

Robert Jennings, A Cal Hayes story

I ran into Cal a few times when I was working for Ron Warner. About the second year that I was working for Holiday On Horseback I was coming out from what they call a 'moving trip'. The way moving trips worked was that we'd start the trip at one area and end it at a different area. So this one trip finished up at the Ya Ha Tinda (Bighorn Campground). Generally the trips were set up back-to-back so usually you'd pick up another group of tourists and make the trip in the reverse. But this particular time there was no booking for a return trip. So this meant that the horses had to be hauled back to Banff. At the time, all Ron had to haul with was a 3-ton truck so we needed a loading ramp and the only ramp available at the time was at the ranch buildings. Anyways, I was with the cook and the pack mules and I was ahead of the guests and the guide. The Holiday On Horseback office in Banff had told me when you get to the Ya Ha Tinda Ranch just ride up to the buildings (and someone will pick you and the horses up) and we will let Cal know you are coming. And it should not have been a big deal.

But I guess someone forgot to phone Cal, or someone was playing a joke on me, because Cal had quite a reputation. Anyways I just rode up there, brazen as all



heck and I rode through the gate and led this string of pack mules into the yard with the cook behind me and I rode right up to the barn. There was nobody around that I could see. I was looking around to see if I could see anyone and started to step down off my horse to tie my animals up to the fence. Suddenly I hear this big bellow. "Hey you! Get up here! Bring those jackasses with you!" So, I rode up the hill to his little house there and Cal proceeded to tear a strip off me. I never got a word in edgewise. Finally, he asked me what I was doing there and I told him. He said, "Nobody called me about it. When are they coming and who is coming?" I told him, Lee Robinson. "Oh yeah, that guy." So, he says, "Okay, let's take them down to the barn." So, we take all these mules down to the barn and he had me bring them all into the barn. We unpacked them inside the barn and put them all in stalls. Cal gave them some oats and all this kind of stuff and just about the time we were finishing up, I could see the dust coming and it was Lee coming with the truck. The guide still was not there with the tourists. Cal said, "Come on." And he took us into the bunkhouse and then he said, "Now you stay in here." And he closed up the barn doors and we sat in the cabin looking out the window watching Lee get lined up on the loading ramp. Lee did not think we were there yet as there were no animals visible in the yard. So he backed up to the loading ramp. Cal waited until Lee was almost backed in there and then he hollered "Hey you in the red truck! What the hell do you think you are doing?"

And proceed to give Lee the same lecture he had gave me. So it was quite entertaining. Then, after that Cal kind of knew what the schedule was and he'd usually end up coming down to the staging area for a visit.