

1: Mabel Stark - Wikipedia

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She worked with the animals from to , was mauled many times, and kept coming back for more, even into her old age. Most sources agree she was born in Kentucky with the name Mary Haynie, although she said at least once that she was born in Canada. Her birthdate varied, but appears to be around She was an only child or one of seven, and her parents died within the same month or two years apart when she was 11 or 13 or We know that she was trained as a nurse before she joined a circus as a hoochie-coochie dancer somewhere around But Stark later claimed she went straight from nursing school to the Al G. Barnes Circus in to become an animal trainer. No one starts out in the circus as a tiger tamer, however. Stark was assigned to riding horses, which she hated. She wanted to work with tigers, the most dangerous animal in the circus. Roth would have preferred for Stark to work with lions, but she insisted on tigers. Roth advocated training big cats by rewarding them with meat , as opposed to just beating them into submission as earlier trainers did. In other words, Roth used the carrot and the stick instead of just the stick. Stark took in a sickly tiger cub that was rejected by his mother and raised him by hand. Rajah became instrumental in making Stark a star. She developed a shocking signature act in which she wrestled Rajah, causing the audience to believe she was being mauled. She admitted years later that Rajah was actually relieving himself sexually during this act, which looks very much like a vicious attack to anyone not familiar with tiger behavior. Stark started wearing a white uniform at this time so that the audience would not see tiger semen. The white costume became her signature, which she used for the rest of her career. By then Stark had divorced Roth and was a star act. Ringling chiefs claimed that the cage took too long to assemble and tear down during a performance. Stark was still under contract, though, and was assigned to a horse act. Mabel later claimed that she married her first husbands for practical reasons, but she fell in love with Rooney. They soon married, which surprised other circus employees because Rooney wore makeup and nail polish, and they assumed he was not the marrying kind. Rooney died soon after under circumstances that were not recorded. Stark was touring with the John Robinson Company when she was badly injured in The circus train was late getting to the venue in Bangor, Maine, the tigers were getting wet in the rain, and there was no time to feed them before the show. Normally, a cat act would be delayed or cancelled for this reason. But Stark let the show go on. Two hungry tigers named Sheik and Zoo mauled her during the show. I could feel blood pouring into both my boots, but I was determined to go through with the act. Zoo jumped from his pedestal and seized my right leg, jerking me to the ground. As I fell, Sheik struck out with one paw, catching the side of my head, almost scalping me. Zoo gave a deep growl and bit my leg again. He gave it a shake, and planting both forefeet with his claws deep in my flesh, started to chew. I wondered into how many pieces I would be torn. Most of all I was concerned for the audience. I knew it would be a horrible sight if my body was torn apart before their eyes. And all my tigers would be branded as murderers and sentenced to spend the rest of their lives in narrow cages instead of being allowed the freedom of the big arena and the pleasure of working. That thought gave me strength to fight. Doctors sewed muscles and skin back together with stitches, but did not expect her to survive. She was back to work within a few weeks, although the injuries troubled her and she was in and out of hospitals several times over the next two years for further muscle repair. That was only the first of three serious maulings Stark suffered. In , during a show featuring 18 tigers, one bit through her arm. She finished her act with the arm hanging limp before seeking medical attention. In , Stark survived her third serious mauling , when her right arm was so mangled that it required stitches. Once again, she recovered. But those were just the "severe" maulings -Mabel Stark had many other incidents in which she was injured by a big cat throughout her career. She always blamed herself, or other factors, but never the tigers. She loved them and respected them, but also said there was no such thing as a "tame tiger. She appeared with various circuses through the s. It later became a theme park, and Mabel Stark went to work there in , eventually on a permanent basis. During her 30 years at Jungleland, she also found time to take her tiger act on the road to Europe and Japan. And she got married for the last time. Her fourth or possibly fifth husband was menagerie keeper Ed Trees, who died in The new owner in did not

like Stark, and fired her. The year-old tiger tamer did not want to retire. The loss of her job, combined with an incident in which one of her tigers escaped and was killed, sent her into despair. Mabel Stark took an overdose of barbiturates, and was found dead by her housekeeper on April 20, According to her autobiography *Hold That Tiger*, Stark would have preferred to die at the hands of a tiger than by any other means, but it was not to be. She had already survived that fate.

2: At Close Range by Smith, Francis Hopkinson, online reading at www.enganchecubano.com

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3: Signet Classics

THE SIGNET CLASSIC BOOK OF AMERICAN SHORT STORIES Introduction by the editor *The Specter Bridegroom*, Irving; *Young Goodman Brown*, Hawthorne; *The Gold Bug*, Poe; *Bartleby the Scrivener*, Melville; *Miss Asphyxia*, Stowe; *The Iliad of Sandy Bar*, Harte; *Who Was She?*, Bayard Taylor; *Grit*, Rose TerryCooke; *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge*, Bierce; *The*.

Biography[edit] Stark was born in Kentucky. She was one of seven children born to Lela and Hardy Haynie. She spent a short period of time with her aunt in Princeton. She then traveled to Louisville and became a nurse at St. Soon after, she left Louisville and her history becomes difficult to trace. Circus friends contend that she worked in carnivals as a "dancer" of some type. Like many circus performers, Stark did not hesitate to enrich the truth to create an interesting story. She even once told an interviewer that she was born to a wealthy Canadian. She ended up in with the Al G. She began work with Louis Roth , a famous "cat man" who she would later marry. Stark was married 4 or 5 times Soon, she became a tiger trainer in the ring. At first, they had her work a "balloon act" which had her "riding" a lion on a platform and then pressing a pedal to release fireworks at some point in the act. Roth had also been mauled earlier that same day by a lion named Jeff. Mabel Stark was dragged unconscious from the cage and rushed to a hospital where she was treated for a mangled and broken arm. In , while in Detroit, Michigan, she was attacked by her leopards during a parade, and during the winter of she was mangled in Venice, California. She accomplished this by romping and playing with the cub at the beach and actually keeping him as a pet in her apartment. Up he went on his hind legs, his forefeet around my neck. We turned around once or twice, I threw him to the ground, and we rolled three or four times. I opened his mouth and put my face inside, then jumped to my feet. In , she starred in the Ringling center ring, but two years later in , the circus banned all wild animal acts. After a sojourn to Europe where she performed in a circus, she came back to the U. In Bangor, Maine , she lost her footing in a muddy arena and was seriously mauled by her tigers. She would suffer a wound that almost severed her leg, face lacerations, a hole in her shoulder, a torn deltoid muscle and a host of other injuries. She was rescued by fellow trainer, Terrell Jacobs, and returned to the ring in a matter of weeks, swathed in bandages and walking with a cane. She suffered numerous maulings and serious injury over her nearly 60 years of working with tigers. At one point in her career, she would face 18 big cats in the ring. She performed with the Sells-Floto Circus in and then rejoined Barnes, after it had been sold to Ringling, in and stayed there until it was absorbed into Ringling Bros. In she and her tiger act was filmed for the Paramount Pictures motion picture *King of the Jungle* film. In the film Stark is seen putting her tigers through their paces when fire erupts in the big top. Stark appeared occasionally on television in the s. In *Jungleland* was sold to a new owner who disliked Stark and fired her. Three months later, she killed herself by an overdose of barbiturates. In the last pages of her autobiography, *Hold That Tiger*, Stark writes: It is a fictionalized account of the events of her life. The screenplay was optioned by director Sam Mendes with the hopes of making a film starring his wife Kate Winslet , however no production schedule has been announced.

4: DelRoy Smith Obituary - Bangor, PA | The Express Times

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