

## Tick War <sup>[1]</sup>

# Tick War

by H. G. Jones, 2006

The "Tick War" was a term that newspaperman [Ben Dixon MacNeill](#) <sup>[2]</sup> applied to a controversy on Hatteras and Ocracoke Islands following passage by the [General Assembly](#) <sup>[3]</sup> in 1919 of an act requiring that cattle and [horses](#) <sup>[4]</sup> be disinfected as a precaution against tuberculosis and glanders, respectively. The law was not especially burdensome on mainland farms with fenced-in [livestock](#) <sup>[5]</sup>, but on the Outer Banks, where cows and horses ranged freely, it was more troublesome. The independent-minded inhabitants of the Outer Banks looked on incredulously when state and federal employees-called "tick doctors" by the local residents-arrived on Hatteras and Ocracoke and began building concrete vats in which horses and cattle were to be dipped. Government officials were puzzled over the relatively small number of animals brought to be disinfected, and the matter got out of hand when some of the vats were mysteriously blown up at night. When news of the problem reached inland, MacNeill was sent by the [Raleigh News and Observer](#) <sup>[6]</sup> to Ocracoke, from where he wired tongue-in-cheek stories about the Tick War. Only after the officials gave up and left the islands were "upwards of 200 cattle and as many horses" led from the marshes, where they had been hidden from the "tick doctors."

### Reference:

H. G. Jones, "Outer Bankers of North Carolina Won 'Tick War,'" *Washington Daily News*, 1 Feb. 1978.

### Additional Resources:

Jones, H.G./Associated Press. "Outer Bankers Waged a 'Tick War'." *The Dispatch* [Lexington, N.C.]. February 2, 1978. <http://news.google.com/newspapers?id=2FlqAAAAIABJ&sjid=j1EEAAAAIABJ&pg=6708%2C3047555> <sup>[7]</sup> (accessed August 21, 2012).

"Chapter 62: An Act Concerning Compensation for Cattle Killed on Account of Tuberculosis and for Horses and Mules Killed on Account of Glanders." *Public laws and resolutions of the State of North Carolina passed by the General Assembly at its session of 1919*. Raleigh, N.C.: Commercial Printing Company. 1919. p. 80-82. <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/Documents/Detail/public-laws-and-resolutions-of-the-state-of-north-carolina-passed-by-the-general-assembly-at-its-session-of-...1919/1956455?item=2105987> <sup>[8]</sup> (accessed August 21, 2012)

### Subjects:

[Farmers](#) <sup>[9]</sup>

[N.C. Industrial Revolution \(1900-1929\)](#) <sup>[10]</sup>

[Politics and government](#) <sup>[11]</sup>

[Public health](#) <sup>[12]</sup>

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### Origin - location:

[Dare County](#) <sup>[14]</sup>

[Hyde County](#) <sup>[15]</sup>

### From:

[Encyclopedia of North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press.](#) <sup>[16]</sup>

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### Links

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