoring to serve any writ, warrant, order, process or command, or in pursuing any fugitive from justice *.10
For making arrest of each person on warrant, or as peace officer 1.00	Commission for collecting money on sale
Executing any writ or attachment, execution or order of sale 1.00	(a) First \$300.00 3%
For making and certifying to copy of any process .25	(b) Next \$200.00 2%
Summoning appraisers and appraising property	(c) All in excess of \$500.00 1%
(a) When value is \$1,000.00 or less 1.00	One-half of foregoing rates on collections without sale.
(b) When value is over \$1,000.00 2.00	For board of each prisoner up to 5, not to exceed per day 1.00
Making return "no property found" .25	For each prisoner above 5 and not more than 20 per day .85
Taking and approving an undertaking 1.00	For each prisoner above 10, not to exceed per day while in custody and care of sheriff .60
Selling and offering for sale any property 1.00	
Taking inventory of personal property, each day 1.50	
Summoning talesmen, each day .10	
Attending any court not of record, per day 1.00	
Executing writ of habeas corpus .50	

\*This fee when collected by the sheriff, is deposited to the credit of the general fund. The sheriff may then be paid 7½ cents per mile by the County as provided by Statute.

## Delaware County



Salix Muskrat, Sheriff (1936-1940) and Deputy Jasper "Jap" Holland (he took over as Sheriff when Muskrat retired and served for many years.) Holland was responsible for solving a murder mystery in December 1945.

Images courtesy of Delaware County Historical Society

During Indian Territory days, the first Grove ordinance to provide for a town marshal was dated April 16, 1897. Also approved was 15¢ per meal for the town marshal to supply good wholesome food for prisoners. At first, the town marshal received \$10 per month, and his job included the removal of dead animals and street repairs.

*I remember the old county jail on Grand between Third and Fourth before the county seat was moved to Jay and the ball and chains they used to use on the prisoners working the streets.*

John Elmo Pace, Grove