ELFEGO BACA'S COWBOY STANDOFF

September, 2000

TRUE WEST

NO BULL

SINCE 1953

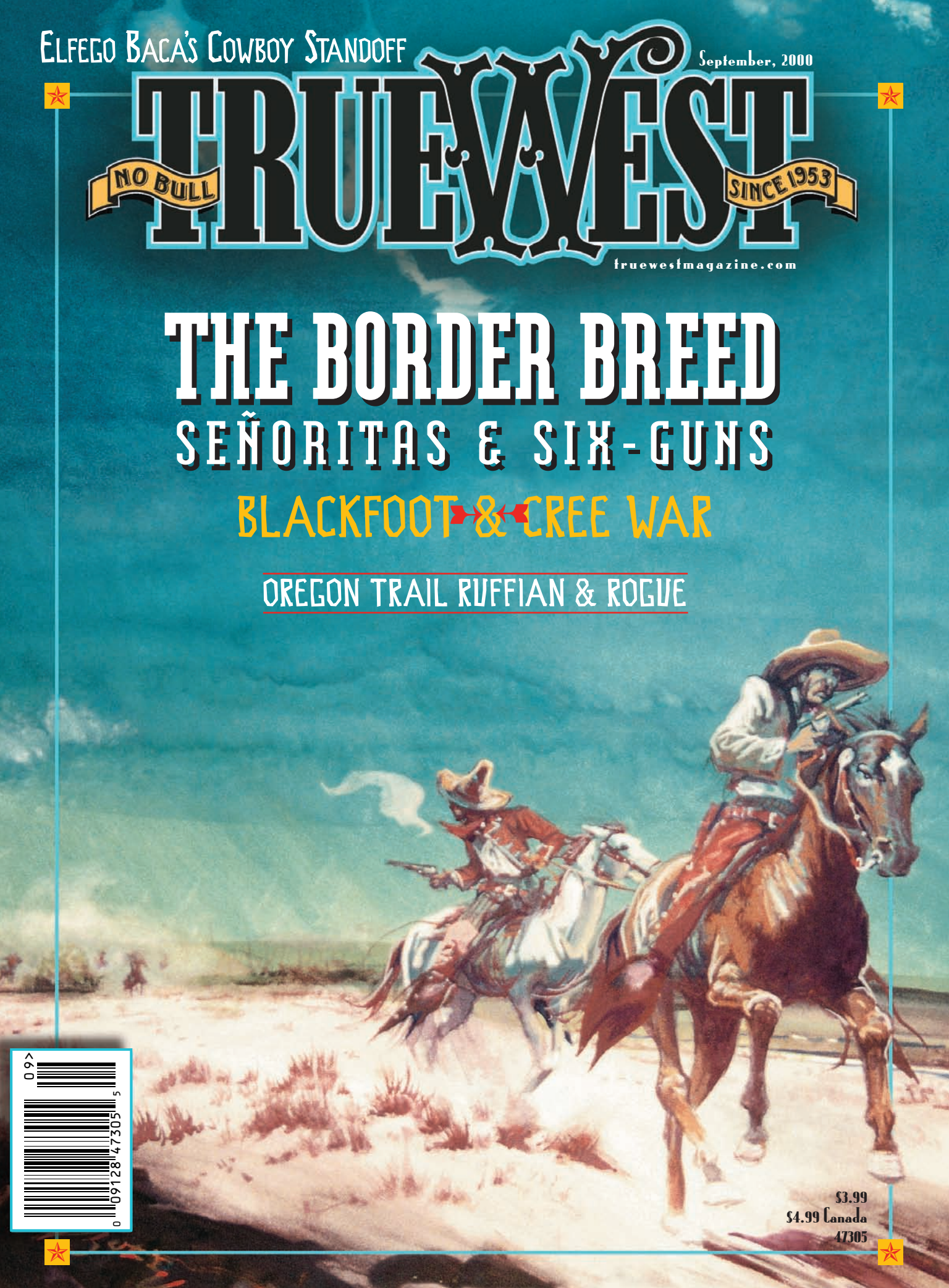
truewestmagazine.com

THE BORDER BREED

SEÑORITAS & SIX-GUNS

BLACKFOOT & CREE WAR

OREGON TRAIL RUFFIAN & ROGUE



$3.99
$4.99 Canada
47305

10th Anniversary

California Bluegrass & Cowboy Music Festival

Sons of the San Joaquin

Featuring:

The Best In Bluegrass:

★IIIrd Tyme Out ★
★Dry Branch Fire Squad ★
★Reno Brothers ★
★U.S. Navy Band ★
★Lynn Morris ★
★The Front Range ★
★Lost Highway ★
★The Grasshoppers ★
★ Within Tradition ★
★The Sawtooth Mt. Boys ★
★ The Bladerunners ★
★Great Northern Planes ★
★Frontline ★
★Bill Evans ★Youth on Stage ★

Cowboy Music With:

★Sons of the San Joaquin ★
★Lone Prarie ★
★Steve Blanchard and more ★

Cowboy Poetry With:

★Waddie Mitchell and more

Plus Country Music Legend
★Merle Haggard ★
Thursday Night Only

September 21-24

Amador County Fairgrounds, Plymouth CA

Camping included with all 2,3, and 4-day passes. Single day passes available.

Activities included: Main stage entertainment all day, all four days; authentic trail camp with cowboy music around the camp fire nightly; craft fair; youghth music camp; wine tasting,;workshops with the headliners; cooking contests; contest for best decorated camp site.

Discount Tickets Available Now!
Call: 503-261-9887 or 503-408-7692

On line at: http://www.greatmusicfestivals.com

An unidentified Mexicano border character, nattily dressed and heavily armed. Note the ornate south-of-the-border Slim Jim holster.
-R.G. McCUBBIN COLLECTION-

We at Texas Jack's are outfitters of the Wild Old West, heirs to seven generations of proud frontier tradition. Our headquarters are located deep in the heart of Texas hill country, and we take our name from John "Texas Jack" Omohundro, consumate plainsman and contemporary of Buffalo Bill Cody.

We cater to the cowboy trade and to those folks all around the world who identify with the vitality and romance of the West.

FEATURING:

- **Men's and Women's Duds**
- **Vests, Coats, and Shirts**
- **Accessories and Equipment**
- **Hats, Hats, & More Hats**
- **Cowboy Essentials**
- **Arbuckles Coffee**

Visit our online catalog at

WWW.TEXASJACKS.COM

Our store abounds with more than 5,000 feet of 1870s cowboy gear, both new and original. Elk, bear, antelope, and buffalo mounts adorn the walls as much as

would be found in an 1880s merchantile. The store is housed in the old livery stable and forge originally constructed in 1889, and once served as a stop for the San Antonio - Llano stage. Drop in and visit in person, or at our home on the Web. We will do our best to make sure you feel right at home.

www.texasjacks.com

TEXAS JACK'S

OUTFITTERS

117 NORTH ADAMS STREET
FREDERICKSBURG, TX 78624

ORDER TOLL FREE:

800-TEX-JACK

FAX: 830-997-6074

September 2000 · Volume 47 · Issue 9

TRUE WEST
NO BULL SINCE 1953

FEATURES

DEPARTMENTS

Our Cover

BORDER BREAK
By Bob Boze Bell

This page:
Elfego Baca's Reserve, New Mexico, jacal hideout. (See related story, page 28.)

TRUE WEST
NO BULL SINCE 1953

Founder
Joe Austell Small
1914-1994

Publishers
Robert G. McCubbin
Richard O. Baish

Executive Editor
Bob Boze Bell

Editor
Marcus J. Huff

General Manager
Carole Compton Glenn

Production Director
Robert Ray

Art Director
Daniel Harshberger

Map Department
Gus Walker

Barbed Wire Press Editor
Frederick Nolan

Contributing Editors
John Boessenecker, Leon C. Metz, Robert K. DeArment, Glenn Shirley, Drew Gomber William Secrest, Richard H. Dillon, Dan Buck & Anne Meadows, Allen Barra, Sherry Monahan, Marshall Trimble

Contributing Artists
Al Napoletano, Gary Zaboly, Sparky Moore, Richard Ignarski, Michael Nunnally, Graham Ward, Larry Willis

Photo Editor
Craig A. Fouts

Marketing Director
Allen D. Fossenkemper

Circulation Consultant
John Dupre

Editorial Assistant
Betty A. Mitchell

Circulation Manager
DeAnne Giago

National Advertising Manager
Brian Minson
(602) 421-1219

Advertising Representative
Jeff Morey
(480) 575-1876
Deena Bell
(480) 575-1876

Resident Punk
Jesse Adams

September 2000, Vol. 47, #9, Whole #388. TRUE WEST (ISSN 0041-3615) is published monthly by True West Publishing, L.L.C., 38012 N. Linda Dr., Cave Creek, AZ 85331. (480) 575-1881. Periodical postage paid at Cave Creek, AZ 85327, and at additional mailing offices. Canadian GST Registration Number R132182866.

Single copies: $3.99. U.S. subscription rate is $28.00 per year (12 issues); $50 for two years (24 issues). To subscribe or for back issue information, reach us at 1-888-687-1881 or visit www.truewestmagazine.com.

POSTMASTER: Please send address change to: TRUE WEST, P.O. Box 8008, Cave Creek, AZ 85327. Printed in the United States of America.

TO THE POINT

THE THIN RED, WHITE & BLUE LINE

There's something about the border…not magical mind you, but something. Crossing it can mean hope for some, despair for others. It seems like its always been that way.

In the 19th century the border between the southwest states and Mexico was a wild and fearsome place; Texans and Mexicans alike skirted back and across, stealing one another's cattle. Up north, whiskey was brought across to satisfy the thirsty in Montana and the Dakotas; when things got too wild and the government came down hard, the Sioux used those same liquor routes to escape into the Canadian wilds. The border breed were, and still are to some extent, a tough lot. The hardest of characters could be found with one toe on the line.

Not much has changed. Down along the Mexico line, the drug trade has escalated the need for tough law and tougher men to enforce it. The Border Patrol has suffered astounding casualties at the hands of drug traffickers. Up along the cooler border of Canada, foreign terrorists have been caught using the relaxed gateway to the U.S. as a pipeline for their own brand of chaos.

Like I said, not much has changed. Although men like John Wesley Hardin and John Selman have long since passed, their methodology, and menace, remain.

In this issue, we are going to take a look back at the threats, the predators, and the prey along the frontier Borderlands.

Marcus Huff
Editor

The New Kid in Town.

OLD WEST journal

From the publishers of *True West* magazine, a contemporary take on the Old West.

Available at newsstands and by subscription for $16.00 per year. For faster service & credit card orders, call toll-free

1-888-687-1881

In The Next Issue:

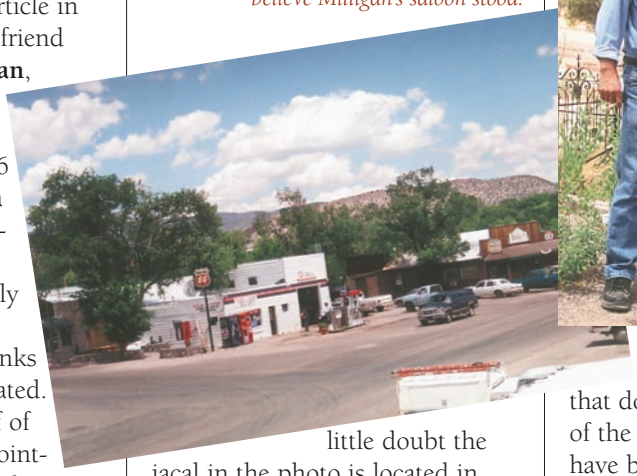
- **Little Bighorn-of-plenty**
  A look at the history, the tourist traps, and the films spawned by Custer's doomed meeting with Crazy Horse.
- **Dressed to Kill**
  The gun-slinging, powder-spewing, chap-wearing sport of Single Action Shooting up close and personal.
- **Silver Bullets & Screens**
  The 25 most important westerns ever made, and why we think so. Plus, exclusive interviews.

Old West Journal
P.O. Box 8008 • Cave Creek • Arizona 85327

truewestmagazine.com

DUCKING BULLETS

We traveled to western New Mexico in June to do some scouting for the Elfego Baca article in this issue.Thanks to our friend and writer, **Howard Bryan**, we were put in contact with **Henry Martinez**, who owns the Phillips 66 gas station and Grandma T's cafe at the main intersection in Reserve (at right). Martinez graciously gave us the grand tour, showing us where he thinks the famous jacal was located. Taking us up on the roof of the hardware store, he pointed out two landmarks, a distant peak and a long mesa off to the right of it (photo, opposite page). Both match perfectly with the only known photo of the jacal, taken in the 1920s. This leaves little doubt the jacal in the photo is located in Upper Plaza (see the original photo on page 32 and compare the butte, just behind the roof line, and the mesa, off to the right, to the photo on this page). Of course, that doesn't mean the photo is of the original jacal. It would have been 40-some-years-old by that time (not a very realistic lifetime for wooden posts and mud). Martinez, who's related to **Epitacio Martinez**, the man used for target prac-



Henry Martinez (right), *at Epitacio's grave, and the intersection in Reserve where some believe Milligan's saloon stood.*

tice by the cowboys prior to Elfego's arrival on the scene, took us to the grave of Epitacio at Middle Plaza.

Martinez, who also treated us to some great Mexican food at **Antonia's**, is trying to locate the exact site of the jacal so a monument can be place there. Locals are confused about the location, with many erroneously believing it was in Middle Plaza (a common error considering the "One, two, three" gunfight took place there and the subsequent testimony is very confusing). If the site of Milligan's saloon can be located, the Baca jacal would be relatively easy to find. Old-timers have placed Milligan's north of Grandma T's and across the street at Uncle Bill's Bar. Martinez is trying to get the state involved to find early deed or Platte map records, but, so far none have surfaced. If you would like to get involved with this important research, call Henry Martinez at (505) 533-6276…

…Another direct descendant in this fracas, **Charlie McCarty** (named for his grandfather, the original Charlie McCarty), also of Reserve, NM, begrudgingly talked to us on June 27th about this grandfather's role in the infamous Elfego Baca story (see page 28). Reached by phone at his rural hardware store—Charlie's Supply—McCarty, 60, told us, "if you want to talk about something important, like wolves or **Bill Clinton's** War on the West, I'll talk to you for two hours, but I don't know what there is to say about that tired ol' Baca story." After coaxing him a bit, he admitted there is a color photograph of his grandfather taken late in life (no known photos of McCarty have ever been published). But he quickly added he didn't know if he could find it. He also belittled many of the "myths" surrounding the Elfego story, among other things, denying the "race war" aspect that always gets prominently mentioned. We tried to be sympathetic to his obvious reticence to discuss such a prominent Southwestern fable in which his grandfather is portrayed as "The Bad Guy" every time.

Finally, Charlie, perhaps feeling a bit sorry for us, told the following family anecdote, which he assured us has never been published: "I had an uncle, born in the 1890s, who told me Granddad [Charlie McCarty, senior] was up at Magdalena in the thirties when he ran into Elfego Baca on the street. Of course, both of them were old men by then, and instead of another confrontation, the two got to talking and trading stories, and they eventually retired into the bar and drank and laughed until they both fell off their bar stools." Now there's a conversation we would kill to hear.

TRUELY WESTERN

'Til Death Do Us Part

Reading your letters page (July, 2000), it sounds like you have some readers who would prefer the magazine die with them.

JIM LARKIN
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Allow me to wade into your debate on the new look of *True West*. Most of it is great. The paper is top-class and when I pick up a previous issue, I can instantly feel the weight difference. The cover look is excellent and the change in pace is invigorating. I'm not too sure about some of the modern fluoro type colors though. I did like the gray look as I kinda thought I was reading an old magazine. I know, I know. You have to update or else you'll only be selling it to old farts like me who will die and leave you no customers. That's why I'm not complaining about it, just letting you know. PLEASE DON'T STOP the historical content though, it is the reason I buy it.

STUART SUISTED
PALMERSTON NORTH, NEW ZEALAND

Tangled Up In True

Any magazine that quotes from the *Good, the Bad and the Ugly,* and compares a picture of a prostitute to Bob Dylan is doing something right! Obviously, you're having fun.

KEN WESTERN
PHOENIX, ARIZONA

A Turnaround

I received the June issue of *True West* today. I've complained about a number of things in previous issues, but I'm very happy with the June issue: it's absolutely first class with none of the problems I saw before; the articles are interesting with a great selection of photos (and no fake ones either!). I haven't read all the articles but I trust the typographical and grammatical errors of recent issues have also been cleaned up. The advertisements have been integrated nicely without being overwhelming.

BERND MARTENS
CALGARY, CANADA

I have been a *TW* reader for many years like lots of other folks. I am certainly not capable of critiquing anything (not that smart) however I want to congratulate you on the new *TW,* and express my pleasure in your great success and good fortune.
I cannot speak for those wonderfully gifted, but just to let you know that from a guy

uneducated and aging rapidly, what you are doing with the new format is bringing a whole lot of pleasure, good pastime and tranquillity to those of us that have admired and loved the history of the American west. The interview with Richard Farnsworth by Drew Gomber in the March issue was outstanding.

ROGER WOLF
VIA E-MAIL

As a subscriber for over 30 years, I've got to tell you that the new format is the best. I like all the new photos on the better quality paper. It is easier to read and I see no loss to the quantity and quality. Some people just can't accept change. Keep it coming.

RICHARD PETRETTI
NAPA, CALIFORNIA

THE ORIGINAL KID ROCK

Out of all the infamous outlaws depicted from the old west, Billy the Kid has remained the most elusive in the revealing of his life. Enjoyed the article "The Private Life of Billy the Kid" (July, 2000). As there are groupies who enjoy the company of sports stars, movie stars and rock stars, there must have been groupies for outlaws back in those trying days. Billy, the sly snake that he was, befriended Charles Bowdre and most likely had a secret affair with his wife. The history of Billy the Kid is slowly becoming more revealing thanks to your publication!

I also enjoyed "Classic Gunfights: Wyatt Earp vs. Curly Bill" and am looking forward to more of the same.

PAUL DALE ROBERTS
ELK GROVE, CALIFORNIA

Speaking of change, we are trying out a better grade of paper this issue. Do you like it?

We welcome your thoughts. Address all letters to True West, PO Box 8008, Cave Creek, AZ 85327, or e-mail us at editor@truewestmagazine.com. Please include your name, address, and daytime phone number. Letters may be edited for content.

Western Pow

Places to go, things to see and stuff to do associated with Old West history.

AUGUST

Aug. 3-5 **7th Annual Buffalo Bill Celebrity Shootout:** Cody, Wyoming. Celebrities join locals in shooting competitions. Cody Shooting Complex. **Information:** 307 578-4032.

Aug. 4-6 **Oregon Jamboree:** Sweet Home, OR. The largest country music and camping event in the state attracts new music artists as well as traditionalists like Merle Haggard. This year's Jamboree features LeAnne Rhymes, Dwight Yoakum, Sawyer Brown and others. RV hook-ups, tent space and arts and crafts booths are available. **Information:** 541-367-8909.

Aug. 17 **World's Oldest Continuous PRCA Rodeo:** Payson, AZ. Named The number one small outdoor rodeo in America, the Payson Rodeo has been held continuously since 1884. **Information:** 800-672-9766.

Aug. 17-19 **Arizona Cowboy Poetry Gathering:** Prescott, AZ. Blend of traditional and contemporary songs, stories and poems of the Old West. More than 100 people present their works and keep alive the working cowboy's oral tradition. **Information:** 520-445-3122.

Aug. 17-20 **Oregon Bluegrass and Cowboy Music Festival:** Odell, OR. The festival, held in the picturesque Hood River Valley, features a cowboy trail camp, craft fair, wine tasting, youth music camp, workshops, kid's activities, food, Special Olympics Fund raiser. Music performers include Rider in the Sky, Larry Cordle & Lonesome Standard Time, Don Edwards, Bluegrass Etc., and Lost Hwy. **Information:** 503-261-9887.

Aug. 18-19 **North American Jew's Harp Festival:** Baker City, OR. This festive event is for all musicians but has a special emphasis on Jew's harps and other unusual musical instruments. Musicians are welcome to attend and participate. The atmosphere is relaxed and casual—with lots of friendly "jamming", sharing and learning. **Information:** 541-894-2345

Aug. 18-19 **Texas Ranch Roundup:** Wichita Falls, TX. Cowboys from prestigious Texas ranches compete in cattle roping, penning and other rodeo-type events, plus cooking and talent contests. **Information:** 800-799-6732.

Aug. 18-23 **19th Annual Buffalo Bill Art Show and Sale:** Cody, WY. Western artists display works in live and silent auction, and Quick Draw on Saturday. **Information:** 888-598-8119.

Aug. 25-Sept. 4 **Nebraska State Fair:** Lincoln, NE. Besides celebrity entertainment, there are arts and crafts festivals, exciting circus acts, a children's fun farm, midway rides and, of course, livestock displays from farms and ranches throughout the state. Grandstand events include a demolition derby, rodeos, car races, various tractor pulls and an ostrich racing show. Other exhibits include fine arts, food and fashion displays. **Information:** 402-473-4109

Aug 27-Sept. 3 **Mountain Man Rendezvous and Living History Days:** Angel Fire, NM. Check out the authentic primitive camps, black powder shooting matches, the 1800s period dress contests, the knife and tomahawk throwing matches, cowboy shooting matches, barn dance, music and merrymaking. Plus, there's a community pancake breakfast and a Mountain Man parade. **Information:** 505-377-600

Roar of the Sixguns...Battle of the Hombres features dynamic and exciting paintings and sketches created to be the covers of old western and detective pulp magazines. Opens with reception October 19, 6-9p.m. and runs through April 30, 2001, at the Mayer Gallery, 7173 E. Main St., Scottsdale, AZ 85251. 480-947-6372, Fax 480-947-3295. Email Meyergalry@aol.com.

SEPTEMBER

Sept. 1-3 **Native American Traditional Inter-Tribal Pow-Wow:** Topeka, KS. Tenth Annual Lake Shawnee Traditional Inter-Tribal Pow-Wow including craft and food concessions, education day, culture seminars, dancing (including gourd dancing), princess and junior princess contest, honoring of Elders. Host Gourd Society: Standing Bear Intertribal Brotherhood. **Information:** 785-272-5489

Sept. 20-23 **8th Annual Western Design Conference:** Cody, WY. Exhibition, fashion show and seminars regarding western design in furniture, accessories and fashion. **Information:** 888-685-0574.

Single-action shooting events around the U.S.

Westmatch VIII
Aug. 4-6, Renton, WA
Brian Howard, 425-271-9286

Bad Day at Black Rock
Sept. 8-10, Yakima, WA
Detlef Jaussaud, 509-453-1954

Horse Ridge
Sept., Bend, OR
Don Emerson, 541-383-8365

Shootout at Litha Springs
Aug. 26-27, Ashland, OR
Bill Longiotti, 541-535-4504

Showdown at Helldorado
Sept. 1-3, Ukiah, CA
Willard Carlstedt, 707-462-1466

Adobe Walls
Sept. 22-24, Gonzales, CA
Clifford Cook, 408-615-9007

John Wayne Shoot
Sept. 8-10, San Luis Obispo, CA
Sam Cotton, 805-481-4100

Whiskey Creek Shootout
Sept. 1-3, San Diego, CA
Steve Fegley, 626-969-4922

Justin Pierce Memorial Shoot
Aug. 4-6, Fairbanks, AK
Wayne Campbell 907-457-6996

Shoot at Cedar Gulch
Sept. 15-17, Show Low, AZ
Lawrence Works, 520-536-7463

Cluck & Clang Chicken Shoot
Sept. 22-23, Lander, WY
John Oliver, 307-332-9203

Rocky Mountain Regional Rage
Aug. 24-27, Denver, CO
Steven Fowler, 303-745-2529

Black Canyon Shootout
Sept. 8-10, Montrose, CO
Bob Eakin, 970-249-7701

Squinty Eye Western Shoot
Aug. 18-20, Virginia, MI
Charles Pottsmith 218-741-8775

Fire in The Hills
Aug. 26-27, Boyceville, WI
Ronald Belden, 715-838-0968

Shootout Along the Dragoon Trail
Sept. 16-17, Eddyville, IA
Victor Nickerson, 515-673-5019

Bush out of Bayou Crossing
Sept. 1-3, Shreveport, LA
David Turner, 318-929-7728

Roundup
Sept. 29-Oct. 1, Fort Worth, TX
Glen Wilson, 817-847-5052

Showdown at Buck Creek
Sept. 15-17, Glen Rose, TX
Doug Handel, 972-241-9650

-Author's Collection-

BY GLENN SHIRLEY

WORK DAILY IN HER OWN CHARMINGLY FEMININE WAY,..."

A Tireless Energy & Nerves of Steel

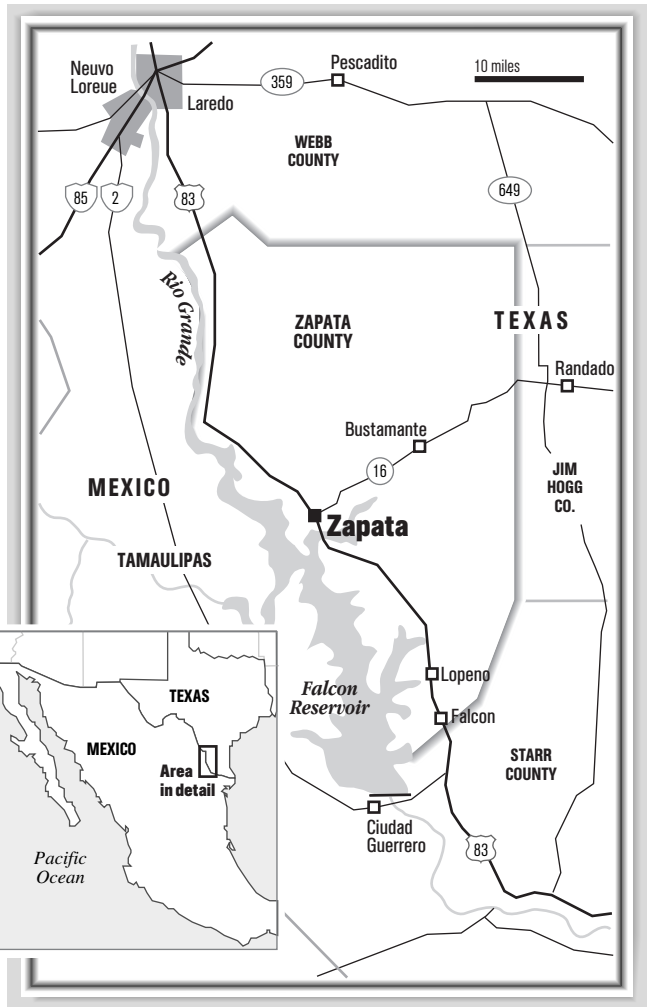
In the current spate of women's studies, historians and other writers have overlooked (probably never heard of) Caroline Bonnival, who, during the 1890s and until her death at her ranch from natural causes shortly after the turn of the 20th century, managed alone Las Floritas hacienda in present Zapata County—one of the largest ranching operations in Southern Texas. She has gone unnoticed perhaps, because in that day and time this part of the Lone Star State on the upper Coastal Plains bordering Mexico for 100 miles along the Rio Grande was so isolated that Las Floritas and its fair mistress thrived in a world practically apart.

"Just one girl," noted a San Antonio newspaper, in 1903, "but she has a clever business head on her pretty shoulders and has tacked a big cipher on the value of the property that her father bequeathed her, and placed herself in the millionaire rank of American heiresses…

"She does a man's work daily in her own charmingly feminine way, would rather round up a herd of stampeded steers on a gritty mustang than make a tour of Europe, and can as easily lead a raid against a band of stock thieves or mescal smugglers, when they cut into her seventy miles of wire fence, as any other American girl would lead a cotillion."

When and from whence her father, John Bonnival, came to Texas is unknown, but it was probably in the mid-1870s when accounts of the historical background of the region extending to the royal Spanish land grants of the early 1700s were still rife. The family often discussed, in particular, the exploits of the county's namesake—Colonel Antonio Zapata. A native of Guerrero, state of Tamaulipas, Mexico, Zapato had been prominent and politically powerful as a sheep rancher, property holder, merchant and Indian fighter.

In 1747, when Captain Miguel de la Garza Falcon led the first white men down the northern bank of the Rio Grande to the river's mouth, the area was inhabited by Carrizo, Borrado and Tepemaca Indians. In 1750, José Vasquez Borrego brought Spanish settlers to the Hacienda de Dolores, a few miles from present San Ygnacio, and both colonies were among those incorporated into Nuevo Santander by José de Escandon. About 1770, colonists of Revilla (Guerrero), whose lands extended across the river, made a settlement at Carrizo, and in 1821 the region, along with other settlements between the Nueces and Rio Grande, became part of the state of Tamaulipas. From the winning of



Texas independence to the Mexican War, the region was claimed by both Texas and Mexico. The treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo established the Texas claim to the region.

During this period of dispute, Colonel Zapata, associated with Texas chiefly through the federalist movement in the Lower Rio Grande region, led cavalry detachments in the field against the centralists. Captured at Santa Rita de Morelos on March 15, 1840, he was tried by a military council and executed at Monclova, Coahuila. His head was taken to Guerrero and set upon a pike in the plaza to convince the citizens that federalism was dead. But the colonel was never forgotten. In 1858, Zapata County was created from Starr and Webb counties and named in his honor, with Carrizo (later named Zapata) as the county seat.

Below Zapata, on thirty miles of riverfront from ten to twenty miles in width, John Bonnival established his ranch on rolling to rough topography traversed from northeast to southwest by arroyos draining into the Rio Grande and covered largely with black brush, mesquite, small oak, prickly pear, cenizo, catclaw and huisache, but sufficient open prairie for grazing. The date of his daughter's birth and the date of his wife's death are unknown, but Las Floritas was Caroline's birthplace. In fact, she had given the ranch its name, apparently from the Spanish *floresta* (meaning forest, thicket, a fine delightful place). Excepting three years in the 1880s, when she attended Harden College, in Missouri, she knew no other life than the free, untrammeled one at Las Floritas.

When cattle king John Bonnival died in 1899, it was supposed (according to the 1903 news dispatch) that "his motherless daughter would retire to San Antonio or some other city, live in luxury upon the rentals of the ranch and eventually amuse herself with society teas and kindred diversions." However, after a time in which she was "overcome with grief," the spirited girl "surprised her friends by declaring that a life of idleness would be a reproach to her father's memory and example."

Miss Bonnival owned 20,000 head of cattle and 2,000 head of mules and horses. More than 100 employees, mostly Mexicans, lived happily and well on her estate. Having been her father's constant companion and his bookkeeper, she was thoroughly familiar with the management of Las Floritas, and she announced, quietly but firmly, "I will stay here all my life."

She made additions to the house and refurnished it in a style that "displayed the taste of a thoughtful girl who had read a great deal, though her opportunities for seeing costly things and enjoying luxury had been limited." She placed the house and grounds in charge of an elderly, refined and educated American woman, a Mrs. Lundy, to whom she paid the "utmost deference" and always addressed as "Mamma Grande."

Miss Bonnival herself settled down to hard work on the range. On her favorite horse, "Moonshine," she rode with her Mexican foreman, Rublo, over the ground as fences were repaired and new pasture lands were enclosed and supplied with strong, brightly painted gates. She superintended the work when bridges or water tanks were to be constructed. In all kinds of weather, she rode with her army of vaqueros in roundups or when herds had to be moved. With an armed body of fence-riders, she was known to make a tour of the entire outside line of the ranch in a single day. Considering the length and width of the spread of the river front, that necessitated a jaunt of nearly seventy-five miles, and such a feat, even by changing horses several times and taking advantage of short cuts, left no room to argue that she possessed "a tireless energy and nerves of steel."

"THIS IS SURE TO BE A BATTLE," SAID PURVIS,"AND THESE FELLOWS FIGHT LIKE

Border thieves and smugglers considered a woman rancher easy prey and were in the habit of cutting Las Floritas fences and grazing the pastures as they pleased. Foreman Rublo never succeeded in catching them, though his vigilance merited better luck. Emboldened by repeatedly successful escapes, these lawless elements became more daring. Miss Bonnival decided to teach them "a needed lesson."

Suspecting collusion between the outlaws and some of her vaqueros, Caroline sent to San Antonio for "Big Tom" Purvis and three other American cowboys who had worked at various times for her father. They were familiar with the trails and crossings on the Rio Grande, and were known to be trustworthy and courageous. The day before they arrived at Las Floritas several fine horses were stolen, among them a Kentucky 4-year-old worth $1,000.

Mounted on Moonshine, with a revolver strapped on her waist, Miss Bonnival set out with the cowboys in pursuit of the rustlers. An attempt by Big Tom Purvis to dissuade her was in vain. On the trail, they were joined by Rublo, who had been informed by an Indian living in the brush that ten men had been roving the vicinity, mounted and heavily armed.

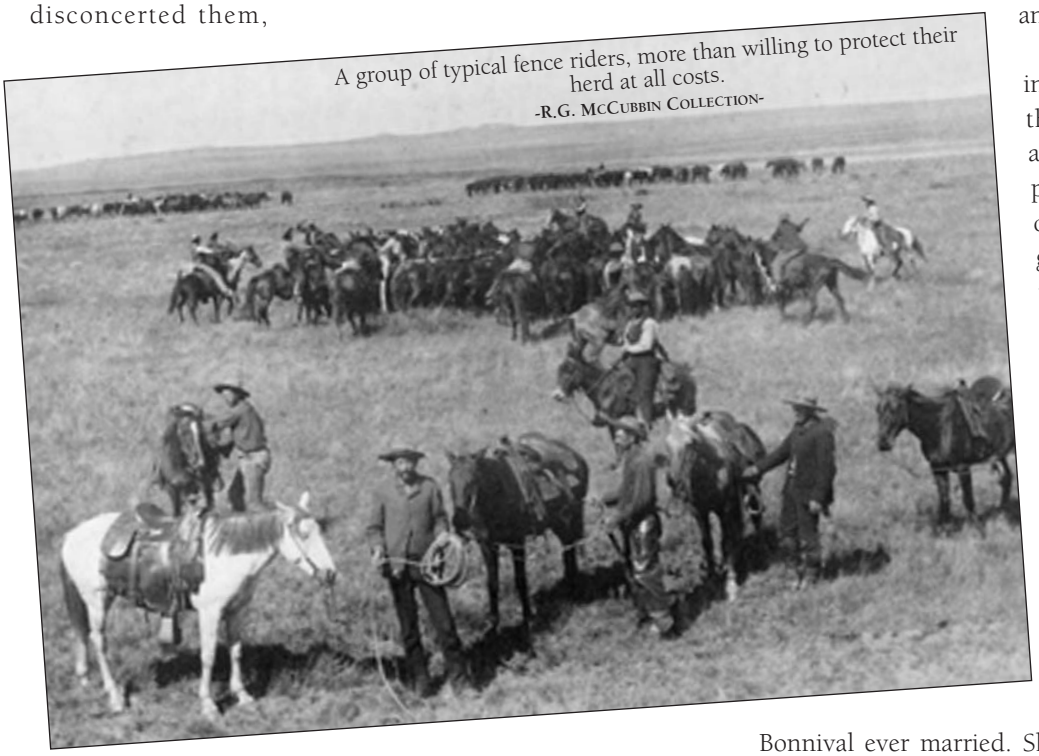
The Rio Grande, four miles away, was badly swollen from recent rains, and the cowboys surmised that the outlaws were encamped with the stolen horses in a thicket near the river awaiting suitable conditions to cross. Again, they urged Miss Bonnival to return to the ranch and let them handle the matter.

"There is sure to be a battle," said Purvis, "and these fellows fight like devils."

"Tom," replied the girl, "you knew my father. Was he afraid of bullets? Lead on!"

A short distance further, they came upon the body of a slain employee. The empty six-shooter in his hand showed that he had died "faithful to his duty." He had been a favorite of Miss Bonnival, and frantic to avenge his death, she waved her quirt at the cowboys and called, "Follow me!"

At that moment, several shots were fired from the brush. Purvis' horse fell dead. Four Mexicans rode into view, but the sight of a white woman on her snorting steed disconcerted them,



A group of typical fence riders, more than willing to protect their herd at all costs.
-R.G. McCubbin Collection-

and Miss Bonnival took advantage of those few seconds. Firing rapidly with her revolver, she killed two of them, while the cowboys dispatched the others. Purvis secured one of their mounts, and the avengers rode on.

The outlaws remaining in camp realized the meaning of the firing, seized their arms and rushed the avengers at a sudden turn in the trail. There were six of them. In the sharp fusillade that ensued, however, Miss Bonnival and her cowboys crippled and captured all of them, with only slight wounds to themselves. The stolen horses were returned to Las Floritas.

Miss Bonnival's gratitude was so great that she insisted the cowboys remain in her employ at their own price, with the privilege of going and coming as they pleased. Big Tom accepted for the quartet, and was wont to tell afterwards how "the girl's fine eyes flashed and her cheeks glowed at the victory."

Despite these hazards of border ranching, Miss Bonnival "had not the slightest intention of quitting the splendid remoteness of mountain and meadow to enter the artificial world of pavements and patents," even for a flying visit.

As she put it, "I would not give one little corner of Las Floritas for the finest palace on Fifth avenue in New York; nor would I exchange the view from my windows of the magnificent old Bravo [Rio Grande] for anything scenic that Niagra [sic, Falls] can offer."

Continuing one of her father's customs, she kept an "open house." The hungry were fed, and no stranger was ever turned from her door. The latch-string hung on the outside during her father's lifetime, and it remained there.

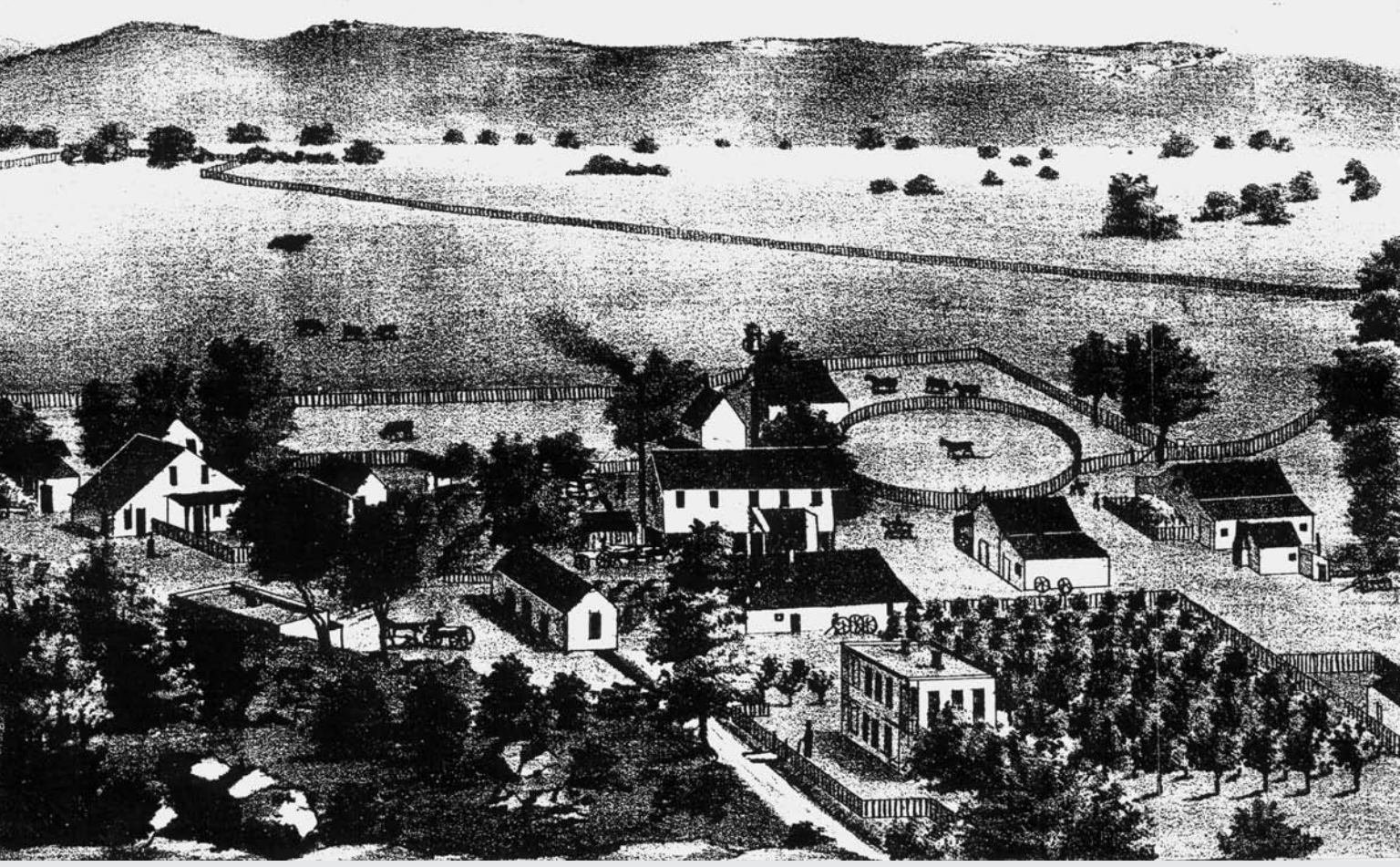
All national holidays observed in Old Mexico were celebrated by the vaqueros, their sweethearts and families at Las Floritas. In picturesque costumes, mounted on spirited mustangs, the graceful riders dashed through the shady groves where sun-browned, gaily attired maidens strewn flowers, and sang the battle songs that stirred the blood of hidalgos 100 years before.

In a little church near the hacienda, Father Sanchez, "surrounded by musty tombs and beaming with smiles," was ever ready to christen babies and join lovers in wedlock.

It is not known if Miss Bonnival ever married. She was a devout churchwoman, and her charities were never confined to this little corner of Texas that she dearly loved.

Las Floritas hacienda is no more, inundated by the vast Falcon Reservoir lying forty-five miles along the southwest corner of Zapata County. The stone and adobe walls of a number of old homes at Zapata were also submerged by the rising water of the reservoir after the construction of the dam across the Rio Grande in 1953. Zapata was relocated two miles from the old town, and the old communities of Lopena and Falcon were moved to higher ground. Cattle and some sheep and goat raising remain the principal industry on the uplands. Zapata is still headquarters for the ranching area and the stopping place for travel on Highway 83, paralleling the river that Caroline Bonnival called the "Bravo."

Glenn Shirley is the author of over 30 books on Western Americana, including *West of Hell's Fringe*, *The Fourth Guardsmen*, and *Gunfight at Ingalls*. Glenn first appeared in *True West* in 1953.



An 1880s lithograph of Campo, California The Gaskill home is in the foreground with an orchard in the rear.
-From Elliot's History of San Bernardino and San Diego Counties, 1883-

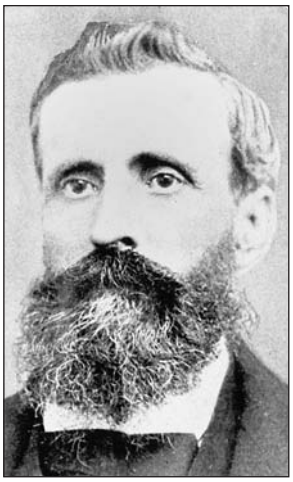
Trouble Along the Border:

A murderous raid at Campo

BY WILLIAM B. SECREST

"I WAS WORKING AT THE FORGE," recalled Silas Gaskill many years later, "when I learned that the robbers were going to raid us." Silas remembered that day well. He had hurried over to the store and told his brother, Luman, what he had learned. Both were acquainted with the Mexican informant and thought he could be trusted. More than that, they had heard other news. Many outlaws, remnants of the old Vasquez and Chavez bands, were reported gathering at the village of Tecaté, just across the Mexican border. The tension was thick as the brothers began hiding shotguns at strategic places around their small village.

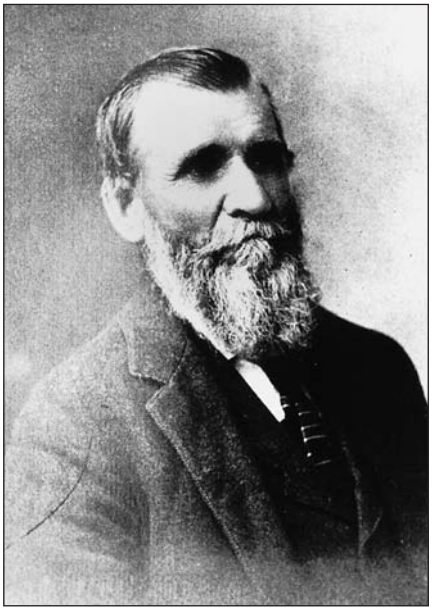
Silas was the oldest, born in New York in 1829. There were eventually six children in the family, brother Luman's birth being in 1843 after a move to



Silas Gaskill
-Author's Collection-

Indiana. The family followed the father to California in 1857, and for a time the boys engaged in the dairy business with the elder Gaskill at Petaluma. Both Luman and Silas were good shots, and when a neighboring rancher named O'Farrell complained that a grizzly had killed some $600 worth of his livestock, Silas offered to hunt down the bear and kill him. The rancher was dubious. Several hunters had already gone after the offending beast and returned empty-handed.

Silas put his dog to following the bear's tracks and soon brought back the 1,200-pound grizzly. The rancher, was delighted to pay $50 for the offending animal, giving Silas the carcass also. After taking the bear to San Francisco to sell it, Silas noticed two well-dressed Chinamen in the gathering crowd. Besides selling the hide and meat, Silas accepted the Chinamen's offer of $75 for the liver which they used for medicinal purposes. That did it. The Gaskill brothers went into the bear hunting business.



Luman Gaskill
-Author's Collection-

Traveling from Mendocino County to San Bernardino, Silas killed some 266 bears during this period. They killed other game as well and sold it in isolated communities. In later years old-timers remembered seeing the Gaskills coming down from the mountains and entering Visalia leading a string of pack animals carrying hides and meat. It was a good life.

The brothers were ranching in Mendocino County in the mid-1860s. In early 1865 there was trouble among neighbors, probably over property rights. It resulted in a rancher named Millay being shot in the arm while riding near Ukiah. Although considered by the local press as "one of our best citizens," Silas was brought in as a suspect. No evidence could be found to hold him, however, and he was released.

While recovering in his cabin, Millay was shotgunned and killed on January 23, 1865. Silas and several other ranchers were arrested for the murder, but when Gaskill was released on $1,000 bail, he promptly left the area. His wife settled up his local accounts before she, too, disappeared. The murder went unsolved.

Luman apparently left Mendocino at this time, also, and the brothers hunted for the next few years. They were in Santa Barbara County for a time, then Ventura. By 1867 both were farming in San Bernardino County, where they established irrigation ditches to water their orchards and fields. Moving again, the brothers bought one thousand acres near San Jacinto, some 70 miles southeast of Los Angeles. Luman was married here and although the brothers kept quite busy, they once again picked up and moved in the spring of 1868.

Moving south, the brothers settled at a spot where a pleasant creek ran alongside the Yuma stage road—a place Mexicans called Campo. It was less than two miles from the Mexican border. Here the Gaskills established a

The Saga of "Six-toed" Pete

Some years prior to the Campo raid, another colorful border incident took place in this same area. Although a tale of brutal men in an untamed land, it was also the story of a brave and implacable lawman who did his duty no matter what odds he might encounter.

Henry and Oscar Bilderback were brothers who filed a claim in the foothills now known as Glendale, some twenty-five miles from Los Angeles. Putting up a shack, they proceeded to cut wood for a living, supplying the fuel needs of various isolated villages and ranches. The brothers were widely known and when they suddenly disappeared, friends feared foul play.

There had been trouble over the Bilderback claim in late December, 1870. Several local characters had attempted to scare the brothers away in an effort to obtain the land and the profitable wood it contained. A man named Stephenson Samsby, known locally as "Buckskin Bill" because of his leather clothing, lived with an Indian woman nearby. He was also known as "Six-toed Pete" because of a foot abnormality. Samsby and two cronies named Alfred Henry and Allenson Gardner, had quarreled with the Bilderbacks over the wood-cutting rights in local Tejunga canyon. The two boys agreed not to work the area, but, probably realizing they had been bullied into the arrangement, soon returned to the canyon and again began cutting wood.

After receiving a report that the Samsby crowd was cutting wood on the Bilderback claim, Los Angeles County Deputy Sheriff Jonathan Dunlap gathered a small posse and headed north. The Bilderback cabin was empty and there was no trace of Samsby or his cohorts. Dunlap noticed a small gully that had been filled in where it crossed the road. It looked like a necessary repair, but for some reason the deputy was suspicious. Finding a metal rod at the cabin, he began probing the

repaired section of the road. When he hit a spongy object, it felt quite different from the soil. "A few minutes quick work," noted the Los Angeles *Star*, "revealed a foot and the lower portion of the leg of what had been a human being." One of the posse was dispatched back to Los Angeles for the coroner.

The next morning the bodies of the brothers were recovered from their makeshift grave. Henry, the younger brother, was taken out first. Stacked on top of each other, the bodies were mashed into the deepened gully by the killers who stamped them into the narrow grave. Henry had been shot from behind, the bullet penetrating his lungs and heart, killing him instantly. Two heavy blows had smashed his skull.

Sadly, there was a letter in one of the boy's pockets from their mother in Ohio. She was frantically worried since she had not heard from them in some time.

A hastily convened coroner's jury acknowledged the murders and listened to the testimony of Daniel Burchard, an old man who lived in the area. Burchard testified as to the troubles between the two parties and

Later, when a volley of shots was heard, Bowen remarked that "I reckon they are killing those boys, now."

stated that Gardner had threatened to kill him because Samsby had told him too much.

George Godhue, who worked for Gardner, testified he was present on January 1, 1871, when Samsby, Gardner and Alfred Henry went over to the Bilderback claim. One of the party carried a Henry rifle borrowed from Henry Bowen, another wood-cutter. Later, when a volley of shots was heard, Bowen remarked that "I reckon they are killing those boys, now."

The desperate battle between the Gaskill brothers and the bandits took place in and around the store shown in the center of this old photograph. The stream in the foreground runs off to the right, underneath the store.
-SAN DIEGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY-

store and cantina, along with a stage stop. Supplies were imported by wagon from San Diego some fifty miles away. A telegraph office in the store kept them in touch with San Diego and helped ease the isolation. Buying large tracts of land, they began running herds of cattle, sheep and angora goats. They also indulged in extensive bee culture over the years, one summer producing over thirty tons of honey.

By 1869 some 400 settlers were in the nearby Milquatay Valley. The Warrens, Grays, Morrises, Livingstons and others were mostly sheep and cattle ranchers. So many of the newcomers were Texans that the area was dubbed "Little Texas." The Gaskills established a school and blacksmith shop, while a planned dam and mill would make the community even more self-sufficient. According to an April, 1875, dispatch to the San Diego *Daily Union*:

> The Gaskill brothers' mill is intended for flouring, sawing and wood turning purposes. It is an enterprise that deserves great credit as a home industry. There will be enough power to attach machinery for a woolen mill, and the time is not far distant when this enterprise and similar ones will be of consequence in San Diego County.

The Campo residents knew they were in an exposed and dangerous position, however. Although the local Indians remained friendly, restless Mexican bandits prowled the border areas, both singly and in groups. These desperadoes were feared on both sides of the border. Ranchers and settlers never knew when they would be robbed or have stock taken. Mexico, politically unstable and corrupt, was a poor country, and the poor were often desperate. The California bandit Tiburcio Vasquez fed on these social conditions and enlisted such men for his gang. When Vasquez was captured and hanged, his lieutenant, Clodoveo Chavez, created havoc in Southern California with his own outlaw band. In November, 1875, border residents breathed a sigh of relief when they heard that Chavez had been killed in Arizona. Rumors insisted, however, that remnants of his gang, just over the border in Tecaté, were plotting new raids.

As they had done before, Campo residents went on the alert. It was three weeks of constant vigil before the village could resume normal activity.

One day in December, 1875, the Gaskill brothers were at work when a Mexican was noticed hanging about the blacksmith shop. Silas knew the man. He lived at Tecaté and occasionally crossed the border on business. The Gaskills had always been friendly and Silas had fed and helped him out several times. Now, however, the fellow acted nervous. Busy at his forge, Silas only gave him passing notice. Luman

was occupied at the store next door.

When Silas was alone, the Mexican loiterer quickly walked over to the forge. He had heard talk in Tecaté. Cruz Lopez and some other bad men were planning a raid on Campo. He didn't know just when the raid would take place, but it could be anytime. Silas thanked the obviously frightened man who quickly disappeared.

There was not time to lose. Silas ran over to the store and told Luman what he had heard. Both agreed that the warning must be taken seriously. Gathering up his six shotguns, the brothers stashed them at various places in the village, warning the telegraph operator and others of what Silas had heard. They scrutinized every Mexican that came near the village from that day on.

It was just a few days later, on December 4, that a cold dawn slowly brightened into a clear, crisp morning. By ten o'clock Silas was busy at his blacksmith forge, while Luman swept and tidied up the store. A short time later, six Mexicans rode leisurely into the village and dismounted in front of the store. Tying their animals, the men stepped into the store and began looking at some rope as Gaskill worked behind the counter. In a few minutes, three of the men walked back outside. Luman looked up from his work to see the remaining customers suddenly pull revolvers from under their shirts and point them at their host.

Yelling "Murder!" to warn his brother, Luman crouched behind the protective counter and rushed to where he had a shotgun hidden. He had just grabbed the weapon when two of the Mexicans plunged over the counter, knocking him to the floor. One of the gunmen fired, the bullet hitting Luman just above the left lung and coming out his back. Blood gushed from his mouth and he was dismissed as a dead man by the bandits.

Running into the street, the three Mexicans then began shooting at "everybody and everything" as reported by the San Diego *Daily Union*. A Mexican, thought to be a local resident, was shot in the side and neck and collapsed in the street. Another hapless bystander, a Frenchman, rode up to the store and dismounted to get his mail just as the battle erupted. One of the bandits took his horse and fired three times at him, one shot taking effect in his arm and he dodged and ran off into the surrounding brush.

Spitting blood and clutching his shotgun, Luman ran out after the gunmen. The first bandit in his sights got both barrels in the face and hit the ground in a sprawled heap. Another bandit rushed into the blacksmith shop and shot Silas just as he grabbed his shotgun. With a pistol ball in his shoulder, Silas must have fired from the hip, killing the marauder with one shot. The telegraph operator in the store now went into action, also, as reported in the *Union*:

> One of the Mexicans and myself exchanged shots without hurting or touching each other. As the revolver used by me had only three loads, when I had fired all I concluded the best plan would be to run; and so I did, crawling under the house and standing in water three or four feet deep for nearly an hour. The stream under the house flows in sort of a culvert, one end coming out near the dwelling house a rod and a half from the store. While there I saw Mr. L.H. Gaskill standing in the water, and faint from loss of blood. He cautioned me to keep quiet, and said he would crawl out and get his needle gun and finish them. But they all had decamped.

After Luman had retreated back into the store and dropped through a trapdoor under the house, several bandits rushed in and frantically looted the place. Taking what little they could carry, in their rush the desperadoes overlooked the money drawer, along with a small can holding some gold notes. Three of the bandits mounted and galloped out of town leaving one dead comrade behind. Two of the riders were thought to be badly wounded, however. With gunsmoke still drifting in the street, the shootout at Campo was over.

As tender hands carried the wounded Mexican resident to a bed, Silas Gaskill looked for his brother. He

Fearing for his own life, Godhue fled to Los Angeles where he was located by Gardner who tried to bribe him to leave the state. A friend, however,

Los Angeles County Sheriff James F. Burns
-AUTHOR'S COLLECTION-

convinced him to return and give his testimony. The coroner's jury verdict was that the murders were committed by Samsby, Henry and Gardner, and a manhunt was quickly under way.

Gardner was apprehended in Los Angeles while Sheriff James F. Burns commenced the search for Samsby and Henry. Born in New York in 1831, Burns was a schoolteacher by profession who had journeyed to California in 1853. After serving in various official capacities, including deputy United States marshal, he was elected sheriff of Los Angeles County on the Republican ticket in 1867. In 1871 he was serving his second term.

Sheriff Burns followed a false trail of the killers to the White Pine mines in Nevada, then back again to Los Angeles. It was late June when he met a young soldier at San Pedro who was traveling to Fort Yuma. The soldier sold him information that Samsby had been seen riding with his Indian wife and

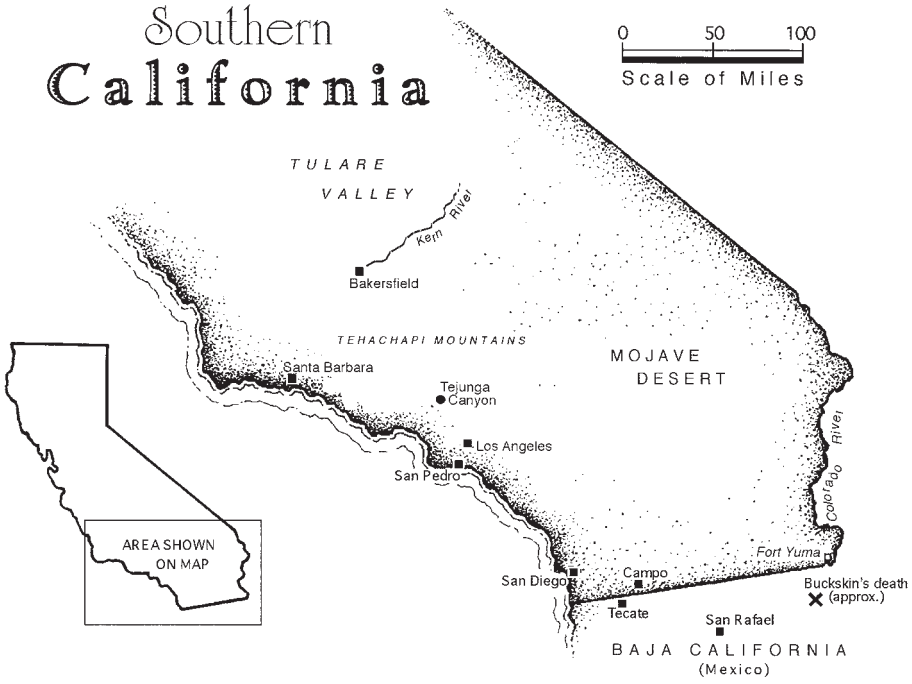
baby on his mule along the border, near Tecaté. It was the first accurate lead Burns had found. Accompanied by Phillip Crossthwaite, under-sheriff of San Diego County, the two men hastened to the San Rafael Valley to secure requisition papers from Governor Roja of Lower California.

Obtaining the services of Don Justo Chaves, chief of the Mexican Frontier Police, together with four other men and some Indian scouts, Burns was requested to wait at the border while the Mexican posse located the fugitive. After a week long scout, Buckskin and his squaw were spotted in the Sierra Madre mountains on June 25. Chief Chaves ordered a charge, with two men flanking the fugitives on each side, while the fifth man charged from the rear as reported in the Los Angeles *Daily News*:

> …The leader's order was to charge simultaneously until within six feet of their object. This was done, but the man left in the rear, Carino Edalecia, was unable to check his horse until it had run directly against that of Buckskin. Buckskin dropped his rifle, grasped that of his assailant near the muzzle and was endeavoring to wrest it from his grasp, when—being at full cock—it went off and the load entering the outlaw's left side, passed quite through his body.

When laid on the ground, Buckskin made another grab for his weapon, but was held down and told he had a mortal wound. He then confessed to the Bilderback murders. When he died an hour later, he was buried where he fell.

The Indian woman refused to take any of the dead man's possessions, saying he was "a bad man and had killed a heap of Americans." She was a Yokuts Indian from the Kern River area and had lived with Buckskin for the past eight years or so. Her baby had been born during their flight from the law. Although Alfred Henry had traveled with the party for a time, the



found Luman had made it home to get to his needle gun, but collapsed and was put to bed by his wife. Returning to the street, Silas and others searched the bandit he had killed. He was a young man, papers on the body indicating his name was Redoro Vasquez.

Reconnoitering the area, it was found that other outlaws had been secreted in the rocks outside of town. Several wagons had been seen, indicating that as soon as the Gaskills had been killed, the other bandits would swarm into town, loot the village and load it into wagons and then head for the border.

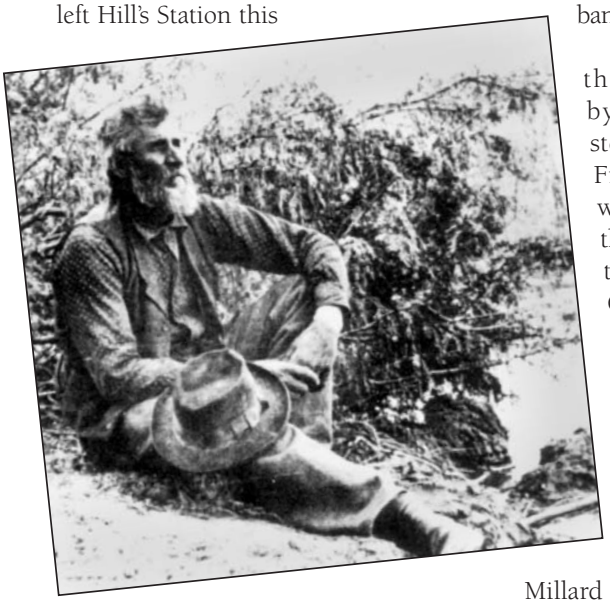
In questioning the local Mexican who had been wounded, he claimed to have recognized several of the raiders. The one who had shot Luman Gaskill was Cruz Lopez. Another was from Los Angeles where he was wanted on a murder warrant. His name was Pancho Alveto. A third gang member was named Alonzo Cota and was recognized as one of the sheep-shearers who had worked in the valley the previous summer.

Cruz Lopez was a former member of the Chavez gang that had raided in Kern and San Bernardino counties earlier in the year. When Chavez fled to Mexico and later was killed in Arizona, Lopez kept under cover with his wife and family in Lone Pine. It was rumored that he had two gangs, one in the Panamint area and another in Tecaté, south of the border. He fled to lower California after he and José Alvijo killed a storekeeper, and committed several robberies around Lone Pine. He worked for a time in old Mexico, near San Rafael, some miles southeast of Tecaté. Soon he had gathered together a gang of cutthroats and villains from Tecaté.

On November 30, 1875, Lopez, Alvijo and one Alonzo Cota stopped a buggy carrying two men as it headed northwest from San Rafael. The bandits were well-posted. A Frenchman named Alphonse Leclaire and a local rancher and former governor, Don Antonio Sosa, were traveling to San Diego with funds totaling some $600 in gold dust. The bandits directed the buggy up a nearby gully and off the road, then shot the Frenchman through the head. Sosa was told to drive further up the gully. Reminding the rancher that he had previously captured three horse thieves who were tried and shot, Lopez brutally beat Sosa to death, then cut his throat. Breaking open a trunk, the killers took everything of value and fled. Four days later, with fifteen others, Lopez made his fateful ride toward Campo.

Meanwhile news began arriving from the friendly Mexicans and Indians of the area. The remainder of the

bandits had taken the road to Fort Yuma. "On the way," reported the Union, "they met Mr. Simon Miller on horseback, whom they robbed of all his money and of two horses. He reported there were three of them; that one had his head tied up, and another was shot fearfully in the neck and he thinks cannot live. The two young men who left Hill's Station this morning for this place as witnesses in a law suit, are missing, and it is thought they were met on the road and were murdered."



Luman Gaskill, on the bank of Campo Creek
-Author's Collection-

By now a ten-man posse of well-armed local ranchers was on the trail of the Campo raiders. Authorities in Mexico sent runners to the borders hoping to cut off escape routes, while an armed Mexican posse was also on the trail of Lopez and his men.

Back in Campo excitement was still at a fever pitch. The village was on a high alert not knowing if a reinforced group of bandits would return to finish the job. Early the following morning one of the wounded bandits crawled up to the store and begged for aid. He had laid out all night hiding in the brush, but the bitter cold morning made him seek aid and shelter. He was in bad shape. Put to bed near a warm fire, he was found to have five buckshot wounds in his right side and three close to a lung. Two more shot were in his abdomen with several others in his arm. He was not expected to live.

In searching the wounded man a gold watch and chain was found. The chain was all gold with the exception of several links in the middle that were silver. It was discovered that a traveler on the road had been carrying such a watch a few days prior to the raid. He had also been carrying a new Henry rifle, as was one of the Campo raiders. There was little doubt that another victim of the bandits could be chalked up.

The other wounded Mexican, thought to be an innocent bystander, had told various stories at odds with each other. Finally, it was realized that he was one of the robbers shot in the gunsmoke-shrouded fight in the street. "He told Silas Gaskill," noted the Union, "that if he would clear him he would work for him for twelve years without pay." The wounded bandit was ironed and scheduled to be put on the San Diego stage.

San Diego County Sheriff William Hunsaker, Dr. Millard and a small posse had left for Campo as soon as they received news of the raid. Pushing hard, they arrived shortly after eleven o'clock that night. The doctor was quickly ushered over to Luman's house where he examined the wounded storekeeper. The patient's wounds were dressed, but he was very seriously injured. Silas Gaskill was the next patient, after which the physician looked after the two wounded bandits. The sheriff placed the two outlaws in a building near his quarters with a three-man guard. On December 7, the *Daily Union* reported an unexpected turn of events:

> No excitement appeared to exist among the residents, and no apprehension whatever was felt of any attempt to molest the prisoners. About 11 o'clock Saturday night, two of the guard went out, and while they were gone the remaining guard was suddenly seized and bound, and the prisoners hurried away without creating an alarm. Soon after the two guards returned, released their companion and hastened to notify Sheriff Hunsaker. A search was at once instituted and the lifeless bodies of the two bandits were found suspended at either end of a single rope to a tree some distance away.

The Saga of "Six-toed" Pete

Indian woman said Samsby and Henry had gone hunting together in the Temecula Mountains after learning that the Bilderback's bodies had been discovered. Knowing Gardner had been captured, and Henry was a potential witness against him, Buckskin was alone when he returned from the hunt.

There was a large state reward for the killers, as well as a $200 reward from the Los Angeles authorities. In his search, Sheriff Burns had expended a large amount of his own money and he wanted to be sure he could recoup his funds. As they had been instructed, when the Mexican officers met Burns at the border, they gave him Buckskin's possessions, along with Samsby's disfigured foot in a mescal-filled container for the identification.

Although Los Angeles officials reportedly paid Sheriff Burns $500 expenses for the Buckskin campaign, a $300 reward was apparently also obtained. A $5,000 reward was offered for the killers by the state. The 1871 California Controller Warrant Ledger in the Governor's Reward Files show Burns being paid $4,434 on February 9, 1872. Apparently the sheriff was docked for some reason, but he still turned a hefty profit for one of the strangest trophies in California and Western history. A brief note in the Los Angeles *Daily News*, July 20, 1871, gave a final notice of Samby's abnormal appendage:

> Buckskin's foot is at present in the custody of Dr. Gelcich. It will doubtless be used as an electioneering document in the coming campaign.

It was a nasty, political remark directed at the Republican sheriff by a Democratic newspaper. In any case, Burns was defeated at the next election. He continued to serve the public, however, and was elected chief of police in 1889. The doughty old lawman died in Los Angeles in 1921.
—*W.S.*

Still in shock over the casualties of the raid, few around Campo concerned themselves with the lynching. Settlers for miles around were on the alert and in Campo a round-the-clock lookout was in effect.

South of the border, however, it was a different story. Writing from Tecaté, a correspondent for the *Union* commented: "These people are very much exasperated about the hanging of the two robbers wounded at Campo, and afterwards captured, and say they mean to get even. They are afraid to move now, as there are too many rifles for them at Campo, and they know the Americans shoot straight."

Writing to his San Diego wholesaler on business matters, Silas Gaskill unloaded some of his concerns on Abraham Klauber:

"We have been told by parties from Tecaté that they [the bandits] intend to try us again; that they are determined to rob us before they give up. They say they will try it next time with force sufficient to go through us.

"It seems rather tough that we can't be protected in some way from being robbed and murdered here at home, minding our own business, does it not? I wish you would use what influence you can use for us and see if we can't get some protection in some way.

"I tell you it is very unpleasant to live here where every man you see you think is a robber coming to pull a pistol or a Henry rifle on you and commence shooting without any warning whatsoever. That is the reign of terror that we are living under now, with my brother lying dangerously wounded…"

Moved by the appeal, the *Union* urged that a meeting be held in which the predicament of the Campo residents could be discussed. Abe Klauber took his friend's plea to heart, also. On the evening of December 15, a meeting was held at city hall to discuss the desperate situation. Gaskill's letter was read to the crowd, and after some discussion, it was decided to take up a subscription to pay the costs of a relief force to be stationed at Campo. H.H. Wildy, district attorney-elect, volunteered to lead the expedition, providing the men were to be paid. When all the motions had been agreed to, a letter was sent requesting troops to be sent to the area. Wildy recruited a number of men, then left the next day for Campo to organize the balance of his force.

Wildy's party arrived on the evening of December 17. "They were received with open arms," commented a letter from the *Union*. And it was none too soon. That very morning word was received from Campo that an armed body of Mexicans intended to "clean us out." Immediately business was suspended and all manner of arms brought into requisition. Extra lookouts were stationed around town and at 10 o'clock a party of Mexicans was seen to be approaching town from the south. As the lookout watched, a Mexican rode out from town and warned the approaching party of the reception that awaited them. They quickly retreated.

Abraham Klauber was a wholesale supplier to the Gaskill brother's Campo projects and was active in the committee formed to go to the aid of the tiny settlement.
-Author's Collection-

"Hopes are entertained," continued the letter, "that before long we will have some troops here. In fact, we must have them, or else abandon the place. Human nature cannot stand the strain of constant watching long, with the country full of banditti liable to attack at any minute."

Upon arrival, Wildy quickly augmented his San Diego force and organized for an attack. A letter written on the day of his arrival gives a good sense of the dangerous situation being confronted:

I have arrived, and find everything in commotion and all on the alert…Every indication is that the enemy contemplates an attack, but how and when we can't tell. They are concentrating in Tecate Valley, close to the border…We are ready to receive them; are well armed, well equipped, plenty of provisions, etc.,—in fact, we can stand a siege of a week; so that if you hear of the ball being opened you may send along the reserve without any further orders, for we will be very apt to be tired before they get here; and you might throw in a coroner or two, and a few coffins, to save time and expense.

But the attack never came. In early January troops arrived from Fort Yuma and the Wildy posse was enabled to return home. As late as mid-March, 1876, suspicious-looking Mexicans were appearing in town, ostensibly "to spy around and see how things are situated." Remembering the deadly shooting of the Gaskills and seeing the armed citizenry and the army patrol camped in town, the strangers would invariably ride out of town and head back toward Tecaté.

Never feeling totally secure in their exposed position, the Gaskill brothers built a new store in town. Their new combination emporium and saloon was a large, two-story stone fort with shuttered first-floor doors and windows so the shooting could be done from the second story. The town, if not the Lower California border, was secured.

Both Luman and Silas Gaskill survived their wounds to live long, productive lives. Their business and ranching activities made them relatively wealthy and both retired to a comfortable old age. Someone once asked Silas why he hadn't left town when he was warned of the bandit raid? "We just don't encourage that sort of thing in Campo," he replied.

Luman died in Los Angeles in 1914, while Silas passed away later the same year in San Diego.

William Secrest is a retired graphic artist, and a respected historian of old California. His books include *Dangerous Trails*, *Lawmen & Desperadoes,* and the recently released *California Desperadoes*.

JACK MORROW

ENTREPRENEUR AND ROGUE

BY R. K. DEARMENT

Along the Oregon Trail in the 1850s and '60s a number of "road ranches" were established on the plains of Nebraska.

At the outset, beef cattle were not raised on these ranches, but rather work oxen, were made available by the enterprising ranchers to replace thin and footsore animals from the wagon trains on the trail. In the usual transaction the rancher provided one fresh ox for two trail-worn ones, which he then turned out to fatten and revive on the nearby verdant grassland. Soon these animals were ready for trade to another western-bound immigrant party.

The Oregon Trail through Nebraska was also the route of the stagecoach line and some of the road ranchers contracted with the Holladay Overland Mail and Express Company to provide a change of horse teams for the coaches and meals, refreshments, and sometimes sleeping quarters for the passengers.

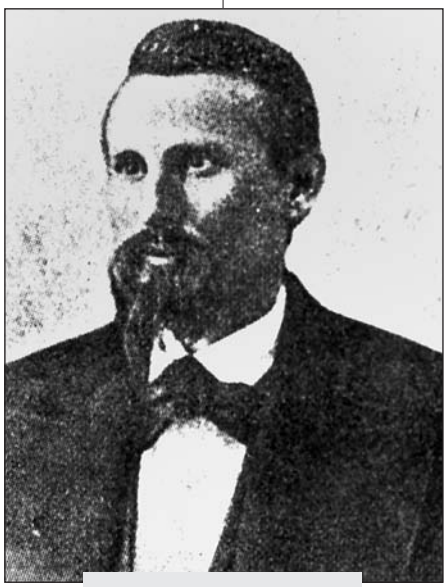
The best known and most controversial of these early road ranchers was John Andrew "Jack" Morrow, a Pennsylvanian who came west as a teenager and soon acquired a reputation, according to one historian, as "a bully, thief and scoundrel." The son of John Morrow, a prominent wagon maker, Jack Morrow was born April 12, 1831, in Washington, Pennsylvania, a town about thirty-five miles south of Pittsburgh. Leaving for the West about 1850, he ranged the frontier, taking any job available. Although details are lacking, legend has it that during these years he dispatched a dangerous desperado named Murphy in a six-gun duel, and was thereafter considered a gunfighter of note.

Morrow proved to be a man of unbounded energy, ambition, and entrepreneurial daring, and undoubtedly could have achieved success in any path he chose on the developing frontier, but his character was flawed by a love - perhaps better described as a lust—for the dishonest dollar. As a government teamster, freighting from Omaha to Denver and Salt Lake City, by the late 1850s he had already become notorious for his crooked and underhanded ways.

He acquired his first stake by stealing gunpowder from the United States Army. Years later, while in his cups, he bragged about his crime to an army lieutenant: "Whacking bulls across the plains," he

Benton, Wyoming, 1868.Jack Morrow is the central character, seated on the high barrel.
-AUTHOR'S COLLECTION-

said, "I got onto a Government train loaded with ammunition. I unscrewed the boxes, took out the ammunition, and sold it to the ranchmen. Filled the boxes with sand, and screwed them down. Then after we got to Laramie I had a rumpus with the wagonmaster and he pulled a pistol and I skinned out for somewhere else and nobody got onto it. I never heard a word from it ever afterwards." His little escapade worked so well that he routinely began to remove parts of the loads he hauled and secrete the goods along the trail to be recovered later. When disposal of the pilfered merchandise became a problem in 1859, he opened a store in a cluster of sod buildings just outside of Fort Kearney, Nebraska. The little village was called Kearney City by some, and Dog Town or Doby Town by others. His partner in this enterprise was a former Missouri River trapper for the American Fur Company named Alex Constant.



Jack Morrow
-Author's Collection-

Early in 1860 Morrow, seeing in Oregon Trail road ranching an opportunity for a man of his ability and lack of scruples, skipped out with all the cash, leaving his partner in the lurch. He built what he called "Junction Ranch" twelve miles west of Cottonwood Springs, and about a half mile south of the confluence of the North Platte and South Platte Rivers. His ranch house, outbuildings, stable and corral were constructed of cedar logs harvested in a nearby canyon. The house was massive when compared to most structures on the plains. Two-and-a-half stories high and sixty-feet long, it soon became a landmark of the Oregon Trail. Besides dealing in replacement oxen for emigrant wagon trains, Morrow contracted with the Overland Stage Company to utilize the Junction Ranch as a service stop. He provided hay and grain for the company horses and mules and replacement animals as required. Eating and sleeping facilities for passengers were also available, although some overnighters may have grumbled about the arrangements on the top floor. The area was divided into rooms by cedar walls and Morrow's carpenters had neglected to saw out doorways, making it necessary for lodgers to crawl over six feet of log wall to get from one room to another.

The Junction Ranch soon became headquarters for a coterie of hardcases— Jack Sharp, Tod Randall, Bob Rowland, and others remembered only as Turgeon, Alley, Gladden, and "Black Jack"—plainsmen who acted as Indian interpreters and traders, hunters, wranglers or herders. Cut from the same pattern as Morrow, they were always available for any shady work the road rancher might devise. Many were "squawmen," whites who had lived with the Indians and taken their women as wives.

In the early years Morrow himself was said to have brought Sioux women into his house to warm his bed. Dr. C.M. Clark, who stopped at the Junction Ranch on his way to the Pike's Peak region in 1861, found an Indian woman living with the proprietor, characterized by the doctor as "a somewhat noted character." It was Clark's understanding that Morrow had several "squaw wives" before the current one.

There was also a woman remembered only as Mrs. Thurman, ostensibly Morrow's housekeeper, who, it was said, died by the accidental discharge of her own derringer in the hands of Jack Morrow and was buried just east of the Junction Ranch.

All of that changed in 1862 when Morrow married 20-year-old Agnes Jane Wood in Omaha and took her to live at Junction Ranch. John Bratt, a Morrow neighbor, remembered Jane, as she was always called, as a "rather nice looking lady, refined and dressed nicely." The genteel, cultured lady and the rough-hewn plainsman made a strange pair. "I often wondered," Bratt said, "how she came to marry Jack. Perhaps to reform him. Not sure she succeeded."

Morrow carried on an active commerce with the plains Indians, providing rations, trade goods and whiskey in exchange for furs, robes and dried buffalo meat that he then shipped to Omaha. Through the influence of his residence squawmen, a party of some two hundred Sioux pitched their tepees near the Junction Ranch. Morrow kept on good terms with these neighbors, a policy that paid dividends when the Indian War of 1864 broke out. During the hostilities Cheyenne and Sioux war parties looted and burned road ranches and killed white residents. The Junction Ranch was spared, partly because of the ties Morrow had built with the Sioux, and partly because his ranch house was so large and substantially constructed. Some neighboring ranchers fled to the Morrow place and fortified it additionally with sod walls. It was the Junction Ranch that held open the lines of communication along the Platte during the war.

A newspaper reported that Jack Morrow in 1865 had a close call with Indians near the Overland stage station at Julesburg, Colorado. He was with some 35 or 40 soldiers from a military camp that had been established in the area, when the party was attacked and surrounded by a large number of Indians. Morrow and several soldiers volunteered to ride for help. "They mounted their steeds, and made a dash through the body of Indians….Morrow was the only man who escaped alive, and he gave the alarm at Julesburg, and also at the post, The body of soldiers, however, were all, or nearly all, killed by the Indians."

Lieutenant Eugene F. Ware of the Seventh Iowa Cavalry visited Morrow at his ranch during this period and described him as "a tall, raw-boned, dangerous-looking man, wearing a mustache and a goatee on his under lip." Morrow bragged to the

officers that the value of his cattle, horses, merchandise and property holdings exceeded $100,000, but the lieutenant suspected he "overstated" it. Ware and the officers were invited to dinner and treated to champagne (quaffed from a tin cup), and a feast featuring broiled antelope heart, baked buffalo hump and fried beaver tails. But when the meal was over Morrow tried to get the officers' agreement to contract with him for grain at exorbitant prices. "This whole proceeding was so raw that none of us ever made visit again to Jack Morrow," said Ware.

The road ranch owner could charm visitors, especially women, however. Margaret Carrington, wife of General Henry Beebe Carrington, who established Fort Philip Kearney in Wyoming, stopped at his place in May 1866 and found Morrow "the king of good fellows, a rancheman indeed! Fortune has showered her favors about his life's journey and prosperity dwelleth within his walls." He was, she said, "keen in business, generous and hail fellow,"' a man of "indomitable spirit." When the transcontinental railroad, then under construction, obsoleted the Oregon Trail, it would be just like the entrepreneurial Jack Morrow, she thought, "to go to Alaska, run a ferry across Behring Straits [sic], and open a ranche for Americans and Russians who choose that route of travel from America to Europe."

Wagon ruts along the Oregon Trail at Guernsey, Wyoming.
-Author's Collection-

John Bratt also considered him "a good social fellow." The most memorable thing about him for Bratt was a large "headlight" diamond Morrow always wore at the neck of his shirt, no matter how soiled the shirt might be.

The first floor of the Morrow ranch housed a store, a saloon, and a public dining room for the convenience of emigrants, but prices were very high. There were rumors also that any money the proprietor didn't take legitimately over the counter he got by having his tough employees "roll" the victims.

It was a lucrative operation Morrow ran, but ever restless and avaricious, he was always conspiring to increase his take. He sent his squawmen and Indian friends on dead-of-night raids on the emigrants' camp grounds to run off oxen, mules, horses, beef and even milk cows and drive them to hiding places in the many deep canyons along the river. Morrow would then show up in the morning, blame the theft on wild Indians, commiserate with the pilgrims, and offer to sell them stock to replace their losses. The replacements, of course, came from the stolen stock of previous unfortunate sojourners at Morrow's.

In time, of course, word of the Morrow depredations spread and wagon bosses began steering a wide course around the ranch. Jack Morrow, not a man to be thwarted easily, put his minions to work digging a deep ditch from the river on the east to the banks of Fremont Slough on the west, a distance of six miles. It effectively blocked passage for heavy wagons, forcing wagonmasters to cross over a bridge he had built almost at his front door. Morrow called his ditch "Rainbow Dike."

As early as June 1860 five eligible voters from the area, including Morrow, met at Cottonwood Springs to organize a county, which they called Shorter. The five rewarded themselves with political offices: Charles McDonald became county judge, W.M. Hinman, treasurer, and I.P. Boyer, J.C. Gilman and John A. Morrow, commissioners.

There was no sheriff. Little official business was conducted in the sparsely popu-

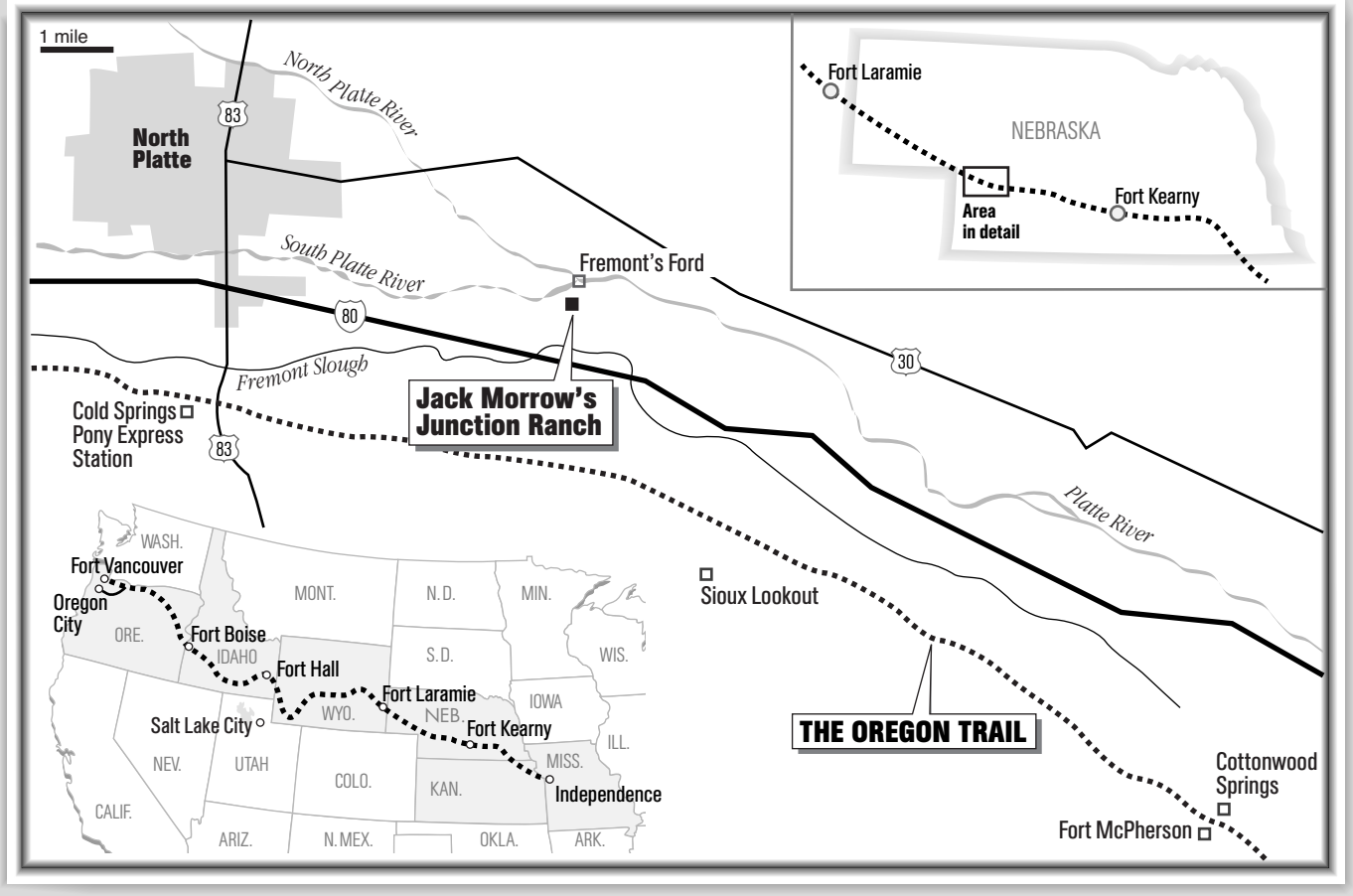
lated county during the next few years. On September 3, 1866, the county was reorganized and renamed Lincoln, after the late martyred president, and again Morrow was elected commissioner.

Late that year the Union Pacific Railroad was completed to a new town called North Platte City, across the river from Morrow's Junction Ranch. The day of the Oregon Trail and the prairie schooner was coming to an end. Undaunted, Morrow tore down his buildings, rafted the cedar logs across the Platte, and rebuilt near the tracks. Ever

Now, with the advent of the railroad, he secured contracts for hundreds of thousands of feet of cord wood and rail ties. Cheyenne and Laramie newspapers and the *Frontier lndex*, a rolling periodical that moved west with the railroad's hell-on-wheels camps, carried Morrow's ads for woodcutters and for ties to be delivered to the latest end-of-track site. But even in this highly profitable enterprise Morrow could not operate ethically and above-board. He later boasted to drinking cronies in Omaha that he shortchanged and overcharged on

his many ventures was Hugh Morgan, a man of superior education who acted as foreman, salesman, cashier and bookkeeper. By all accounts, Morgan had Morrow's complete trust and served him well. Although he evidently did not approve of Morrow's duplicitous practices, his aversion to illegalities, as one historian has pointed out, "was not strong enough to make him give up a well paid job."

Morrow certainly needed a reliable man to take charge when he went on one of his periodic sprees in Cheyenne, Laramie,



the entrepreneur, he saw the coming of the railroad as a new opportunity rather than a threat to his operations. For years he had employed crews to cut telegraph poles in a cedar stand at a place he called Morrow Canyon. Although he had no legal claim on the property, his tough gunmen discouraged anyone else from cutting trees there. Lieutenant Ware said that as early as 1864 Morrow had sold two thousand cedar telegraph poles and had harvested five thousand logs for his own use and for sale.

his contracts and practiced "cribbing," the arrangement of ties or cordwood piles with a hollow center.

During his early wanderings he had discovered a coal deposit in a mountain some eight-hundred miles west of Omaha. He now filed claim to what he called the Black Buttes mine, and contracted with the Union Pacific to provide coal for their locomotives. He also at this time operated a mule train between Laramie and Salt Lake City.

Serving as Morrow's right-hand-man in

Omaha or Denver. He loved to drink and he loved to gamble and he did both with wild abandon when on these binges that Lieutenant Ware called "stupendous in their waste of money and strange eccentricities." Morrow kept a faro table in his saloon at the ranch house, but his memorable gambling exploits took place in the cities.

John Bratt was in Laramie one night when Morrow was on a winning streak. "Before going into a poker game he handed me a roll of some $1,500 in green backs,

requesting me to keep it for him until morning, which I did," said Bratt. "When I handed him back his roll he showed me another of nearly equal amount that he had won from two very prominent men on a flying visit to the city. It is claimed that Jack broke the bank and loaned these gentlemen money to go home on."

On another occasion, when a committee from Washington came west to investigate irregularities in government contracts, a subject Morrow knew a great deal about, he reportedly inveigled the members into a card game and cleaned them to the tune of $60,000.

He was not so fortunate one night in the genteel gambling room operated by Matt Harris in Omaha's Caldwell Block. According to an eye-witness, after dropping about $3,000, Morrow suddenly whipped out a six-shooter and, pointing it at the dealer, said: "You pulled two cards on me. I have lost my money against your brace game and you'll hand it back or I'll put a bullet through you." The dealer was Matt Harris, a very cool man, who quietly remarked: "You are mistaken, Jack, but we do not want any misunderstanding; you may have your money."

Harris…counted out $3,000 and shoved it over the table to Morrow, who put it in his pocket and was about to leave. "Won't you have a drink before you go," asked Harris, who at once ordered the liquid refreshment. Closing the game, he went into another room and soon returned with two revolvers and said: "Jack, you had the drop on me, but now I have got it on you. We don't want any fuss, but you must put the money I paid you back on the table. Put your gun there first, and if you attempt to make a gun play I'll kill you or someone else will."

Morrow burst into loud laughter and declared that he had been joking. "I thought so," replied Harris, but I was not sure of it until I got my guns." Morrow placed his weapon on the table and then returned the money, and, after taking a drink, departed with the invitation from Harris to "come around tomorrow when you are sober and get your gun."

Omaha was always Morrow's favorite city, and in 1868 he sold the Junction Ranch and moved there. His new home was a fine big house on the northwest corner of Eighteenth and Davenport Streets that he purchased from his father-in-law, Reuben Wood. Financially well off, he was not ready to retire at the age of thirty-seven. He still maintained a number of business operations, including a sutlership store at Fort Abraham Lincoln, near Bismarck, North Dakota; and Sixteen Mile Ranch, the first Overland stage stop on the Military Road from Omaha to Salt Lake City. He continued to engage in government contracting, supplying beef cattle for the Standing Rock, Cheyenne and Brule Indian agencies.

Cattleman Ed Lemmon said that in his beef contracts Morrow was still up to his old shenanigans.

Cattleman Ed Lemmon said that in his beef contracts Morrow was still up to his old crooked shenanigans. He was believed to be the originator of the "counting around the hill" trick, wherein beef cattle, strung out for counting, were driven around a hill and back into the tail end of the herd to be counted again. One receiving agent, discovering he was out eight hundred steers, charged Morrow with the shortage, but the unrepentant reprobate defied the government and refused to reimburse the agency. Ed Lemmon thought it ironic that after Morrow's death his heirs filed a $75,000 claim against the government for property they said was destroyed or stolen by Indians during the plains wars. The claim, Lemmon said, was allowed and collected by them.

Over the years Morrow had kept diaries of his daily activities. Sometime in the mid-1870s an Eastern writer offered him $500 for the volumes, with royalties to be paid on sales of a book he planned to write based on the frontiersman's experiences. Morrow refused to part with his diaries and it is not known what became of them. They would still make engrossing reading.

On July 7, 1876, Jack Morrow, after a ten-week bout with pneumonia, died in his Omaha home. He had crammed a great deal of living into his forty-five years. The *Omaha Bee* eulogized his memory, saying:

> The name and fame of Jack Morrow as a frontiersman was and is still widely known throughout the West. He was a remarkable character…, a man with a history...of romantic incidents, hairbreadth escapes, thrilling adventures, personal encounters, and deeds of bravery and reckless daring. The record of his life would make, even in the plain, unvarnished tale, one of the most entertaining volumes, descriptive of Western life and adventures, ever written. [He was] a thoroughly western man [with] many good qualities…, generous in every respect, free with his money, brave and fearless.

Although the paper acknowledged that "like all men he had his faults," it did not go into them. Elaboration would have required another page.

Agnes Jane Morrow, accompanied by Hugh Morgan, Morrow's trusted associate, took her husband's body back to his home in Washington, Pennsylvania, and interred it in the family plot. She remained there five years, until her own death at the age of thirty-five, on July 11, 1881. She was buried beside her husband.

Eugene F. Ware, who, as a young army lieutenant had known Jack Morrow, returned to the area of Junction Ranch in 1906, thirty years after Morrow's passing. He found the site of the old cedar log ranch house, long gone, of course. In its place was a house, "surrounded by trees and smiling gardens," owned by a Swedish farm family who told him they had lived there for eighteen years.

They had never heard of Jack Morrow.

R.K. DeArment is the author of *Alias Frank Canton*, *Knights of the Green Cloth*, and *Bat Masterson*. Robert first appeared in *True West* in 1965.

TRUE WEST EXCLUSIVE

CLASSIC GUNFIGHTS

The Fracas in Frisco Plaza

Elfego Baca Vs. The Cowboys

The "Mexican War" In Socorro County

COW-BOYS ON THE WARPATH

BY BOB BOZE BELL & MARCUS HUFF

Maps & Graphics by Gus Walker

LETTERING BY BOB STEINHILBER

You Pays Your Money and You Takes Your Choice

"I will show the Texans there is at least one Mexican in the county who is not afraid of an American cowboy."

—Elfego Baca, 1881
–Courtesy R. G. McCubbin–

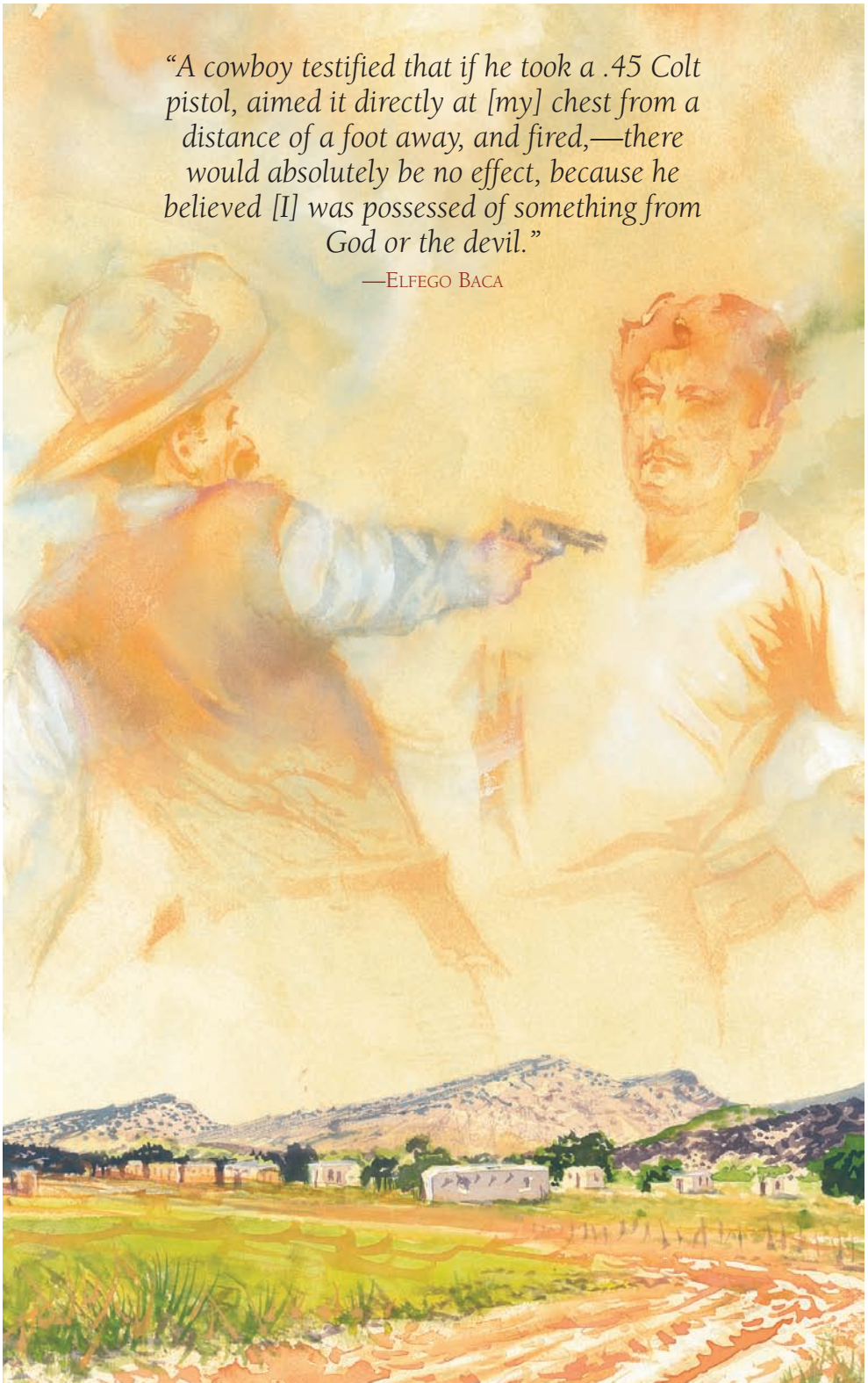
Was Elfego a deputy sheriff at the time of the fighting?

At his trial in Albuquerque, Baca's lawyers produced an affidavit showing Elfego was issued a deputy sheriff's commission by Socorro County Sheriff Pedro Simpson on October 26, 1884 (two days before the trouble in Frisco). However, there is strong suspicion this document was created after Baca's arrest and back-dated to help give his actions the veil of authority.

In later years, Baca always maintained he was "self-appointed." Several sources claim Baca was visiting the Frisco Plazas to electioneer for Sheriff Simpson and make speeches on his behalf (Ironically, Simpson lost the election).

In the end, it doesn't really matter. If Elfego had no official badge, it makes his bold actions against such overwhelming odds all the more amazing.

Most cowboys got along well with Mexicans, including this mixed group of WS cowboys lounging outside their bunkhouse in 1884. Some, however, viewed native New Mexicans as nothing more than bandits.



"A cowboy testified that if he took a .45 Colt pistol, aimed it directly at [my] chest from a distance of a foot away, and fired,—there would absolutely be no effect, because he believed [I] was possessed of something from God or the devil."

—Elfego Baca

October 28, 1884

While visiting Upper Frisco Plaza in western Socorro County, 19-year-old Elfego Baca is called upon to arrest a drunken cowboy, Charles McCarty, 22, for firing off his pistol in Milligan's saloon.

Baca recounted: "I walked up to the fellow using the gun and he had already fired five shots. I commanded him to quit...He turned around and shot my hat off. That started the rest of the performances."

Unarmed at the time, Baca recruits several fellow Hispanics to help arrest the cowboy, but when they return, McCarty is gone.

Baca's posse catches up with McCarty on a "nearby ranch road," arrests him, and takes him back to Middle Plaza. McCarty is still quite drunk and very abusive as he is put under guard at a private residence [probably Deputy Sheriff Pedro Seraccino's home in Middle Plaza].

Within a short time a large number of Slaughter cowboys show up, led by ranch foreman, Young Parham. They are "miffed at the insulting treatment of one of their own," and they demand McCarty's immediate release.

As Deputy Baca tries to negotiate, his prisoner suddenly grabs a pistol from Parham's scabbard and shoots at Baca once again. At this point Baca informs the would be liberators there will be no bail. Reluctantly, the cowboys retreat back to Upper Plaza and Milligan's emporium.

Returning some three hours later, and this time led by saloon-keeper William Riley Milligan (ironic, because it was Milligan who demanded McCarty's arrest in the first place), the cowboys once again demand McCarty's freedom. Baca stands firm, but the crowd is quite aggressive (especially the inebriated Milligan) and the situation begins to deteriorate. Feeling threatened, Baca draws his pistol and fires a shot into the ground for effect.

Milligan scoffs, "You are a bad shot; you didn't hit me."

Baca tells him he just wants them all to go away. Milligan and crew start to leave, going towards where their horses are hitched, but instead the barkeep returns, making more threats. According to Baca, the tipsy Milligan "mounted his horse and again dismounted and came back and said, 'The devil may take me if I don't get Charley McCarty out.'"

Exasperated, Baca informs the mob he will count to three and if they don't vacate, he and his guards will open fire. At this point, both sides draw their weapons as the situation teeters toward the abyss.

"One, two.....three!" Baca says loudly, making good on his threat: then, "I ordered the guards to fire, and the two discharges went off about the same time—their fire and our fire."

The Chloride *Black Range* reports Baca's forces open fire "from a dozen or more guns which constituted Baca's guard," adding, "the range was short the shots not less than fifty.."

In the exchange of shots Young Parham is crushed when the horse he is riding is hit by gunfire and falls on its rider. Parham lives through the night but dies the next day from his injuries. The only other casualty is Tabe Allen, a cowboy who took a ball in the knee.

Once again, the cowboys gather up their wounded and retreat to Upper Plaza.

October 29, 1884

During the night, cowboy couriers ride swiftly to cattle ranches in the vicinity claiming that the Mexicans at the Plazas have "gone on the warpath," killing four or five men, and are threatening to kill all Americans in the vicinity. Alarmed, cowboys saddle up and head to the scene of the supposed conflict.

Deputy Baca has his own problems: "I did not take McCarty up to a justice's office...at 9 o'clock as I had intended. At about 10 o'clock he made his escape. We went after him and overtook him near Milligan's house. I again put him under arrest."

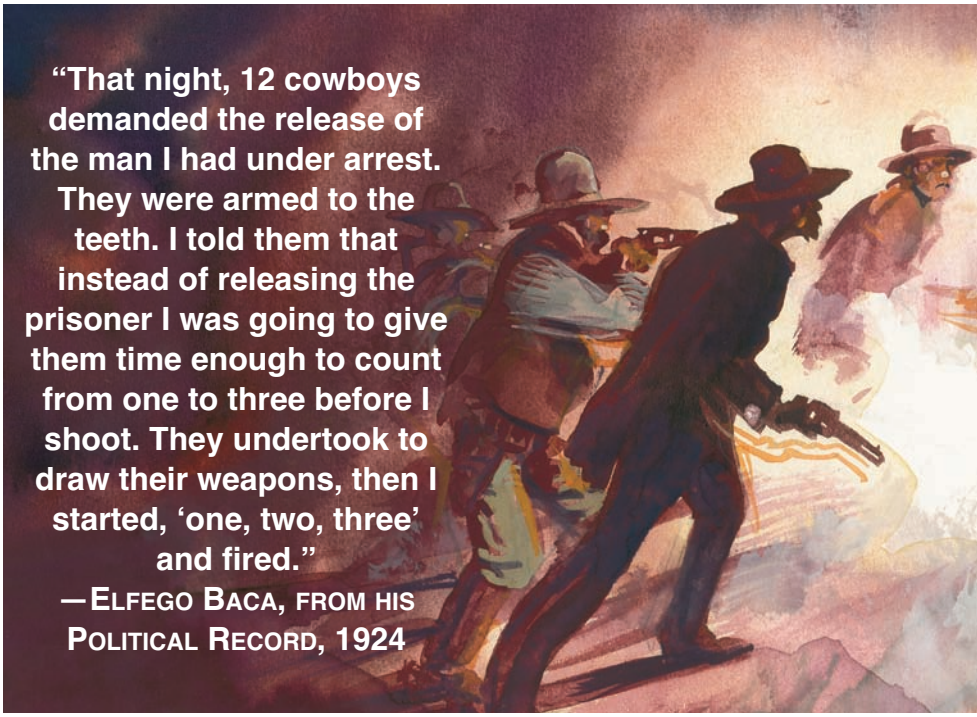
The rest of the day is uneventful, as Baca waits for the other boot to drop.

October 30, 1884

At about one in the morning, a WS ranch contingent arrives just outside town at the SU ranch, and a posse led by Deputy Dan Bechtol, out of Alma, arrives shortly thereafter "full of zeal and whiskey."

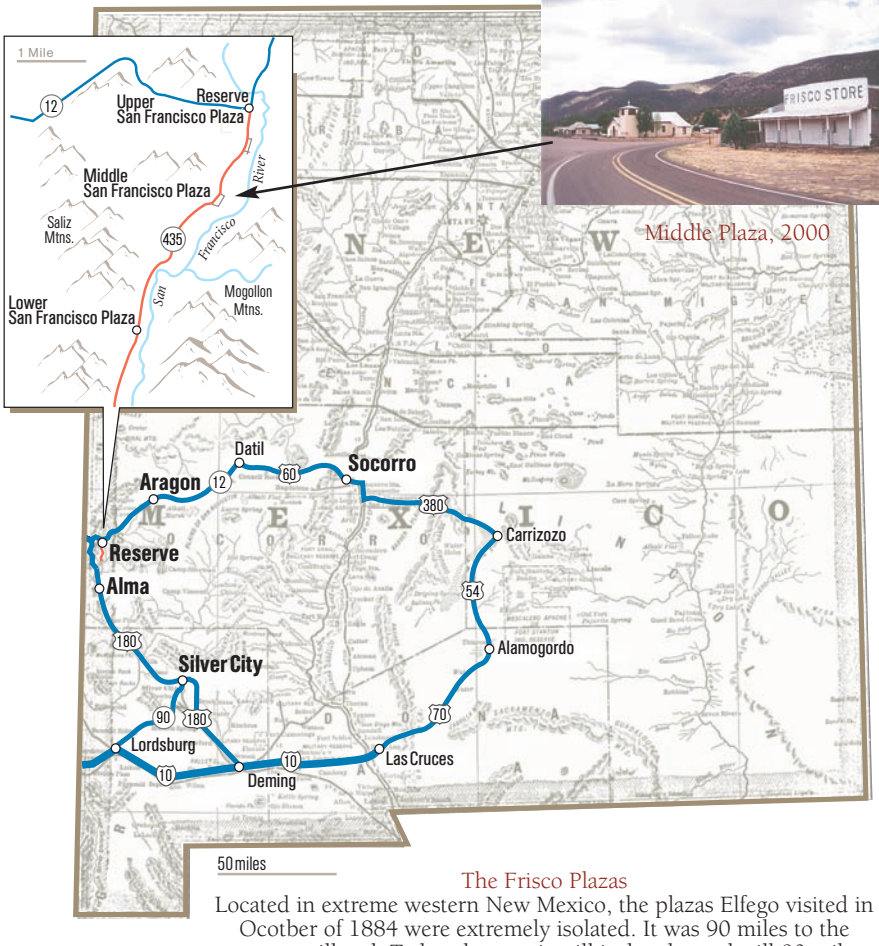
Estimates of the cowboy party's size range from 20 to 80. When the cowboys ride into Upper Plaza they discover "the place almost deserted." Baca evidently ordered the women and children to take refuge in the Middle Plaza church.

About 8 o'clock in the morning, a "committee of two," Jerome Wadsworth and Clement Hightower, ride down to Middle Plaza to check on McCarty. Baca spots them coming and orders them to halt 200 yards out. Pointing two pistols at them, Baca demands to know if they are "friend or foe." The two cowboy emissaries relate the rumor that McCarty is dead and their desire to see him. Baca tells them if they will sign an agreement that Baca



In later years, Elfego inferred he faced the cowboys all by himself, but the court records indicate Baca was backed up by some of the following bravos: Pedro Sarracino, Francisquito, Quico and Chi Naranjo, Bernard Chavez, Juan Luna, Jose Andres and Patrocinio Romero.

Middle Plaza, 2000



The Frisco Plazas

Located in extreme western New Mexico, the plazas Elfego visited in Ocotber of 1884 were extremely isolated. It was 90 miles to the nearest railhead. Today, the area is still isolated—and still 90 miles from the nearest railhead.

Not All The Cowboys Were Bloodthirsty

"I considered the Americans gathered at the Plaza neither more nor less than a mob. Baca, I was informed, was a county officer, and the law was on his side. I felt that, although he may have overdone his duty, the best thing possible for all concerned was not to kill him, but to secure him and get him to the county seat at Socorro."

—James Cook, one of the leaders of the cowboys, in *Fifty Years On The Old Frontier*, 1923

WS Cowboys

James Cook (top of page in buckskins, and on horse) was the foreman of the WS Ranch with headquarters near Alma. He was one of the leaders of the cowboys during the Baca seige. The WS cowboys (seen here on the porch of the bunkhouse, 1882. Note pet bear at left), guarded Baca after the seige because they lost no men in the previous mayhem.

will not be harmed, he will produce McCarty and they can have a trial.

About an hour later, a "four or five man posse" led by Baca, and their prisoner rides into Upper Plaza. As Baca dismounts he greets the cattlemen with, "Good Morning, Gentlemen." The Texan contingency, especially the Slaughter crowd, is "in no mood for either fair play or polite words," and although Baca later quotes their reply as, "Good morning, you dirty Mexican blankety-blank;" it's not real hard to fill in the blanks.

As Baca, his prisoner, and others go inside the justice's home to begin the legal proceedings, a Baca deputy notices a large group of cowboys coming down from Milligan's "with arms in their hands." The prisoner, McCarty, is standing just outside the door [an odd place for a prisoner to be] and says, "Look at the crowd of men coming here."

At some point, the trial actually takes place and McCarty is fined $5 and released. This all takes about 30 minutes.

Greatly outnumbered, Baca holds his own in the tight quarters. After a terse exchange of words with a Mr. Wilson [it is confusing as Baca doesn't tell us his first name and there are at least three Wilsons present; visiting Justice of the Peace William W. Wilson; English rancher, Harold Wilson; and a cowboy with the same surname who Baca had arrested earlier], Baca draws his pistol. At this moment a "young man" in the cowboy party "fired his gun accidentally." Although Baca later testified he didn't think the shot was intended for him, because "there were some more people in back of me," it no doubt sets everyone's nerves on edge.

Elfego, no doubt reacting to the escalating clenched-teeth atmosphere, takes this opportunity to depart "out the back door." A witness outside observes Baca emerge "hastily" and pull "his hat down over his eyes." Baca said, "I went out in the direction of Jeronimo Armijo's house. I watched to see if anyone was following me." There are two boys on the roof husking corn and Baca tells them "Vamos!"

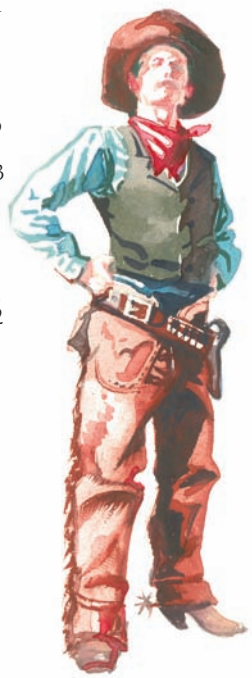
"I entered the house and the woman locked the door [a padlock] and went away." Essentially, Elfego has locked himself inside.

After the release of McCarty, the cowboy's justice of the peace, William W. Wilson, issues an arrest warrant for Baca in the death of Young Parham (and perhaps, this impending "legal" turn of events was already happening as Baca decided to bail out of the courtroom). Baca also still has McCarty's pistol and the newly freed prisoner and his cowboy pards are bent on retrieving it. This arresting party

Is This The Jacal?

"A jacal is a building made by hammering long stakes into the ground," Elfego Baca explained to a writer in the 1920s, "much like a corral—and plastering them over both inside and outside in semblance of an adobe house. It is positively not an adobe house."

The above photograph is alleged to be the jacal Baca hid in during the seige at Upper Plaza. It was published in *Law & Order, Ltd*, in 1928. Although some have questioned the location, it was definitely taken in Upper Frisco Plaza (see "Ducking Bullets," page 6). Unfortunately, there are several things wrong with the dwelling. It appears to have more than one door and Baca tesitifed there was only one. It also strains credibility to think that a building made out of mud and wooden posts, that was subsequently shot to pieces (remember, part of the roof caved in from the bombardment), would still be standing forty-five years later.



An orphan from Lexington, Kentucky, born in 1862, Henry McCarty came to Socorro County in September 1883

McCarty got a job driving cattle for the Slaughter outfit, and was only 22 at the time of the Baca conflict.

How Many Shots Did Baca fire?

Everyone talks about the massive number of shots fired into the jacal (estimates range from 400 to 4,000). But unlike his besiegers, Elfego entered the jacal with two pistols and a finite amount of ammunition. It's probably safe to assume he had on a belt of cartridges—or maybe two—as was the style when going to war at that time. So on the low side he had maybe 25 extra cartridges and on the high side, perhaps as many as 50.

Let's take his series of shots as recounted by eyewitnesses and see if we can determine how low Elfego was on ammunition by the end of the siege:

Baca testified he shot through the door twice at Bert Hearne; William French claimed Baca next shot at "Old Charlie" as he rode up with French's horse and that when French went to his aid, Baca also fired at him. After French attended to the dying Hearne, he said he went back to retrieve his hat and came under fire again. When he made it to safety, his hat had bullet holes in "three places." We'll assume Elfego was a good shot and grant him four shots for that effort.

At this point, French and Old Charlie took up a position from behind a buttress of the church and began "amusing ourselves by exchanging compliments with him." This went on for fifteen minutes. We'll say Baca fired ten times. When an intermediary tried to parlay with Baca, French claims "All we got was more shots." Let's call that five more shots. Total so far: 23.

This was followed by a twenty-minute fusillade by the cowboys, but they don't say if Baca returned their fire. We will assume he did not.

After a lull, Ed Erway ventured into the street, but he was met with a "bombardment" from the "cabin." Give Baca another five shots.

End of firing for day one.

In the morning, French said he ran across the road at an "acute angle" to see if the fox was still in the lair—"[Baca's] shots roused the whole camp." Give Baca two more rounds.

Elfego claimed a cowboy sheltered behind "the cast-iron front of what had once been a stove" made a careful approach, but that Baca creased his scalp with one shot and the attacker fled.

French said they tried unsuccessfully to "get in communication" with Baca but it only resulted in "the expenditure of ammunition." Okay, let's make that five more shots.

Later in the day, French mentioned they again tried to "induce Mr. Baca to come out" but "the only response we could get from him was by exposing someone or something for him to shoot at." He adds, "we fogged him up occasionally, fearing that he might be inclined to rest." This is all somewhat vague, but, given the six or eight hour time lapse and the various known runs at the picket post, we'll estimate low and tally another 15 shots.

Total: 51 rounds.

In conclusion, it would appear, even with two belts of ammunition, Baca was getting very low on cartridges.

includes, Bert Hearne, Charlie McCarty, and six or seven others, who walk and ride down to Jeronimo Armijo's house just south of the justice's house in Upper Plaza.

From the inside of the jacal, Baca hears "several men round the house; I heard them talk, and they wanted to kill me..." Bert Hearne, kicks violently at the door and yells, "I'll get that Mexican out!" At this point, Baca fires "two shots through [the cracks in] the door..."

Shot in the stomach, Bert Hearne staggers backwards and says, "Boys, I'm killed."

The siege is on, as groups of cowboys who were leaving the plaza, hear the shots and come galloping back.

Efforts by the cowboys to dislodge Baca are sporadic at best (see shot-for-shot sidebar). After several attempts to negotiate fail, about 8 to 10 men lay siege to the house all night.

October 31, 1884

When the cowboys return in the morning, they find Baca calmly preparing a breakfast of hot coffee and tortillas on the stove. They open fire again and the barrage continues at intervals throughout the day.

A crowd of Hispanics continues to grow on the hillsides surrounding the village and the cowboys fire a few shots in their direction.

The cowboys try to burn Baca out with kerosene-soaked rags (some say a burning log) from Milligan's store, but the mostly mud structure will not ignite, although, one section of the dirt roof reportedly collapses when a wall, weakened by bullet holes, gives way.

Late in the day, the army of cowboy besiegers grows "grumpy" and "drowsy." They have lost too much sleep and have consumed too much of "Mr. Milligan's forty rod whiskey."

At this point, Deputy Sheriff Frank Rose and two others ride into the plaza as an official party from Socorro. [Francisquito Naranjo is credited with summoning these authorities, but since it's close to a three day ride to Socorro, evidently Rose was in the vicinity of Frisco on other business].

New negotiations, using Naranjo, are started with Baca and a proposal is put forth that will insure Baca's safety until he can be taken to the county seat.

An eyewitness describes what happened next: "Suddenly Baca sprang out of the jacal through a small window...He had a six-shooter in each hand and was clad only in his underclothes. As he came towards me, many of the Mexicans on the hills yelled for him to run to them. Luckily he did not attempt to do so, for many rifles in the hands of the best shots in New Mexico were trained upon him."

Another remarks: "he was like a wild animal, stripped to his shirt, with a revolver in each hand, looking suspiciously on every side of him, as if fearing treachery."

Many of the remaining cowboys want to string Baca up, but cowboy leader, James

Cook gives a passionate speech, counseling them to let the law take its course. Incredibly, the cowboys concede and back down.

Deputy Rose asks the WS cowboys to guard Baca overnight. The prisoner is taken to Milligan's saloon and permitted a "wash and some refreshment." James Cook claims the cowboys retrieved Baca's "Prince Albert coat at the Armijo cabin and returned it to him." [In later years, Baca scoffed he did not own such a garment.] It is at this round table, that Baca explains to his incredulous captors how he survived the two-day-fusillade: "It was only by lying on the floor," Baca told them, "which was a foot or more below the level of the ground, that I escaped being hit."

November 1, 1884

Baca is escorted to Socorro in a buckboard. His captors agree to his terms—that he be allowed to remain armed and that the guards should ride in front of him. He is put in the new jail at Socorro to await the grand jury.

Tried twice, once in Albuquerque (for the death of Hearne) and once in Socorro (for the death of Parham), Baca is acquitted both times.

Odds & Ends

Baca claimed the door of the jacal was produced as evidence at his trial, which contained 367 bullet holes, and a broom was also produced with eight bullet holes in the handle.

The cowboys assumed they had to talk to Elfego in Spanish but ironically it was his second language. He had been schooled in Topeka, Kansas and was not fluent in his native language at the time of the fight.

Charlie McCarty lived a quiet life around Reserve until his death in 1939. His grand-daughter claimed he never talked about the gunfight or its causes. His descendents still resides there, and his grandson, Charlie McCarty runs a ranch and hardware store just north of town.

Elfego was so impressed with the attorneys who defended him, he decided to become a lawyer. In 1919 he was elected sheriff of Socorro County, serving one term. In 1940, the City of Socorro honored Baca with the key and door to the jail cell he occupied in 1884. Baca died in 1945, at age 80.

BORDER LANDS

BY LEON METZ

BORDERLANDS BY THEIR VERY NATURE BRING TOGETHER THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE WORST. The international boundary in particular between the United States—as represented by Texas and New Mexico—and Old Mexico was born in a crucible of violence.

Texas and New Mexico began as the northern reaches of Mexico. Texas achieved its independence in 1836 after fighting the 13 day Battle of the Alamo at San Antonio, which it lost, and the subsequent Battle of San Jacinto near today's Houston, which it won.

As an independent nation, Texas claimed the Rio Grande as its southern and western boundary. Mexico disagreed, and offered the Nueces River.

The bloody struggle that resolved this boundary dispute turned out to be the Mexican War. It started on April 24, 1846, when Mexican cavalry crossed the Rio Grande upstream from today's Brownsville and inflicted 16 casualties on General Zachary Taylor's army. That brief battle set the precedent for the next 150 years of compromise, good neighborliness, and bloodshed.

The 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the war and established the international boundary as the Rio Grande from the Gulf of Mexico to El Paso, Texas. The Gadsden Purchase completed the international portions of the Mexico, New Mexico, Arizona and California boundary in 1854.

However, the international surveys were not without controversies and mayhem. In early 1851, at Socorro, Texas, a suburb of El Paso and a mile north of the Rio Grande, a group of eleven employees recently discharged from the U.S. boundary commission, committed riot, rape, murder and mayhem. They were soon captured and U.S. Boundary Commissioner John R. Bartlett described their subsequent Socorro trial:

> There sat the judge with a pistol lying on the table beside him; the clerks and attorneys wore revolvers at their sides; and the jurors were either armed with similar weapons, or carried with them the unerring rifle. The members of the commission and citizens, who were either guarding the prisoners or protecting the court, carried by their sides a revolver, a rifle, or a fowling piece, this presenting a scene more characteristic of feudal times than of the 19th century. The fair but sunburned complexion of the American portion of the jury, with their weapons resting against their shoulders, and pipes in their mouths, presented a striking contrast to the swarthy features of the Mexicans, muffled in checkered serapes, holding their broad-brimmed glazed hats in their hands, the delicate cigarritos in their lips. The reckless,

The good...the bad...the worst...

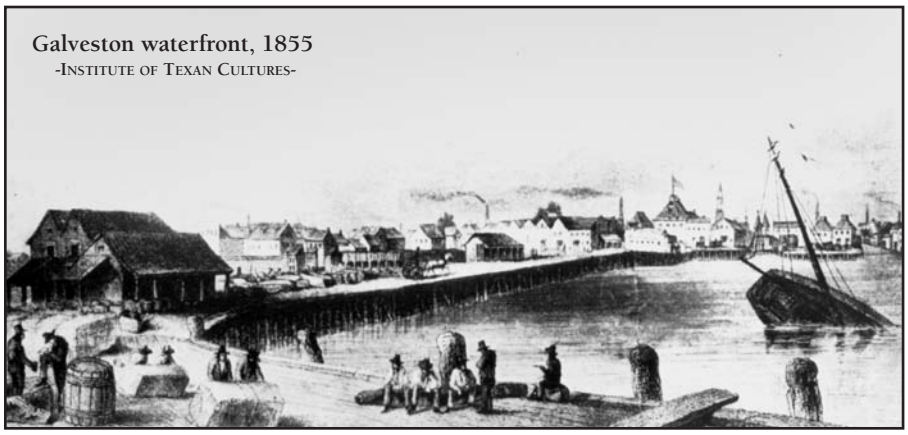
unconcerned appearance of the prisoners, whose unshaven faces and disheveled hair gave them the appearance of Italian bandits rather than American and Englishmen; the grave and determined bearing of the bench; the varied costume and expression of the spectators and members of the commission, clad in serapes, blankets or overcoats, with their different weapons, and generally with long beards, made altogether one of the most remarkable groups to grace a courtroom.

The three outlaws were found guilty, and hanged from cottonwood trees in front of the Socorro Mission. The authorities captured another murderer, Alexander Young, a month later. He received a trial, was found guilty and hanged from the same limb. Socorro subsequently became a quiet, peace-loving community.

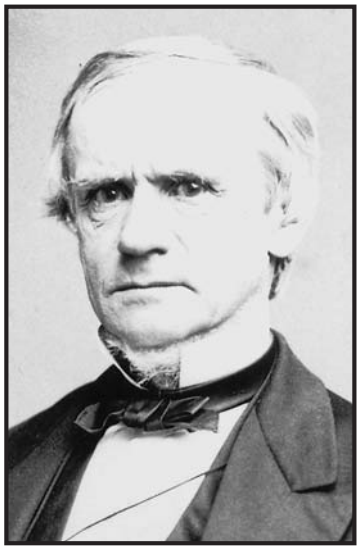
In June of that same year, Bartlett moved the boundary surveys to Santa Rita, near Silver City, New Mexico. One Sunday afternoon, as scout John Cremony lay reading on his cot in his tent, two naked Mexican boys, perhaps ten years old, dashed inside jabbering in Spanish and Apache. Cremony quickly realized that the boys had escaped from Indians who had kidnapped them from their families in Mexico. Now the youngsters sought sanctuary.

The Apaches, who at this time were friendly to the Americans, demanded the boys back. The boundary men bought them off with gifts, and returned the youngsters to their parents.

On the following night, boundary guards noticed a fire down near the river. Suspecting Indians again, a few soldiers started to run them off since Apaches were not allowed inside the compound at night. Instead, the guards encountered Comancheros, people who traded with the Indians. The Comancheros had a 15-year-old captive Mexican girl named Inez Gonzales, a young lady, beautiful and mature. Indians down in Santa Cruz, Sonora had raided her family's caravan and captured her. They then sold her to another tribe, who in turn sold her to the Comancheros, who were now in the process of swapping her to a local rancher.



Galveston waterfront, 1855
-Institute of Texan Cultures-



U.S. Boundary Commissioner
John R. Bartlett
– Rhode Island Historical Society–

Bartlett put the Comancheros in chains, stopped all boundary surveys and announced he personally would return Inez to her home. He then proceeded 150 miles south into Sonora, located the village of Santa Cruz, and returned her to her family.

But this did not end the story. Since he had spent all the boundary commission money on unauthorized travel, Bartlett slipped overland to Guaymas, Mexico, and took ship to San Francisco. There he cashed vouchers and was returning to Santa Rita, New Mexico, when, in Tucson, Arizona, who did he encounter, but the beautiful Inez Gonzalez. She was shacked up with the Mexican garrison commander, Captain Gomez.

Bartlett—his Presbyterian sensibilities totally stunned—conferred with Inez. She explained that Tucson wasn't much, but it was better than Santa Cruz. The commissioner then talked with Gomez, who replied, "What do you expect me to do? Tucson is a very lonely post!" Bartlett next conferred with the village priest, but the good padre ended the conversation by rolling his eyes and walking away muttering to himself. With that Bartlett dropped the matter. His writings never mentioned Inez again.

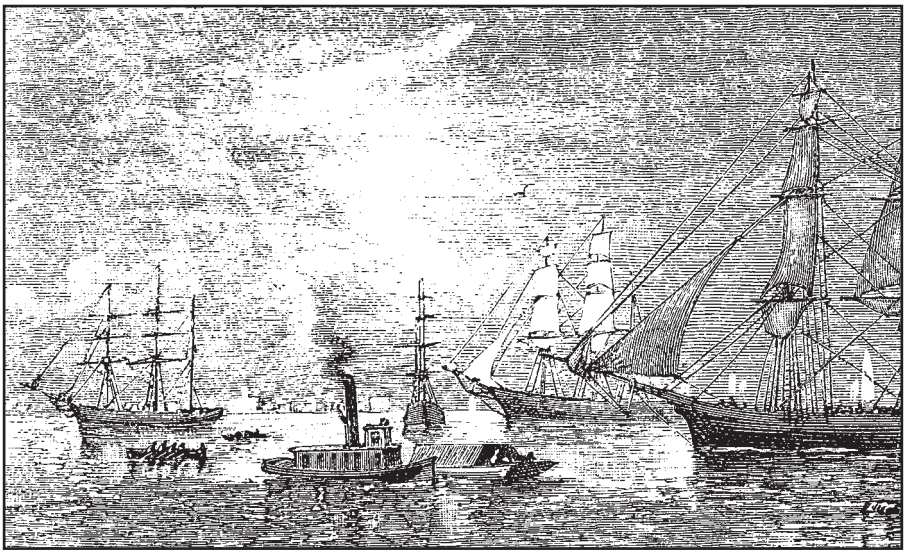
TEXAS RANGER McNELLY

One of the most famous sections of the international boundary involved the Nueces Strip, a green belt extending 300 miles west across the Texas borderlands from the gulf. Immense herds of cattle and wild horses grazed here especially throughout the middle and late 1800s. Due to a stagnant Mexican economy, cattle on Texas ranches offered tempting targets for Mexican rustlers. Cattle theft in Texas flourished beyond belief.

In the meantime, Texas Ranger Captain Leander H. McNelly had hit a stone wall trying to resolve the smoldering Sutton-Taylor feud in the Texas brush country. McNelly turned from that to resolving the problem of border rustling. In this respect he became not so much a lawman as a guerrilla leader. He met the enemy on terms that both sides fully understood. His motto could very well have been: When the shooting stops, whoever is left standing, wins.

McNelly used harsh but successful methods for extracting information. A ranger known as Jesus "Old Cayuse"

Sandoval slipped a noose around the neck of "obviously guilty rustlers," threw the opposite end of the rope over a tree limb and lifted the thieves up and down a few times. Not too surprisingly, most of them had sudden recollections. In 1871, one such interrogation revealed a forthcoming cattle raid near Brownsville. McNelly and forty-eight rangers reached the site just in time to intercept the thieves. Following a brief, thunderous gun battle, the rangers recovered nearly 300 cattle and collected the remains of 15 rustlers. McNelly stacked those bodies in the Brownsville plaza during the following day. Such innovations did not end the stock thefts, of course, but they gave rustlers some second thoughts.

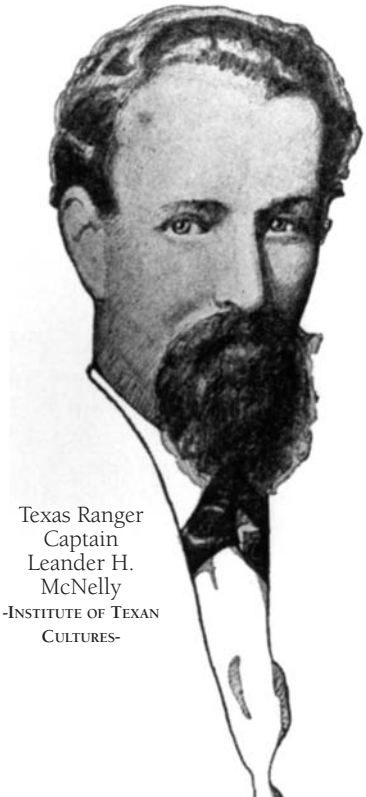


Engraving of Galveston harbor, 1879.
-Institute of Texan Cultures-

McNelly next hit the enemy at home. He and twenty-nine rangers crossed the Rio Grande to destroy a rustler headquarters known as Las Cuevas. When McNelly reached the ford, however, he found Captain James Randlett of the United States Army already there. The captain had fought a skirmish with rustlers during the night but hesitated to pursue them across the river. So while Randlett waited at the deserted crossing, McNelly and his rangers rumbled into Mexico, the ranger captain having reason to believe that should he encounter odds impossible to overcome, Captain James Randlett and the American Army would ride to his assistance.

So at the crack of dawn, McNelly swept down on a Mexican ranch and killed twelve residents. Unfortunately, it was the wrong ranch, and these were the wrong people.

McNelly turned and headed for the primary target, but at Las Cuevas he found not a few dozen rustlers, but two hundred. Following a brief fight, the rangers retreated. Randlett crossed the river and provided back-up. However, Randlett expected McNelly to also quickly retreat back into Texas, and McNelly refused. So during the evening of November 19, 1875, McNelly found himself and 29 rangers, plus a lot of mad Mexicans, all alone on the south bank of the Rio Grande. McNelly stubbornly held out for a few hours, and then he and his rangers exited back into the United States.



Texas Ranger Captain Leander H. McNelly
-Institute of Texan Cultures-

Otherwise, for sheer audacity, few borderland raids surpassed the Corpus Christi strike of May 1875. Four bands of Mexican raiders crossed into southeast Texas, and all but one ran afoul of the United States Army and were chased back. The fourth and last one, led by a borderlands outlaw named Alberto Garza, threatened Corpus Christi. Panicked townspeople crowded aboard two steamers and sailed three miles out to sea where they were more in danger of drowning than robbery.

Back in Texas, Garza released the women, but herded the males toward Nuecestown. Along the way the bandits ransacked the store of George Franks, killing an employee and taking Franks as a hostage. In Nuecestown the marauders ransacked a post office and murdered another employee.

By now a Corpus Christi posse had charged out in pursuit, but only John Swanks, a merchant, showed any real spirit. He all alone charged the Garza forces, obviously hoping his comrades would follow. They did not, and Franks was shot dead.

Since the Mexican force was already retreating toward the border, the Texas posse contented itself by lynching a wounded Mexican. Garza crossed back into Mexico where he surrendered to local officials. The authorities released him, and rebuffed American attempts at extradition.

TEXAS RANGER GILLETT

Out at the western end of the state, Texas Ranger Sergeant James Gillett and Corporal George Lloyd had illegally crossed the Rio Grande from Ysleta, Texas, into Zaragoza, Chihuahua, Mexico. Gillett sought a Socorro, New Mexico, murderer named Enofrio Baca. The ranger caught Baca clerking in a Zaragoza store, stuck a six-shooter in his ear, forced him on a horse, and then raced two miles north to the border while a Mexican posse rode in wild but futile pursuit. Gillett then took his prisoner by train to Socorro, turned him over to vigilantes, and watched him hang.

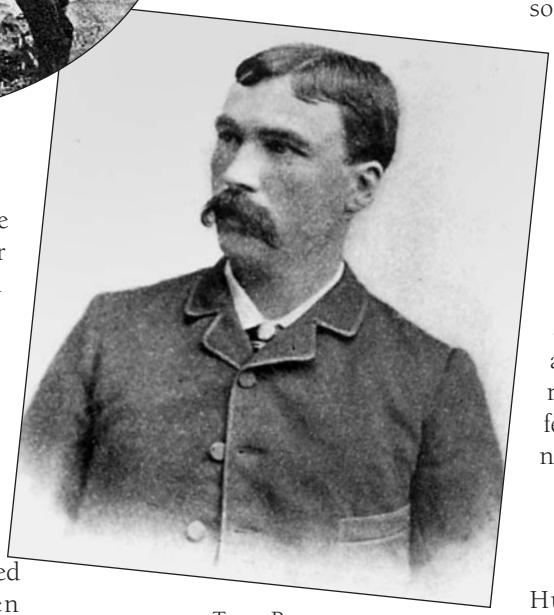
Texas Ranger Sergeant James Gillett
-Author's Collection-

Back in Ysleta, Gillett became the center of an international uproar over this invasion and kidnapping from Mexican jurisdiction. Mexico City put pressure on Washington, which put pressure on Texas, which put pressure on the Rangers, which put pressure on Captain George Baylor, who forced Gillett into civilian status. The ranger found work as an assistant to El Paso City Marshal Dallas Stoudenmire, and then assumed the city marshal's position when Stoudenmire resigned to become a United States deputy marshal.

Gillett then counter responded by bouncing a six-shooter off Keating's head.

On February 10, 1881, the 25-year-old Gillett married 16-year-old Helen Baylor, the daughter of Gillett's former commanding officer, George W. Baylor. It was a shaky marriage, local gossip having it that she consistently laid in bed reading magazines. Nevertheless, the couple had two children, Baylor and Harper. Baylor died at the age of three. Harper later changed his last name from Gillett to Lee, and became a noted Mexican bullfighter, the first American known to do so.

Meanwhile, City Marshal James Gillett accused El Paso Mayor pro-tem Paul Keating of often being too intoxicated to perform his duties. Keating responded by accusing Gillett of not properly accounting for fines and fees. Gillett then counter responded by bouncing a six-shooter off Keating's head.



Texas Ranger
Captain Frank Jones
-Author's Collection-

The El Paso City Council dismissed Gillett as marshal, and his wife Mary sued him for divorce, charging adultery. James Gillett subsequently moved to Marfa, Texas, entered the cattle business, remarried, and helped establish Cowboy Camp Meetings, an activity still famous and popular in that part of the country.

TEXAS RANGER JONES

Back in El Paso, Mary Baylor Gillett married Texas Ranger Captain Frank Jones, commander of Company D, the Frontier Battalion. In those days the Rio Grande meandered across a flat desert floor east of town creating almost impenetrable bosque (thickets) which were miles wide. Old channels extended all over the area, confusing the actual location of the international boundary and creating a no-man's land often called "the island," or "Pirate Island." Thieves and outlaws flourished here, all of them essentially safe from either Mexico or United States jurisdiction.

On June 30, 1893, Frank Jones left a pregnant wife, and rode into the bosque with Deputy Sheriff Robert E. Bryant, and Texas Rangers Karl Kirchner, Ed Aten, J. W. Sanders, and F. F. Tucker. They sought a father and son cattle rustling team identified as Jesus Maria Holguin and Severio. In their pursuit, the lawmen intentionally or unintentionally crossed the border near the Mexican brush settlement of Tres Jacales (Three Shacks). A gunbattle ensued.

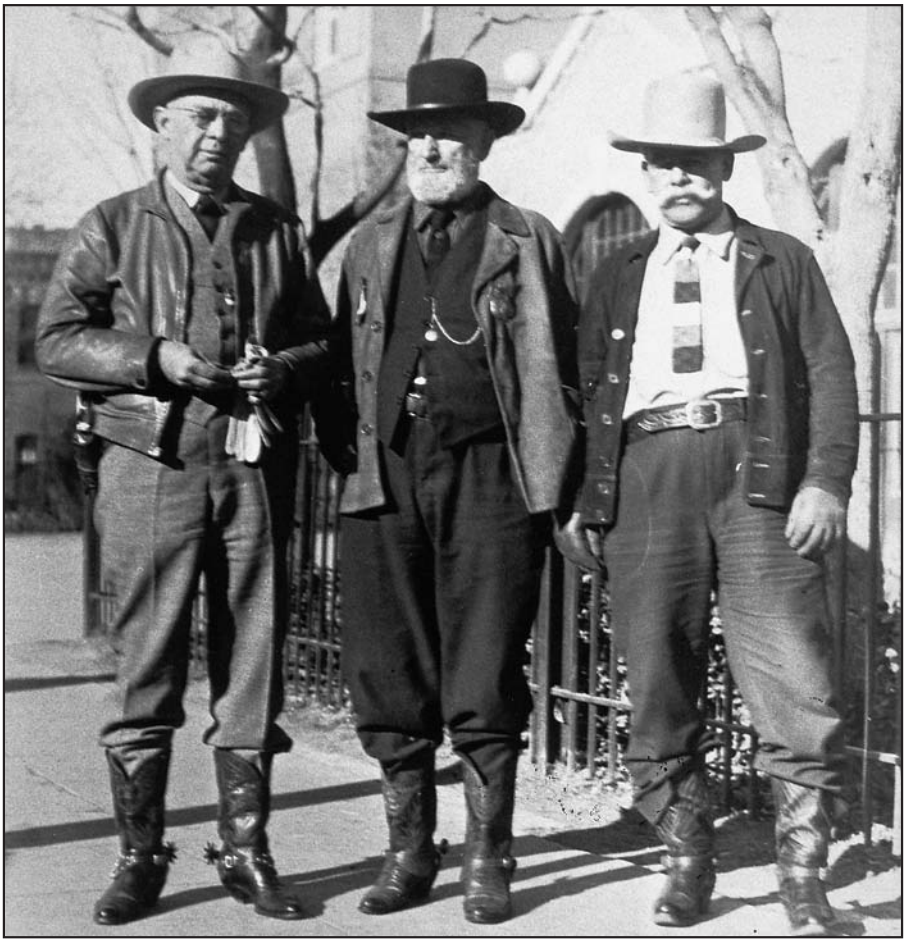
Frank Jones went down hard, but continued fighting until shot a second time. The rangers therefore abandoned their downed leader and retreated. Mexico returned the body a few days later. No arrests were made; none of the fugitives ever went to trial.

TEXAS RANGER HUGHES

Following Jones's death, John R. Hughes, the Border Boss, assumed command of the Frontier Battalion. He was born and raised in Illinois, but was in Texas by his seventeenth birthday. There he became a cowboy, learned Spanish, and by his twenty-first birthday had killed three cattle thieves, captured two others, and recovered stolen steers. He then enlisted in the Texas Rangers, quickly became sergeant of Company D of the Frontier Battalion and then rose to company commander with headquarters in El Paso. Hughes never married, but lived mostly in El Paso and retired in 1915. In 1946, at ninety years of age, he committed suicide. The Border Boss had a remarkable life and career, but unfortunately an adequate biography does not yet exist.

SALT WARS

In the meantime, two El Paso Salt Wars got everyone's attention. The first occurred in 1854. El Pasoan James Magoffin had acquired title to a salt flat in New Mexico on land that would eventually become the White Sands Missile Range. Men in those days took salt wherever found, and salineros had



Three law enforcement officers of the Old West,
L-r: Bill Greet, Texas Ranger Captain John R. Hughes and Jim Chinn.
-Author's Collection-

been removing theirs from this site for a century.

To stop the thieves from removing "his" salt, Magoffin recruited Sheriff Jerry Snyder of El Paso County. Snyder rounded up twenty deputies, and borrowed a mountain howitzer from Fort Bliss. On December 8, the posse rode north to San Augustin Pass in the New Mexico Organ Mountains, where they waited for the Mexican caravan. After three days, the posse learned that the Mexicans were already at the salt lake, so the posse continued north to intercept the returning wagons.

In the melee that followed, the mountain howitzer banged, missing everything except the nearby mountains. The salineros abandoned their wagons and vanished. Magoffin grabbed the wagons and the salt and hustled back to El Paso. However, the Territory of New Mexico swore out indictments against James Magoffin, and it was years before he could reenter that territory without being arrested.

Albert J. Fountain
-Author's Collection-

Salt not only preserved meat, and enriched food, it was a necessary commodity in the Chihuahua silver mines. It helped separate minerals from rock. For this reason, borderland salineros for decades had been plundering a salt flat 80 miles northeast of El Paso. Wagons lumbered in from New Mexico, Texas, and Chihuahua…and for longer than anyone could remember, the salt had been free. To charge for it was like charging for air. Gathering free salt was a centuries long understood tradition and practice.

This salt happened to be on public land, and that made it all the more free for the taking. Since a small lake existed in the mist of the beds, the salineros whipped their oxen-driven carts into the water. They shoveled the salt on board, as the water drained out.

In December 1877, El Paso politicians William W. Mills and Albert J. Fountain formed the El Paso Salt Ring, filed deeds to the salt beds and charged salineros a fee. However, both politicians had a falling out after Fountain reached the Texas legislature, one reason being that Fountain now realized that these salineros voted. Therefore, Fountain formed an anti-salt ring.

On December 7, Fountain entered Ben Dowell's Saloon in El Paso, and encountered Ben Williams, a Salt Ring member. The two men commenced arguing. Fountain rained blows on William's head with his walking stick, while Williams put little round holes in Fountain's shirt with his derringer. Fountain staggered home to bleed and to get his rifle. Williams ran next door for his shotgun.

A block distant, Fountain met Gaylord Judd Clark and Captain Albert

Fountain staggered home to bleed and to get his rifle.

H. French of the State Police. He explained what happened, so Clark and French attempted to arrest Williams. By now Williams began flourishing his shotgun, chasing Clark, a founder of St. Clements Church, back and forth around an adobe portal supporting the saloon roof. Williams finally jumped the wrong way, and there in the dusty street both men paused to confront each other for the final time.

"Williams, don't you dare!," Clark gasped. Williams dared, and pulled the trigger. Clark died on the spot.

Returning up El Paso Street, Fountain put a rifle bullet in Williams, knocking him down. Before Williams could rise, however, French fired a bullet into his head. Round one of the El Paso Salt War now ended.

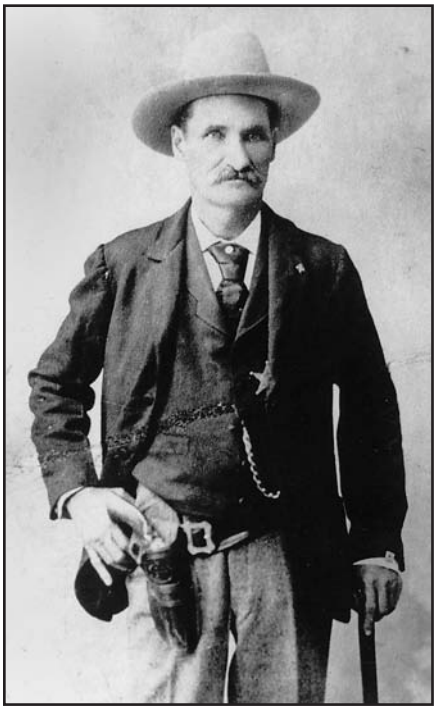
French went on to live a fairly long life. Fountain, and his young son Henry, died in the White Sands of New Mexico during 1896. Their deaths remain "the" major murder mystery of the American Southwest.

Their deaths remain "the" major murder mystery of the American Southwest.

Enter now Charles H. Howard, a stocky, dark-complected Missourian nicknamed "El Indio." As El Paso district judge, Howard reignited the salt controversy by registering the Salt Flats in his father-in-law's name, and forbidding Hispanic salineros from gathering salt without paying fees. This brought him into opposition with Louis Cardis, an Italian, Spanish speaking political leader of the Hispanic salt gatherers. It also brought Howard into opposition with Father Antonio Borajo, a supervising priest at San Elizario and the Mexican village of Guadalupe across the Rio Grande.

During October 1877, Howard caught Cardis inside an El Paso store and killed him with a shotgun. This brought Texas Ranger John B. Jones to El Paso, and Jones raised a company of local rangers whom he placed under the command of Lieutenant John B. Tays. The lieutenant, a former El Paso city marshal, wasn't the sharpest man in town, but he was a brave, decent individual.

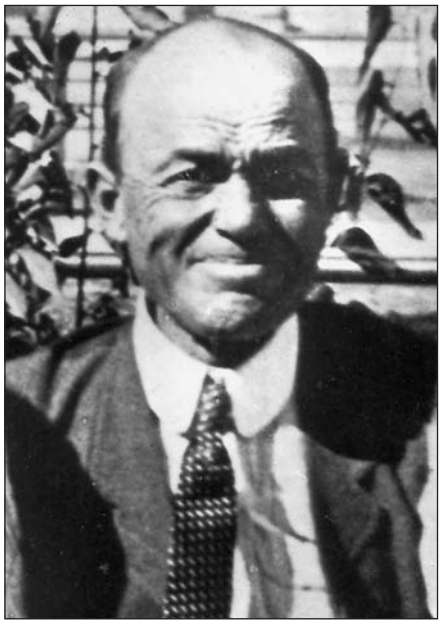
As Jones returned to Austin, Tays in December took Howard and perhaps twenty-five "rangers" on a twenty-mile trek from El Paso to San Elizario, their mission being to prevent a salt insurrection. However, a belligerent San Elizario crowd penned the rangers and Howard inside a building. They murdered San Elizario merchant Charles Ellis. From across the border, Father Borajo allegedly thundered, "Kill all the gringos, and I will absolve you."



Constable John Selman
-Author's Collection-

During a three-day San Elizario siege, one ranger died from gunfire. To save everyone's life, Howard turned himself over to the mob…the Texas Rangers surrendered. Howard was executed, dying bravely. The rangers were released, minus weapons.

Within a month a group of New Mexico rangers recruited from the neighborhood of Silver City, New Mexico, rode through El Paso and into San Elizario practically unopposed, in the process, raping, killing, and stealing. It is believed, without conclusive evidence, that Billy the Kid rode with this bunch. The timing was right. The Kid allegedly broke a friend, Melquiades Segura, out of the San Elizario jail.



Andrew Jackson Lightfoot
-Author's Collection-

As result of the El Paso Salt War, the El Paso valley briefly underwent martial law. A congressional investigation handed down indictments. But no one ever went to trial because everyone involved in that sorry affair had a lot to be ashamed about.

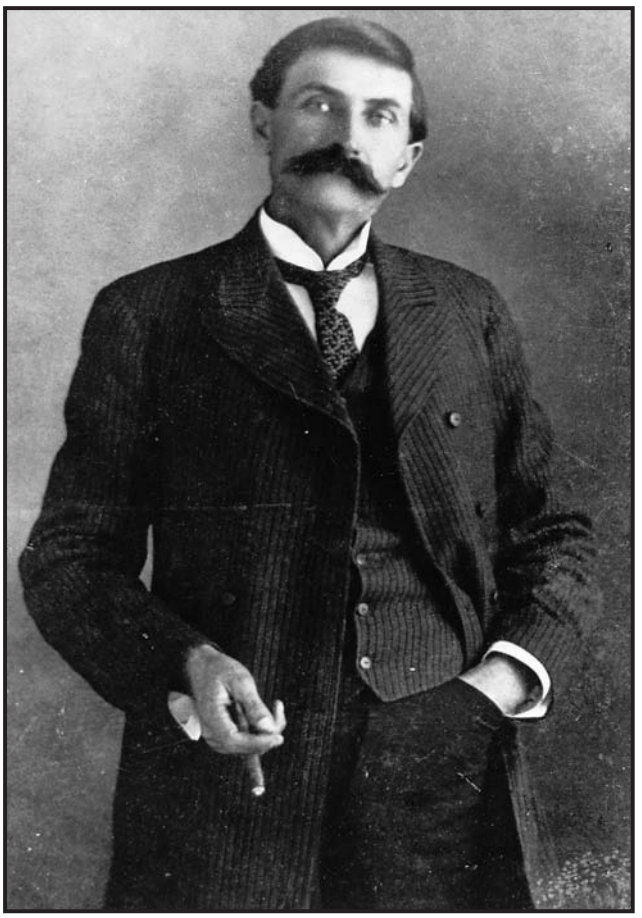
JOHN WESLEY HARDIN

And speaking of sorry affairs, at least those of the heart, the noted gunslinger John Wesley Hardin was not ordinarily thought of as a border man, although that was exactly what he became during his last few months. He reached El Paso in April 1895, hung out his shingle as an Attorney at Law, and his first and only client turned out to be Martin M'Rose, a New Mexico cattle rustler-in-hiding across the Rio Grande in Juarez, Mexico.

Police officer John Selman Jr.
-Author's Collection-

Martin sent his attractive wife, Beulah, back to El Paso for an attorney. She got John Wesley Hardin. Within a week, Hardin had gotten her. She never returned to her husband.

One afternoon while carousing in Juarez, Hardin entered a cantina and encountered the M'Rose gang, although Martin wasn't present. One word led to another, and Hardin struck a man named Andrew Jackson Lightfoot with



Customs collector Pat Garrett, El Paso, 1901.
-Author's Collection-

a resounding blow heard throughout every saloon in town. Wes then challenged the others to a shootout. No one accepted.

Days later, Martin M'Rose, the ungrateful wretch that he was, threatened his attorney, apparently because of Hardin's attentions to his wife. Hardin allegedly arranged for M'Rose to slip across the Rio Grande and confer with his woman. Of course, Hardin notified various law officers of Martin's intentions, specifically United States Deputy Marshal George Scarborough, El Paso Police Chief Jeff Milton, Texas Ranger Frank McMahan, and (allegedly) Constable John Selman. Scarborough guided M'Rose across a railroad bridge spanning the Rio Grande, then the lawmen shot him to death before he had gone ten feet on Texas soil.

Another month passed, and on August 19, Constable John Selman quarreled with Hardin in the middle of San Antonio Street, allegedly accusing Wes Hardin of not paying him for his part in the M'Rose killing. Later that evening a brooding Selman followed Hardin into the Acme Saloon, watched him belly up to the bar and begin rolling dice, and then shot him in the back of the head. Hardin was buried in El Paso's Concordia Cemetery, three graves south of Martin M'Rose.

Selman himself met death the following year after his 21-year-old-son, police officer John Selman, Jr., allegedly took a 15-year-old Mexican girl to Juarez to get married. After failing to interest a priest, the love birds settled down for the night in a hotel. Their bliss was interrupted by the girl's furiously indignant mother. The young lady went home. El Paso policeman John Selman, Jr. went to the Juarez prison.

On April 5, 1896, Constable John Selman cornered U.S. Deputy Marshal George Scarborough in an alley and demanded his assistance in getting Young John released from the Mexican jail. Scarborough not only refused, he put four bullets in Selman. Old John died that afternoon at Sisters Hospital.

PAT GARRETT

Two people seldom associated with the borderlands, and yet very much a part of it, were Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid. The Kid grew up in Silver City, New Mexico, where, since his friends were Spanish speaking, the Kid learned the language fluently. Pat Garrett, an Alabama native, never heard much Spanish until he reached Fort Sumner, New Mexico, but there he married an Hispanic woman in 1880, and after that he spent much of his career speaking Spanish. His nine children conversed in Spanish as well as English, and his grandchildren still do.

Pat Garrett became the Kid's first biographer (although Garrett's pal Ash

BORDERLAND: Friend or foe?

A borderland, as Americans and Mexicans tend to think of it, is that strip of water and land separating two countries. And it not only separates two nationalities, it separates two ways of life, two sets of laws, two different languages, and a host of conflicting customs.

But borders tend to unite, too. People on opposite sides of an international line often speak two languages, although with a variety of accents. People on opposite sides of the border such as SanDiego/Tijuana, Nogales/ Nogales, El Paso/Juarez, Presidio /Ojinaga,and Brownsville/ Matamoros often share as much or more in common than each does with respective cities in their own nation.

These communities invariably started as small Indian villages, later consumed by Spanish towns spreading out on both sides of what is now an international line. Later these towns became Mexican communities, villages frequently united by trade such as American wagon trains winding down the Santa Fe and Chihuahua trails.

The international boundary between the United States and Mexico, established during the 1850s, brought not only renewed settlement and commerce, but disruption and violence. This line in particular attracted the lawless, the rootless, the hard-cases who belonged nowhere, and so sought the diversities of the line as their last refuge pending eventual assimilation and civilization.
—L.M.

THE BORDER BREED

Literally millions of people presently live alongside the United States-Mexico international border, a 1,951 mile strip of water and sand. But only a few of these, less than one-third, qualify as border people.

In modern times, a main criterion for becoming a border breed is to speak—and frequently read—English and Spanish fluently. Citizens of both countries tend to intermarry. They generally understand each other's customs, mores, and history. Border breeds oftentimes live and work in both nations. They run corporations; they serve on international committees; they get elected to high offices.

Border breeds of the late 1800s and early 1900s, however, were often a breed apart, sometimes patronizing and oftentimes hostile. Acceptance on both sides of the border did not come easily. Law officers, for instance, had to become bilingual, to understand the mores of other nationalities. However, this did not necessarily make them lovable as personalities, or likable and understandable as human beings.

One could argue then that it was the border breeds—the ones who knew the most about the other—they were the ones who brought disruption back and forth across the international line. In the end, however, although they made fascinating history, they could not prevail as civilizers. The "wild" border breed assimilated.

The modern border breed took its place.

George Scarborough (right).
-Author's Collection-

Part of an El Paso law enforcement group, circa 1895.
Chief of Police Jeff Milton is seated at right.
-Author's Collection-

Upson claimed to have written every word of it). According to the story, the Kid spent considerable time south of the border, in the process shooting bandits and wooing charming young ladies. Then he moved into Lincoln County, New Mexico, and became involved in the Lincoln County War. The last words he ever spoke were Spanish: "Quien es?, (Who is it?)", he hoarsely whispered in that darkened Fort Sumner, New Mexico, bedroom only seconds before Sheriff Pat Garrett squeezed the trigger.

Garrett's bilingual abilities later stood him in good stead when President Theodore Roosevelt appointed him collector of customs at El Paso in 1901. Garrett's job primarily involved the importation of Mexican cattle, so Pat spent considerable time in Mexico. However, Garrett also had a caustic personality, and in late 1905 it cost him his job. Roosevelt refused to re-appoint him for another two-year term.

Garrett returned to his ranch in southern New Mexico, where, on February 29, 1908, he died five miles from Las Cruces. A cowboy named Wayne Brazel claimed self defense in court, arguing that he shot Garrett in the back of the head when the old man-hunter halted his buckboard to urinate on the desert sand. A Las Cruces jury accepted the self defense plea.

The "real" reason behind Garrett's murder is as unclear now as it was then. A motive might have been that Jim Miller, a notorious hired gun, offered to purchase Garrett's ranch, claiming he needed a remote site to temporarily stock Mexican cattle prior to shipping them to market. However, Miller also seems to have been involved in smuggling Chinese out of Mexico and into the United States. Garrett's ranch would have been a perfect temporary hideout.

Garrett's death aside, the early 1900s, with the Mexican Revolution commencing, were a time of great transition in the borderlands. Poverty stricken Mexican and Chinese refugees streamed north into the United States, as did wealthy Mexicans. Former Chihuahua Governor Luis Terrazas took over an entire floor of El Paso's Paso del Norte Hotel, and then

purchased the majestic A.B. Fall mansion on Arizona Street.

PANCHO VILLA

Meanwhile, hundreds of Mormon refugees fled Mexico. Over 500 once lived in El Paso lumber sheds.

Pancho Villa, at times a bloody bandit and at times a capable military leader, assisted in taking Juarez in 1911. He then helped himself to a comfortable share of the gambling casinos. Pancho resided in both El Paso and Juarez with his various wives. He believed in marriage but not divorce.

One of the great questions involving Pancho Villa, however, is why he made the famous March 9, 1916, assault upon Columbus, New Mexico. One theory claims retaliation against Sam Ravel, a Columbus merchant, who allegedly cheated Villa out of several thousand dollars in weapons. Of course, by then Villa should have been used to being cheated. Another theory has it that Villa coddled expectations that President Woodrow Wilson would recognize him and not Venustiano Carranza as president of Mexico. Then there is the nutty theory that the U.S. government paid Villa to attack

Pancho resided in both El Paso and Juarez with his various wives.

Columbus so that Americans might intervene and test equipment, and toughen soldiers for the forthcoming World War I conflict.

In this writer's judgment, Villa attacked Columbus because it was an isolated target of opportunity. This was ranching area, and Villa hoped that neighborhood horses would replace his worn out animals. Columbus also had supplies to replenish Villa's largely depleted stocks.

It also had an army post which Villa may or may not have known about, but regardless Villa paid a terrible price for his rashness. Villa's raiders killed less than thirty Columbus residents and

Pancho Villa
-Author's Collection-

soldiers. The United States Army at Camp Furlong, near Columbus, slaughtered dozens, perhaps a hundred or so of his raiders.

The Mexican government retired Villa a few years later with the "$50,000 cannonball," a press term referring to government bribes for aging revolutionaries. Villa was assassinated on July 23, 1923 in Parral, Mexico. The mystery surrounding his murder remains just as deep as the mystery of why he attacked Columbus.

PASCUAL OROZCO

In the meantime, Pascual Orozco was in many respects better known, at least during the earlier part of the Mexican Revolution, than Pancho Villa. Orozco commanded Mexican insurgents who captured much of Chihuahua, and in particular the City of Juarez in May 1911.

Yet, at his moment of great triumph, with the revolution essentially over and his friend and commanding officer, Francisco Madero, ensconced as president of Mexico, things started going downhill for Orozco. He believed Madero subsequently betrayed the revolution, so Orozco raised a small army and recaptured Juarez. Madero responded by sending troops led by General Victoriano Huerta to flush out Orozco. However, Huerta returned to Mexico and arranged the assassination of President Madero.

Huerta became president, and the revolution restarted. However, a combined army of insurgents drove him into Spanish exile on July 15, 1914. In Barcelona, Huerta chafed to return, and to this end received financial assistance from Germany. He sailed for New York, and announced he was touring the United States while secretly planning to meet Orozco at Newman, Texas, fifteen miles east of El Paso. Orozco would arrange wagons and provide manpower. The two men would circle El Paso into Mexico and restart another revolution.

The train stopped in Newman on the morning of June 27, 1915. Huerta stepped off, and Orozco greeted him. Then U.S. Department of Justice officials greeted both men, and placed them under house arrest in downtown El Paso.

Orozco escaped on the evening of July 3, and remained free for two months—yet inexplicably did not flee to Mexico. On August 30, a contingent of cowboys, Texas Rangers, and federal authorities caught up with Orozco at Green River Canyon, twenty-five miles east of Sierra Blanca, Texas. The lawmen killed him and four Mexican companions.

The body entered a vault at El Paso's Concordia Cemetery on September 3, 1915. Over 3,000 people attended the services.

The former president, Victoriano Huerta, developed cirrhosis of the liver, and died in El Paso on January 16, 1915. His body went alongside Orozco's in the vault.

In 1925, Orozco, a border man to the core, was declared a hero of the revolution. His body traveled with honors to Chihuahua City. Victoriana Huerta, a former president of Mexico and lately a border man also, remained in Mexican eyes, a traitor to the Revolution. He was removed from the vault and buried in El Paso's Evergreen Cemetery, where he rests today.

Leon Metz is a highly published author and recognized authority on the Old West. His books include profiles of Dallas Stoudenmire, John Selman, Pat Garrett, and a detailed look at the border country of south Texas and New Mexico. Metz lives in El Paso, where he hosts a popular history radio program.

OCTOBER 25, 1870

Battle on the Belly River

By Gord Tolton • Illustrated by Gary Zaboly

When plains aboriginal tribes began to acquire horses and firearms in the 1700s, territorial rivalries became a fact of life. Among the bitterest of rivalries was that which existed between the Cree and the Blackfoot. One of the last Inter-Tribal Indian Battles in North America occurred in the valley of the Oldman River, what was then known as the Belly River, in the heart of what is now the small city of Lethbridge, Alberta.

Not a lot of love was ever lost between the nations of the Blackfoot and Cree confederacies. Most elders could always remember a time when warriors of either tribe were taking a vicious swipe at each other. For a few years, though, at the behest of missionaries and through the efforts of Maskipitoon of the Crees, the bloodshed had subsided. By 1870, as their traditional domains began to shrink, the prime times of both Confederacies on the plains were slowly coming to a close. But not before the Cree made a last grab for territory at the expense of their traditional foes.

In October of 1870, scattered bands of Nehiyawak, or Cree; and Nakota, or Assiniboine; from the areas of the Touchwood Hills and Wood Mountain, gathered at the Vermilion Hills of southern Saskatchewan, the gathered party

numbering between 600 and 800. Leaders of the assemblage had correctly received information that the Blood faction of the Blackfoot Confederacy were in a weakened state due to an 1869 smallpox epidemic, and that their camps and horses were vulnerable to attack. The Cree-Assiniboine faction was led by Big Bear, Piapot, Little Mountain and Little Pine. It was decided to launch an expedition into the heart of the Blackfoot territory, to make an attempt to establish Cree dominance.

The Blackfoot confederacy of the age consisted of the Siksika, or northern Blackfoot; two branches of the Piikani, or North Peigan and South Peigan; and Kainaiwa, the Blood. For countless ages, the Blackfoot nations had held sway on the portion of the prairies from the Red Deer River south, far into Montana Territory. Their domination of the buffalo trade, with the Hudson's Bay Company and with American traders, had for years earned the envy of the Cree and Assiniboine rivals. For decades, Cree and Blackfoot played a chess game of coup-counting, horse stealing and hit-and-run warfare.

By 1870, the Blackfoot were in a favorable trade situation as American free traders, supplied by the merchants of Fort Benton, were operating well into their territory. Many circumstances were changing. The land itself had changed hands from the domain of the Hudson's Bay Company to the new nation of Canada. Relentless hunting pressure was beginning to dwindle the herds of buffalo. The U.S. Army had exercised authority on their side of the line, when Major Eugene Baker engineered a massacre of Peigans on the Marias River in the spring. The results of the battle, and the return of the dread smallpox led to a seriously weakened Blackfoot Confederacy.

Into these circumstances an amassed Cree war party decided to strike. The expedition followed the South Saskatchewan river upstream, eventually reaching the mouth of the Oldman, knowing the tributary would bring them to their quarry.

A couple dozen miles northeast of their eventual target, the war party made camp on the Little Bow river. That night Piapot had a fateful dream. Aboriginal culture takes their dreams very seriously, and base many of their decisions on such phenomenon.

A ten-year-old Cree boy, Iron Horn, told of the War Council he witnessed

between Piapot and his soldiers. "My children, I had a dream last night. I saw a buffalo bull with iron horns goring, stamping and killing us. We were unable to destroy it. After long meditation, I have come to the conclusion that we must abandon this venture and return home, otherwise misfortune awaits us." The Council was stirred by Piapot's vision. Many heeded the warnings and turned back for home.

But a war chief with an opposing view, sought to rekindle the fires in Cree bellies, and went so far as to ridicule Piapot's notions: "My children, don't believe in a dream. Advance and capture the Blackfoot Nation, women and children. The smallpox killed off most of their fighters so we won't be opposed by any great number." Those warriors who had come so far, and were now so close to their goal, would not be dissuaded. The Cree raiders had come for a fight, and a fight they would have.

From the Little Bow River, scouting parties were dispatched to assess the military capability of the Blackfoot camps and the numbers of their horses. At 15 Mile Butte, Cree Scouts attacked a Blood family's camp, killing everyone in it. But a small boy survived the attack and followed the Whoop-Up Trail to the St. Mary's River to warn the encampment there.

Near the junction of the St. Mary's and Belly Rivers, the scouts found some small Blood camps and gained their horses. But what these Cree scouts did not realize was that they were in the direct vicinity of the American-owned free trading post of Fort Whoop-Up. The managers of Whoop-Up, Alf Hamilton and John Healy, were on mostly good terms with the Blackfoot. For some reason, the scouts failed to take notice of the over 200 Peigan lodges in the direct vicinity of Fort Whoop-Up. In fact the river juncture had been a traditional Blackfoot campsite for untold generations.

To make matters worse, on their way back to the Little Bow camp, the scouts reported on the existence of a few lodges on the west side of the Belly, three miles north of Fort Whoop-Up. Their observations supposedly complete, the scouts returned to the Little Bow, confidently reporting 60 Blackfoot lodges, with the core camp being at what the Blackfoot called "sik-oko-toks" or "the black rocks," where outcroppings of coal would someday give rise to the birth of the Coalbanks mines, and eventually, Lethbridge. What the spies failed to understand was that they had merely located the middle core of what was essentially a much larger encampment stretching twenty miles, from Forts Kipp to Whoop-Up. The Bloods were only a small part of much more than 200 lodges of an amassed Blackfoot Confederacy. The botched reconnaissance would be a fatal error for the Cree-Assiniboine invaders.

Based on the scouts faulty interpretations, it was decided that the attack was to be upon the sixty lodges at the Black Rocks. A temporary war camp was set up by the Crees on the Coyote Flats, scant miles from the target. In the dim pre-dawn hours of October 25, the several hundred members of the War Party followed the Belly River Valley south to the scene of their attack.

The Cree-Assiniboine party attacked the Blood camp, located above the coulees along the Belly River, not far in distance from the St. Mary's River, and unknown to the attackers a short ride away from the Fort Whoop-Up camp of the Peigan. A brother of Red Crow, destined to become the Blood chief, was killed, as were two or three women. The Blood warriors commanded by Bull Back Fat and Button Chief, immediately counter-attacked, and engaged the enemy on the plains between the oxbow of the Oldman River. Big Brave, a Peigan warrior said:

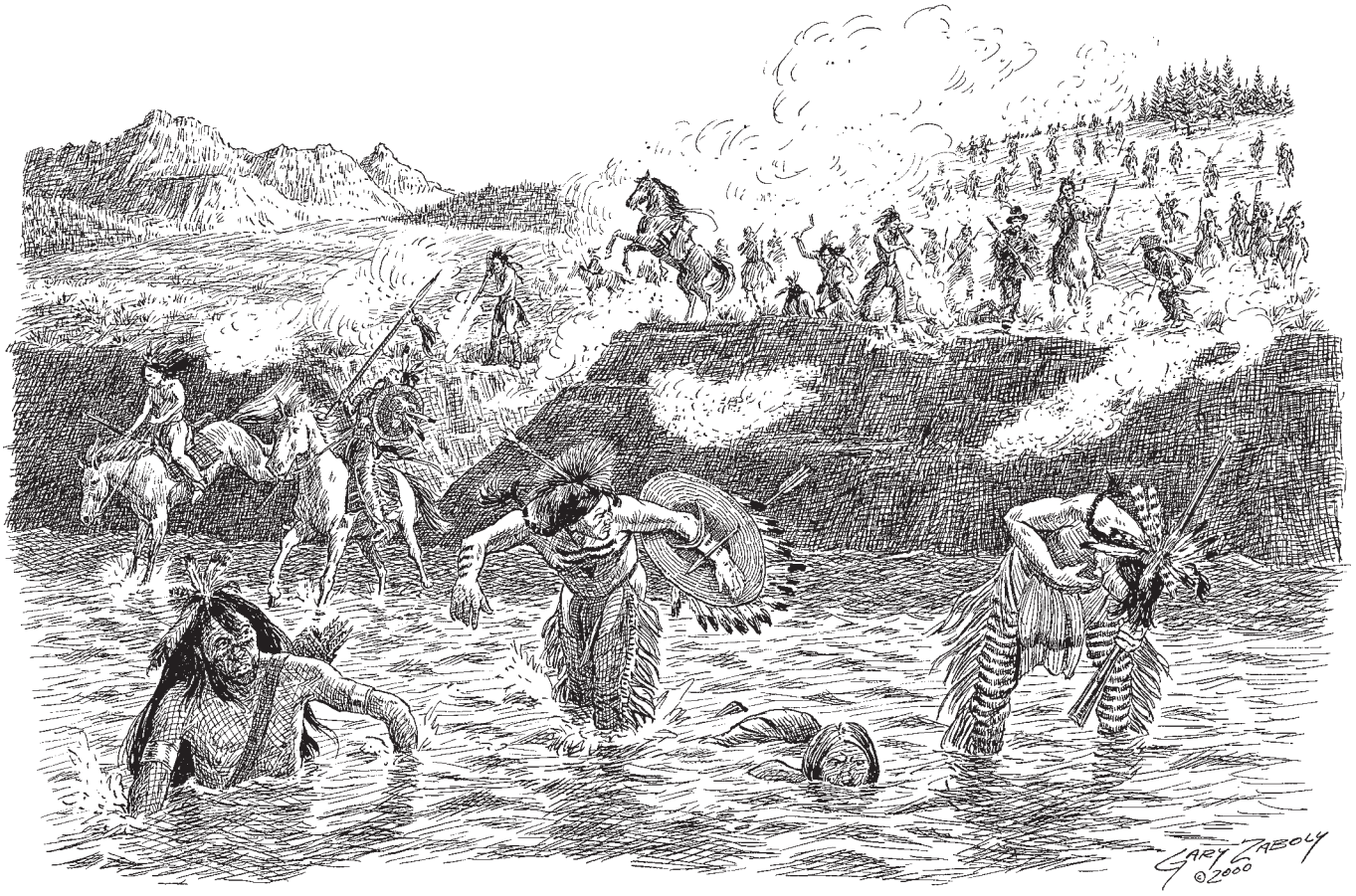
> "The Crees took their knives and slit the teepees of our village down the sides and then rushed in. When the Crees rushed into the teepees, they took everything they could lay their hands on, killing the women and children, and this made me mad. That was why I fought so hard that day".

Soon the Blood allies camped nearby were alerted to the dangers faced by their brethren. As the attack started, female messengers scampered off to the south, swimming the Belly River to alert the Peigan of the attack and bring them to the assistance of the Blood. One of the women of the camp picked up a tomahawk and single-handedly killed four Cree attackers. Among the Whoop-Up camp were the Blackfoot Metis, Jerry Potts, later to be a Scout for the Northwest Mounted Police, and brothers Alex and Charles McKay, known respectively as Unborn Calf and The Bear. Jerry Potts, no stranger to gunfights in both the red and white man's world, did not hesitate to offer his services to the Peigan, and to his own aboriginal roots.

A group of South Peigans, led by Big Leg, Black Eagle and Heavy Shield were encamped near Fort Whoop-Up as well. The Peigans were still stinging from an attack by the U.S. Army on the Marias River earlier that year. Blackfoot warriors had had enough of invading aggressors, and soon the Crees were to suffer for the humiliations of the Baker massacre. Assistance also came from a small camp of Peigan at nearby Fort Kipp.

In scattered twos and threes, warriors for the defense of the Bloods appeared singing war songs, praying that if they were to die, to die as soldiers. Big Brave carried a shield that had been blessed by his Medicine Man, and sang as he carried the shield: "My body will be lying on the plains." When the allies arrived to reinforce the defense, the Cree realized they were now outgunned and outnumbered. Before long the assembled defenders had the Cree backed into the ravines, known locally as "coulees," where the hunters became the hunted. The fight became most intensive as the Cree used the coulees as breastworks, with which to snipe at the charging Blackfoot. Cree ponies were run into the bottom of the ravines, as their riders established a defensive position.

The Peigan secured a smaller coulee to the south, as the Bloods and Blackfoot attempted to control the high ground above, eventually they too were forced into the coulees. For four hours, the Crees and Peigans battled between their parallel positions, exchanging shots at any visible target. In later years, based on interviews with participants, Mounted Police Surgeon George Kennedy wrote: "A head, a hand, a piece of blanket or robe—anything was enough to shoot at." Two Peigan scouts were sent out on horseback, to ascertain numbers, and were quickly put out of



commission. Some Peigan were able to get to the narrow tops of the coulees, and dropped heavy rocks onto the heads of their enemy.

Calf Shirt was a seasoned Blood warrior, well-trained in the arts of fighting and of revenge parties. He had just returned from a hunt when his father told him of the battle already in progress. Immediately he switched from hunter to defender, as his father painted him for war. Before departure, however, he promised his father that should he fall to a Cree arrow, he would not remove it. Calf Shirt got on to the battlefield in time to find the Crees trapped in one of the many coulees stretching from the prairie to the river. Among the beset Cree were a tall warrior, and another draped in a calfskin robe. The pair had already killed several Blackfoot, and Calf Shirt was warned away from them.

True to his religious convictions, he grasped a knife that had been among the prized possessions in his Bear Medicine bundle, an iron weapon, with a rare double edge. With only the knife in his hand, and shouting a war song, Calf Shirt rushed the Cree stronghold. The tall defender deftly put an arrow into Calf Shirt's wrist, but the rushing Blood would not relent. Recalling the promise to his father, he ignored the wound, and with his injured hand, grabbed the bow of his enemy and fatally thrust his knife into the archer's midriff. Before the bowman's calf-skinned companion could aim his rifle, he too fell before Calf Shirt's spiritual weapon.

During the cross-coulee exchange, an estimated dozen Blackfoot were killed, with no known numbers available for the Cree. The fight was probably more evenly matched at this juncture than at any time during the entire battle. Soon that would change. Eventually, as Cree cover fire dwindled, the Peigan charged over the ridge of the coulees and overwhelmed the Cree position, forcing the attackers to retreat in a mass towards the Belly River.

As the Crees fled, Jerry Potts ordered a Peigan charge down the hill. Potts later stated: "You could fire with your eyes shut and be sure to kill a Cree." Big Brave recalled "I could not hear for the roar of the guns, and could not see for the smoke." Kennedy's findings confirmed the din heard in the valley "…filled with dust and smoke, the air resounded with the report of rifles and the deafening war cries of the Blackfeet, while thick and fast came the death yells of the Crees."

As the charge progressed, the Cree warriors reached the river and in attempting to cross were shot down indiscriminately by the Peigan. Blood warrior Prairie Chicken jumped his horse directly off a cutbank into the Belly River to pursue his enemy, as the waters turned red with blood. Among the Cree killed at this point were two blond-tressed mixed-bloods, the Cree-Scot Metis, Yellow Hair and Curly Hair, sons of a Hudson's Bay trader, Hugh Sutherland. The Sutherland boys had been the most ardent to go on the warpath against the Blackfoot, and many young Cree warriors had been magnetically attracted to the words of these two blue-eyed fair-haired warriors. Before the excursion, Yellow Hair had told James Sanderson, "I have never been taught anything but fighting. " In the end the Sutherland boys went out swinging, fighting with their knives even after they had been mortally wounded by Peigan bullets.

Big Brave was one of the warriors who would not allow the Cree to retreat. "The Blackfeet made an onrush for the Crees and I ran over two of them before they got to the river. As they were crossing the river, I jumped off my horse and stabbed one of the Crees between the shoulders. He had a spear and I took that away from him. I jumped off my horse again and just as I returned there was a Cree who raised his gun to fire at me. I ran over him and he jumped up and grabbed my horse by the bridle. I swung my horse's head around to protect myself and took the butt of my whip and knocked him down. When I struck him he looked at me and I saw that his nose had been cut off. I heard afterwards that a bear had bitten his nose off. After that I knocked him down and killed him."

The accounts of the warriors make plain that the fate of the retreating Cree was entirely in the hands of the defenders. No quarter was given, none was taken, and the Peigans and Bloods were able to kill virtually at will. Mike Oka, a Blood youth at the time of battle, said "Many of the enemy never reached the east shore of the Oldman River. They were killed and butchered in the water. I never saw so many scalps in all my life as on the next day in a victory war dance."

Several Crees made it across the river, still pursued by the Peigan. But on the east side of the river, the Cree were faced with a wide open plain, making it easy for their pursuers to hunt them down. With little chance of regaining lost ground and running for their lives, the would-be attackers were surrounded and fifty Cree were killed at that point on the wide open plain. Some accounts state that in their zeal and confusion, some Blackfoot may have been inadvertently gunned down by their own comrades.

The surviving Cree hurried across the plains into a clump of trees where ten of the group abandoned their horses, deciding to take cover and make a stand. The stance could not hope to be successful, and was effected merely to allow fellow warriors time to escape. The pursuers moved in and the Cree, armed only with a single revolver and wet gunpowder for their muzzleloaders, died like warriors as their horses were gathered. What remained of the Cree-Assiniboine party withdrew downstream into the heavily wooded Belly valley, and escaped.

The defending Blackfoot-Blood-Peigan party suffered about 40 killed, 50 wounded. Despite his heroics, Calf Shirt repeatedly refused to allow his companions to remove the arrow from his wrist. He finally had to be tied to a travois and be dragged back to camp, where the shaft was cut and the head removed with brass tweezers. Big Brave was one of many soldiers who came home victorious. "When we returned I had taken nine different scalps." But this was the last time, the Blackfoot Confederacy would be able to attain such glories in battle.

While actual numbers are difficult to ascertain, sources state that 300 of the attacking Cree-Assiniboine party were killed, a high estimate, with the lowest being at 70. The combined casualties of the Bloods and Peigans were about 40 dead, and 50-60 wounded. The result of the battle mirrored the difference between the Cree and Blackfoot Confederacies. The attack was unsuccessful largely due to the poor scouting work done, the unfamiliarity with the surroundings and the fact that the Cree had not yet gained the access to the weaponry available to the Peigans and Bloods. While the Cree with traditional ties to the Hudson's Bay, came armed with bows, spears and muzzle-loading North West trade guns, and a few revolvers. With ties to American trade, the Blackfoot nations by this time possessed the Henry, Spencer and Winchester repeating rifles. The following year a peace offering was made by the Cree to the Blackfoot, and that year the bands agreed to a treaty, ending forever the centuries-old rivalry.

The surviving Cree hurried across the plains into a clump of trees where ten of the group abandoned their horses, deciding to take cover and make a stand.

In 1874, The North West Mounted Police established Canadian government sovereignty in Blackfoot lands, and in 1877 the once warlike Confederacy was solidified in peace by Treaty Number Seven with the Queen and the Canadian government. That peace was demonstrated in 1885, when the Cree and mixed blood Metis Rebellion against the government erupted. Blood, Peigan and Blackfoot leaders were invited to join the uprising, and with growing discontent towards government officials, the Plains Indians had every reason to fight. But chiefs like Red Crow remembered the 1870 sneak attack, and wanted nothing to do with risking his tribes' positions for any Cree causes. The Blackfoot Confederacy stayed out of the Northwest Rebellion largely due to the memory of the Belly River battle.

Little today remains of the battle site, as the early coal mines and communities built virtually atop it, destroying many of the stone cairns that had been erected by the Blackfoot to commemorate fallen comrades and enemies. In 1887, Jerry Potts toured the site with businessman Charles Magrath, who gathered much information on the 1870 battle, combining it with accounts received by North West Mounted Police Surgeon George Kennedy, who in later years treated some of the Blackfoot participants for complications of war wounds. The 1870 Belly River battle, known as the last major inter-tribal battle fought in North America, is commemorated today in the name of Indian Battle Park.

Magrath himself, took a personal interest in the battle, and commissioned a painting by Charles M. Russell, entitled "The Battle of Belly River" The painting today is in a private collection and largely unavailable to the public.. The site is referred to by the Blackfoot Confederacy as *"Assinietomochi"* or "where we slaughtered them." A winter count, or painted buffalo skin by the warrior Crop-eared Wolf, depicts the scene as "Assinay-itomosarpi-akaenaskoy" or "Assiniboins-when we defeated them-Fort Whoop-up."

Gord Tolton is a highly published author and recognized authority on the Canadian West.
Gary Zaboly is a frontier illustrator from New York. His work is currently on display at the Alamo.

Frank and Jesse James: The Story Behind the Legend

By Ted M. Yeatman. (Cumberland House, Inc., 431 Harding Industrial Dr., Nashville, TN 37211. 480 pages, selected bibliography, index. 76 pages of notes, 72 photos, 7 maps. $26.95, cloth.)
★★★★

Twenty-five years ago, Ted M. Yeatman started gathering material on the activities of the James Brothers between 1877 and 1881, the period when they resided in middle Tennessee. This was a "natural" as Yeatman was a Tennessee resident himself. His intention was to take maybe a year and then go on to other projects. But as many others have found, once research begins the subject becomes obsessive and the year-long study became years, and then decades. But history and outlaw-lawmen buffs are much better off for it due to the high quality of Yeatman's research and writing.

This new book is dedicated to the memory of Dr. William A. Settle Jr. and Milton F. Perry, two historians who contributed greatly to our knowledge of the James history and legend. Yeatman's name will now stand along side theirs.

Frank and Jesse James will be recognized as a major contribution to the vast amount of James literature. It is a factual biography of the man who became the most notorious desperado of America, and a study of the elements which made him the proverbial "legend in

-Photo Illustration By Damian Kinsella-

his own time" and which has only grown through the years since the Bob Ford shooting of April 3, 1882.

Certain aspects elevate this work far above other works attempting a biographical study of the brothers:

A thorough study and discussion of the February 11, 1866 daylight bank robbery in Liberty, Missouri. Some claim Jesse and Frank were there, while others merely state they were involved in the planning of the raid. Yeatman's treatment is more thorough than any previous, and unless significant new material is discovered, will remain the "last word."

A provocative analysis of the government's involvement in the attempted destruction of the James Brothers' home, a poorly planned raid which resulted in the maiming of their mother and the killing of their half-brother.

A perspective on the many robberies which the James Brothers were accused of committing, but which they denied.

And, a consideration of the numerous men who posed as the "real" Jesse, their claim being that the "death" of Jesse James was a hoax involving many people. Yeatman considers the best known cases, reviews their lives and dismisses their claims as fraudulent. A brief description of the fate of many members of the James-Younger Gang follows.

As the lives and important events of the James Brothers are discussed, we learn as well how certain writers, most notably John Newman Edwards, helped create the public's attitude towards Jesse and his associates. Ash Upson helped create the Billy the Kid legend with his ghost writing for Pat Garrett; Edwards openly applauded the rashness of Jesse, ignoring the needless murders committed long after the guerrilla warfare of the Civil War had ended.

For the outlaw buff this book will contain some material which has

C O N T I N U E D

appeared before, but there is much of the new as well. Many of the photographs are familiar, but several are published for the first time: a portrait of teenager Annie Ralston. who eloped with Frank James in 1874; and a portrait of the Ralston siblings as adults (Annie, brother Harry M., sister Margaret and brother Samuel) made in 1893. The appendices are especially worthy for careful reading. They include the notorious General Order No. 11 and the response letter from "Bloody Bill" Anderson; two of the better known editorials of John Newman Edwards, "The Chivalry of Crime" and "The Killing of Jesse James"; letters concerning the Pinkerton Raid on the James farm and the death of Daniel Askew; the report of Adjutant General George Caleb Bingham regarding the raid on the James Farm; the Amnesty Bill of 1875; Frank James' stage speeches; a Jesse James filmography, 1908-95—not including foreign films about Jesse James; and a transcript of the press conference regarding the 1995 exhumation and forensic study of the Jesse James remains conducted by Professor James Starrs.

Frank and Jesse James is an example of how a biography should be prepared: thorough research into all available depositories; reasoned interpretation of materials; and documenting the research so others can review the sources as desired. And of course the writing is presented in a popular narrative style allowing the average readers to enjoy it as well as the academics.

The first edition, hardcover only, will probably be sold out within a few months. It will then no doubt appear in paperback.—*Chuck Parsons*

Black Cowboys of Texas

Edited by Sara R. Massey, Introduction by Alwyn Barr. (Texas A&M University Press, John H. Lindsey Building, Lewis Street 4354 TAMUS, College Station, TX 77843-4354. 384 pp. 22 b&w photos, index. $29.95, cloth.)

★★★★

It has been over thirty years since a book was written about the exploits of African American cowboys who trailed and worked cattle on the

western frontier. The last major study of these men and women of color was *The Negro Cowboys,* by Philip Durham and Everett Jones, which was released in 1965.

This latest book was edited by Sara R. Massey, a curriculum specialist at the Institute of Texan Cultures, University of Texas at San Antonio. There are articles by twenty-five writers, which illuminate, like never before, the story of black cowboys of frontier and modern day Texas. Most of the stories concern the cowboys who worked and toiled on the cattle trails and ranches of the early days. They have also located some marvelous images of known and unknown cowboys. Research throughout the book is consistent and well done. Much of the information is from oral history handed down from families and friends of these black Texas cowboys and cowgirls, but there is also quite a bit of new information from courthouse records, documents and writings concerning these individuals. As the book points out, many of the important black Texas cowboys are lost to history because so little was written about them. That is why this book is so important; it is documenting history before it is lost forever due to time and neglect.

The home of the African American cowboy in the early 19th century was east Texas and the Indian Territory (Oklahoma), where they worked as slave labor. Most of the black cowboys who later settled in New Mexico, Kansas, Colorado, Nebraska, Wyoming, Montana and other ranching areas where originally from Texas or Oklahoma, the majority coming from the Lone Star state.

This book talks about such famous black cowboys such as Bose Ikard, James Kelly, Addison Jones, Robert Lemmons and Mathew "Bones" Hooks, who played major roles during the cattle driving era. But there are also chapters on black cowgirls of Texas such as Johanna July, an African-Seminole, and

C O N T I N U E D

Henretta Williams Foster, who was known as "Aunt Rittie." These women became local legends in the area of Texas where they lived and worked. There are also stories about other less well known but important black cowboys such as the Payne family who became legends in the Big Bend country, and Louis Power of South Texas, who was considered one of the best cowboys in the history of the state. The stories are captivating and interesting. They detail the day-to-day work, the discrimination, the fortitude, and indomitable courage of these Texas men and women.

It is evident after surveying the pages of this book that it is the most important work compiled to date on African Americans who worked in the cattle industry. For serious collectors of Western History, this volume will be a necessity for their library. Hopefully, other researchers may be inspired to take a look at black cowboy history in other western states. Black Cowboys of Texas will add greatly to our knowledge of the participation and contribution of African Americans who rode the range on the Great Plains. —*Art T. Burton*

A Complete Guide to Hunter's Frontier Times

By James A. Browning and Janice B. McCravy. (Eakin Press, P.O. Box 90159, Austin, TX 78709-0159. 236 pages. $18.95, paper.)
★★★★

J. Marvin Hunter's *Frontier Times* magazine, a "grass roots" history publication, was started in Bandera, Texas, in October 1923, and continued until October 1954 (a total of 344 issues). The periodical

was a combination of letters, original stories, reprints of newspaper articles and items from other publications, as well as an occasional serialized book. The content dealt with all aspects of Western History: the pioneers, the gunfighters, train robbers, Indians, massacres, gunfights, animals and many other topics. The sales of *Frontier Times* was instrumental in providing funds for the building of the Frontier Times Museum in Bandera, which is still in operation.

Only the most dedicated collector has a complete set of the original *Frontier Times*, while many have a partial set. In 1972 Joe Austell Small began reprinting the original magazine in facsimile form, so today historians and researchers have easy access to the thousands of articles preserved by Hunter.

But Hunter's little journal did not include an index, so the historian—until now—had to leaf through the many pages to find a certain article. Whether Hunter did not envision his journal becoming such a valuable record, or perhaps simply did not care to include an index, we don't know. There was a definite need for one, and now, thanks to the work of the late James A. Browning and his sister Janice B. McCravy, we can easily access the contents of *Frontier Times*. No longer must one vaguely remember seeing an item, but not knowing in which issue it appeared (I have done this too many times to count, and it is a blessing to finally have this *Guide*.)

Not only are names of individuals included, but subject matter as well. Out of curiosity I looked up John Wesley Hardin. A total of six articles appeared dealing primarily with this noted Texan, but also his autobiography is shown to have been serialized in four parts, from September through December 1925.

James A. Browning began this guide some years ago, finishing the index about 1998. He did not live long enough to see his work in print, as death claimed him on February 4, 1999. His sister, Janice B. McCravy,

knew how much the project meant not only to Jim but to his many friends throughout America, and resolved to ensure its publication. With her determination, and with the efforts of Mike Cox, historian by avocation and spokesperson for the Texas Department of Public Safety by profession, the *Guide* was finally published by Eakin Press. It is now available to historians, genealogists and librarians, and any one else who has had the fortune of knowing any of the *Hunters* and what a contribution they made for the future. This is an important publication and deserves to be a part of every school, library and collection dealing with any aspect of western history.
—*Chuck Parsons*

J.B. "Billy" Mathews: Biography of a Lincoln County Deputy

By Elvis E. Fleming (Yucca Tree Press, 2130 Hixon Dr., Las Cruces, NM 88005.102 pages, maps, photos, bibliography. $14.95, cloth.)
★

Jacob B. "Billy" Mathews was a rather minor player in the violent Lincoln County War in New Mexico Territory. Minor or not, though, he served as a deputy sheriff during the conflict and deserves a biography.

After all, Mathews was in charge of the posse that shot John Henry Tunstall to death in February 1878, the catalyst for the ugly confrontation that author Elvis E. Fleming aptly describes as "greed for wealth and power versus greed for wealth and power."

Mathews wounded Billy the Kid after Tunstall's avenger took part in the killing of Sheriff William Brady and Deputy George Hindman in April 1878. Mathews was there for the "Five-Day Battle" in Lincoln in July 1878, and served as one of the guards transporting the Kid to Lincoln after his murder conviction in April 1881.

Fleming has done much research to put together this slim account, interviewing descendants of Mathews, poring over archival sources and using the myriad books written about the war and its participants.

But Fleming's credibility is shattered by mistakes a good high school history student would have caught, reducing his book to a biography that must be considered with skepticism.

The first sentence in Chapter 1 begins, "Since Tennessee was a border state during the Civil War ...." Although Tennessee had plenty of Union sympathizers, it was a member of the Confederacy. Missouri, Kentucky, Delaware and Maryland were the only states classified as "border states" under the Lincoln administration.

While covering Mathews' Civil War experience, Fleming writes of "the same surrender terms that General-in-Chief U.S. Grant offered Robert E. Lee and Joseph E. Johnston at Appomattox Court House." Johnston surrendered to William Sherman in North Carolina.

Most sources state that Mathews, a native of Tennessee, fought for the Confederacy, but Fleming documents that the teenager served in the Union's Fifth Tennessee Cavalry Regiment. He goes on to say: "In an apparent attempt to conceal his identity (or possibly through a spelling error by the enlisting officer), he enlisted under the name of 'Jacob B. Mathis.'" Apparent seems like another bad word choice. Given the nature of enlistment papers, a spelling error seems just as likely as an outright lie.

Mathews moved to New Mexico after the Civil War, eventually drifting to Lincoln County to take part in

another bloody conflict. Afterward, Mathews remained in the territory, and Fleming follows his trail. In 1893, Mathews lost an 1895 bid to run for Chaves County sheriff but was appointed Roswell's postmaster in 1898, serving there until dying of pneumonia on June 3, 1904, at age 57.

Fleming challenges a lot of what has been written about Mathews—including accounts from noted historian Frederick Nolan— and maybe he has a point. Unfortunately, when authors make too many blatant historical mistakes themselves, when their conclusions can be argued too easily, and when they don't footnote their findings, their books cannot be taken seriously. That's what dooms *J.B. "Billy" Mathews*, a noble attempt that falls flat. —*Johnny D. Boggs*

Cowgirls

By Candace Savage. (Ten Speed Press, Box 7123, Berkeley , California 94707. $22.95 paper.)
★★★

The Weaker Sex? Not too likely, particularly when that title is applied to the countless, valiant, tough-as-nails women who helped win the West along with their menfolk.

Canadian author Candace Savage's extensive research took her on a long, looping trail from Calgary, Alberta, to Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado and Wyoming, but she got her Western Woman.

Cowgirls is a big, colorful book of 144 pages, jam-packed with over one hundred photos, posters and paintings as well as dozens of pithy excerpts from the participants' diaries.

While some were business-oriented Cattle Queens, others in a hurry to succeed were tempted to turn to rustling, like Cattle Kate Averill, and paid for their midnight rambles by swinging on a rope. Those following the golden lure of gambling became royalty of a different sort including Poker Alice, Lottie Deno and the aptly monikered Madame Moustache. Their weekly take from bracing the card playing suckers usually topped most male rivals.

In addition to the countless Bar Girls and Fallen Doves, there were truly Bad Actors such as the hawk-faced horse thief Belle Starr, innocent-looking train robber Pearl Hart and those juvenile delinquents Cattle Annie and Little Britches. This pair resembling outlaw groupies had their fifteen minutes of fame as companions and look-outs for the hardcase Dalton Gang.

Nearly all Wild West Women stuck by their man. Two of the most noted were Mrs. George Custer and Mary Jane Cannary, otherwise known as Calamity Jane. Libby Bacon Custer accompanied her dashing colonel from post-Civil War Texas to the wilds of the Dakota Territories while Calamity Jane hitched her wandering star to Wild Bill Hickok. Living as a free spirit, Calamity claimed to have been an Army scout, wagon freighter, Indian fighter and Wild Bill's Prairie Rose.

But other women arrived as the years proceeded who became responsible for the apotheosis of the American West. Among the better known were Annie Oakley of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, and the earlier and even more dashing Lola Montez.

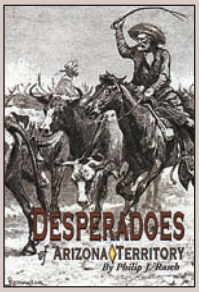
In a natural progression, dozens of rodeo trick riders and sure-shots arrived, continually portraying and expanding the legend of a never-never land sort of West. Then followed a veritable stampede of movie westerns which made the names of Jeanette MacDonald, Barbara Stanwyck, Jane Russell and Dale Evans synonymous with "Cowgirl."

Coming full circle at last, the brassy musical-comedy star Ethel Merman appeared as Annie Oakley, a Hollywood-Broadway performer portraying William Cody's publicity-inspired Little Sure Shot.
—*Bill Garwood*

America's Number One Source For The Best Western Books!

Over 400 Titles, Look For The Entire List At www.truewestmagazine.com

Easy To Order Just Call Toll Free 1-888-687-1881

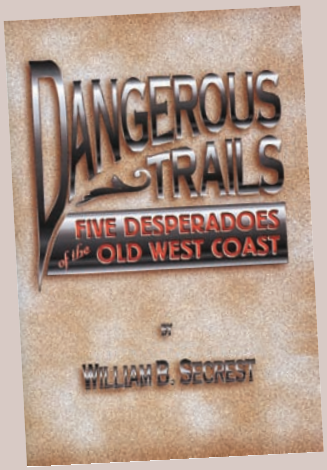


Desperadoes of Arizona Territory

By Philip Rasch

Featuring twenty-four obscure articles by the late Dr. Philip J. Rasch, preeminent historian of the outlaw Southwest. These otherwise hard-to-find articles examine the misdeeds of Arizona's most desperate men: John Ringo, Frank Leslie, the Earps, Pete Spence, Gus Gildea, and many more. 208p. National Association for Outlaw and Lawman History.

Barbed Wire Price **$29.95**

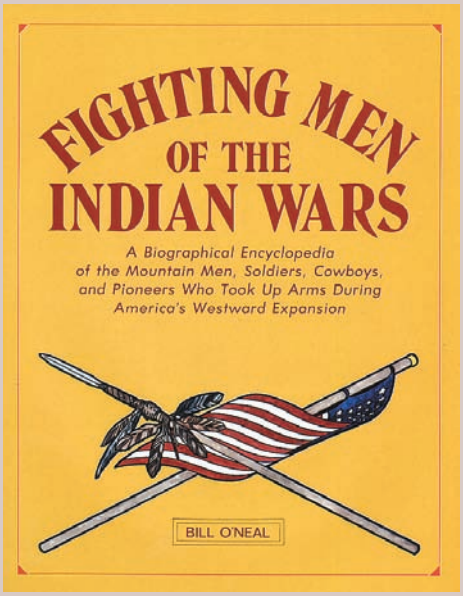


Dangerous Trails

By William Secrest

A rich romp through early California, this book explores the exciting stories of five unheralded outlaws. Secrest, a noted authority on the Old West Coast,tells the tale of Bob Talbert, Charles Mortimer, Procopio Bustamente, and others. Derived from prison documents, contemporary newspapers, and court records, this volume takes readers on a trip they'll never forget Features forty-one photographs, many previously unpublished.

Barbed Wire Price **$29.95**



Fighting Men of the Indian Wars

By Bill O'Neal

Each entry in this biographical enyclopedia contains a brief summary of each fighting man's life, followed by detailed narrative accounts of his combat experience and a list of sources for further reading. 255 pages. Photos, maps, illustrations. Barbed Wire Press.

List Price **$26.95**

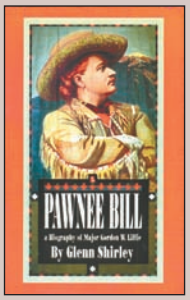
Barbed Wire Price **$15.95**

Trailing Billy the Kid

By Philip Rasch

Featuring twenty-five obscure articles by the late Dr. Philip J. Rasch, preeminent historian of the outlaw Southwest. These otherwise hard-to-find articles examine the short life of New Mexico's favorite son. Includes studies of Billy's family and origins. 220p. National Association for Outlaw and Lawman History.

Barbed Wire Price **$29.95**

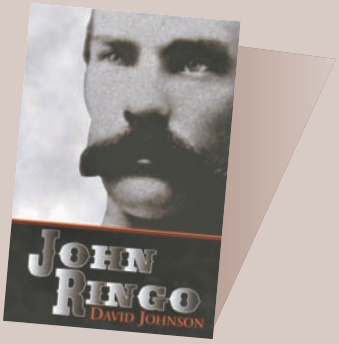


Pawnee Bill: A Biography of Major Gordon W. Lillie

By Glenn Shirley

The only full-length biography devoted to the West's second-best showman and apprentice to Buffalo Bill. Written in a style as entertaining as Pawnee Bill's Wild West shows of yesteryear. 262p. Barbed Wire Press.

Barbed Wire Price **$22.95 Cloth**
$14.95 Paper



John Ringo

By David Johnson

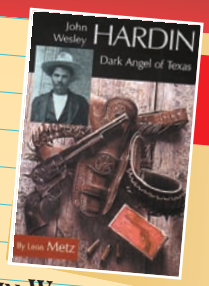
Few names in the lore of western gunmen are as recognizable. Few lives of the most notorious are as little known. Johnson painstakingly researched the gunman for over twenty years to create this definitive biography. 264p. Barbed Wire Press.

Barbed Wire Price **$25.00**

The Top Forty Western Books

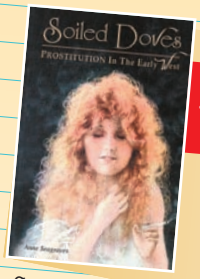
Based On Current Sales Through True West, Barbed Wire Press and www.truewestmagazine.com

Rank/Last Month	Title/Author	Publisher	Our Price
1/1	John Wesley Hardin: Dark Angel/ Leon Metz	Mangan	16.95
2/2	Bad Men / Bob Boze Bell	TriStar	18.95
3/3	Desperadoes of Arizona Territory / Philip Rasch	NOLA	29.95
4/6	Soiled Doves / Anne Seagraves	Gem Guides	11.95
5/4	John Ringo / David Johnson	BWP	29.95
6/New Entry	Covered Wagon Women #10 / K. Holmes, ed.	Bison	11.95
7/5	Doc Holliday: Family Portrait / Karen H. Tanner	OK Univ	28.95
8/7	Fighting Men of the Indian Wars / O'Neal	BWP	15.95
9/14	Bloody Legacy of Pink Higgins/O'Neal	Eakin	18.95
10/9	Warriors of Lincoln County / Philip J. Rasch	BWP	29.95
11/16	Alias Frank Canton / Robert DeArment	OK Univ	18.95
12/22	Daughters of Joy, Sisters of Mercy / Anne Butler	U. Ill.	12.95
13/15	Trailing Billy the Kid/Phillip Rasch	NOLA	29.95
14/12	Triggernometry/Eugene Cunningham	OK Univ	18.95
15/22	Gunsmoke in Lincoln County / Philip J. Rasch	NOLA	29.95
16/17	Bad Blood / Frederick Nolan	BWP	29.95
17/18	Gold Dust and Gunsmoke / J. Boessenecker	JW	30.00
18/8	Bloody Bill Longley / Rick Miller	HenPub	31.95
19/19	Satanta / Charles M. Robinson III	StathsePress	18.95
20/19	Shoot From the Lip / Nancy Samuelson	S. Star	35.00
21/21	Dallas Stoudenmire: El Paso Marshall / Leon Metz	OK Univ	11.95
22/39	Hog Ranches of Wyoming/Brown	HighPlains	9.95
23/34	Encyclopedia of Western Gunfighters/Bill O'Neal	OK Univ	19.95
24/23	Dangerous Trails/William Secrest	BWP	29.95
25/36	Doc Holliday/John Meyers	Univ. Neb	28.95
26/27	Trail Drivers of Texas / J. Marvin Hunter, ed.	TexPress	26.95
27/New Entry	Thirteen Days of Terror/Glenn Shirley	BWP	19.95
28/31	Geronimo: The Man, His Time, His Place/A. Debo	OK Univ	18.95
29/26	Blood of Noble Men / Alan Huffines	Eakin	27.95
30/New Entry	Ghost Towns of N.M / Sherman & Sherman	OK Univ	21.95
31/New Entry	Bill Doolin/Hanes	OK Univ	14.95
32/New Entry	Doc Susie / Cornell	Manifest	14.95
33/31	Undercover With Wells Fargo/ Lake	OK Univ	28.95
34/New Entry	Luke Short: A Biography / W. Short	Devil's Thumb	14.95
35/33	Illus. Life & Times of Doc Holliday / Bob Boze Bell	TriStar	26.95
36/New Entry	Indeh: An Apache Odyssey/Ball	OK Univ	17.95
37/25	Digging Up Butch and Sundance/Anne Meadows	Univ Neb	19.95
38/New Entry	Illus. Life & Times of Billy the Kid / Bob Boze Bell	TriStar	26.95
39/40	True Tales of the Am. Southwest/Howard Bryan	Clear Light	24.95
40/38	Dodge City/Stanley Vestal	Univ. Neb	12.95



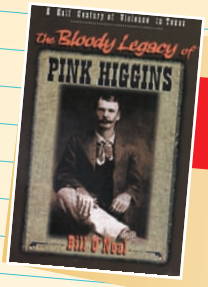
#1

John Wesley Hardin: Dark Angel



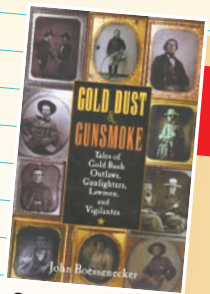
#4

Soiled Doves



#8

Bloody Legacy of Pink Higgins



#15

Gold Dust and Gunsmoke

To Order Any Of These Titles
Call Toll Free 1-888-687-1881
or visit us online: www.truewestmagazine.com

Barbed Wire Press • P.O. Box 8008 • Cave Creek, AZ 85327
Shipping & handling charges must be added. Call for amount.

ASK THE MARSHALL

BY MARSHALL TRIMBLE

Q **Was Richard Clark, AKA "Deadwood Dick" really a scout in the Black Hills? If so, what's his claim to fame, and when did he pass away?**
Jason Emerson
Columbus, Ohio

A Dick Cole, Richard Bullock, Robert Dickey, Nat Love, Richard Palmer and Richard Clarke all laid claim to being the prototype of the fictional dime novel hero Deadwood Dick. In 1924 the Deadwood Chamber of Commerce began "Days of '76" parades and Clarkedid such a good re-enactment of Deadwood Dick he began to believe he was the real McCoy. Clarke even went to Washington to personally invite President Coolidge to visit Deadwood. He got a lot of publicity for this and this led him to begin re-inventing himself as a bold, brave frontiersman. Clarke was so convincing he began to believe his own tales.

Nat Love

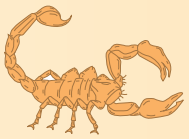
The real frontiersmen considered him a fraud. The public didn't seem to mind and when Clarke died on May 10,1930, his funeral drew a large crowd. Tourists are still taken to his grave and told he was the real Deadwood Dick. Clarke was the best of the pretenders. The others were never able to make their claim stick.

Q **I've heard that by raising your legs slowly and laying on your back, you cannot sink into quicksand. Is that true?**
Sarah Reinhardt
Southampton, New York

A That's true, but I don't recommend trying it. Some say you'll sink anyway, just slower.

Q **My grandfather was kind of a kidder, but he said if you place a tiny amount of liquor on a scorpion, it will instantly go mad and sting itself to death. Was he pulling my leg?**
Mairta Hines
Santa Fe, New Mexico

A Your grandfather must have been acquainted with mine. I'd put that in the same category as the one about stringing horsehair ropes around your bedroll to keep-ratttlesnakes from trying to snuggle up to you. I don't believe that one either, but it makes a good story. My Uncle Jimmy Mulvihill was an Irish cowboy and he claimed you could spread pepper around your bedroll. He said the pepper would get the snake to sneezing and he'd blow out all his venom, rendering his bite harmless.



Q **I was looking at a criminal log book from 1884 and among the crimes listed under the mug shots included the term "sneak," and "bank sneak." What does that mean?**
Walt Riddell
Alameda. California

A We still use that to describe a sneak thief. A sneak is the same as a burglar. My favorite western burglar was Bernie Bolton. He was strawboss for the notorious Soapy Smith and good at his trade. His reputation was permanently damaged when he broke into a place, intent on blowing up the safe, and blew upthe ice box by mistake. He was never able to live down his new nickname: "Ice Box Bernie."

WILLIAM COLEMAN,
ALIAS BILLY COLEMAN,
BURGLAR AND BANK SNEAK.

Marshall Trimble is Arizona's Official Historian. His books include *Arizona: A Cavalcade of History, A Roadside History of Arizona,* and *Never Give A Heifer A Bum Steer.*
If you have a question, write:
Ask the Marshall,
PO Box 8008, Cave Creek, AZ 85327.

A petition featuring the signature of **Billy the Kid's** mother is going on display in Kansas. The Wichita town charter, signed by 124 residents, had been in storage in the Hutchinson salt mines along with other historical documents. Earlier this year, the Kansas Supreme Court authorized **Judge Paul Buchanan** to dispose of many of the records stored in the salt mines.

"I was glancing at the file and thinking about giving them to various places," Buchanan said. "Since it was the charter of Wichita, I thought it best to give them to the **Wichita Sedgwick County Museum.**"

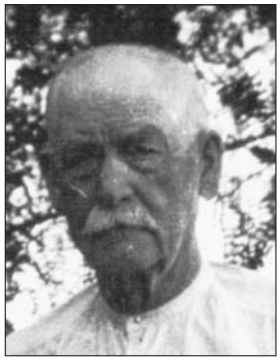
The petition was presented

Purported photo of Catherine McCarty
–TRUE WEST ARCHIVES–

to Probate Judge **Reuben Riggs** in July of 1870. It went to Topeka that same summer, requesting the governor designate Wichita the temporary county seat.

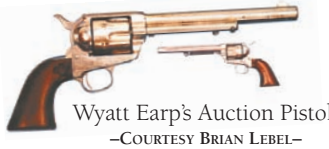
Also included among the 124 signatures on the petition is Chief Justice **Sandra Day O'Connor's** great-grandfather.

The document will be on display in **"The Magic City"** exhibit at the Wichita-Sedgwick County Museum. The Kid's mother, **Catherine McCarty**, is the only woman who signed the petition, which makes her prominence in the fledgling town a tad more significant than some had speculated. The widow McCarty owned and operated the City Laundry on North Main in Wichita, before moving to New Mexico and marrying **William Antrim**...



Wyatt Earp
–COURTESY R. G. MCCUBBIN COLLECTION–

…A pistol which allegedly once belonged to **Wyatt Earp** has sold at **Brian Lebel's Cody Old West Show & Auction** in Cody, Wyoming, for $137,500. The Colt .45, which has Wyatt's name inscribed along the backstrap, was bought by an undisclosed buyer from Connecticut. In fact, there were five bidders all the way to the end, and all five were from the east coast.



Wyatt Earp's Auction Pistol.
–COURTESY BRIAN LEBEL–

COLLECTOR'S CORNER

C L A S S I F I E D S

Antiques

COWBOY AND THE LADY MUSEU QUALITY ANTIQUES OF THE OLD WEST—A full time business providing dealers, collectors and museums with quality scarce items at reasonable prices. Specializing in California and Texas bits and spurs of all makers and high quality fancy chaps. Also, saddles, boots, cuffs, hats, and gun leather. Bill and Sally West owners. Call 602-957-3372 for appointments, or visit The Old Territorial Shop, 7220 E. Main in Old Town Scottsdale, AZ.

Art Prints

ART PRINTS—from his cover work to his illustrated bios on Doc Holliday, Wyatt Earp and Billy the Kid, all original images by Bob Boze Bell. Oil paintings, gouache and scratchboard. Check them out at bobbozebell.com.

Audio/Video

B-WESTERNS & TV WESTERNS $3.98. Free catalog. Buck Cassidy Video, Box 216, Hazlet, N.J. 07730. (732) 888-8245.
5/01

GOSPEL PIANO CASSETTES, CD'S—Instrumental favorites! Country-gospel style! Great for travelers, retirees, sweet old ladies & gentlemen! Free brochure! Jacky Campbell, 11 Clifford, Natchez, MS 39120-9708.
12/00

Books

BOOKS about Indians, artifacts, lifeways, archaeology, collecting, many titles. Free catalog. Buying related books. Hothem House, Box 458-W, Lancaster, OH 43130.
6/01

Civil War

NEW BOOK ENCYCLOPEDIA OF QUANTRILL'S GUERRILLAS $35.00 Includes shipping & handling. Rosemary Lankford, RT 1, Box 114A, Evening Shade, AR 72532.
5/01

Coins

30 DIFFERENT WHEAT Cents $3.00. Derryberry, Box 146, Surrency, GA 31563.
10/00

Comics

VERY RARE COMIC—A first edition of Honkytonk Sue, The Queen of Country Swing, 1979. $25. PO Box 4410, Cave Creek, AZ. 85327

Magazines

EVEN LOWER BLOWS —the second installment of cartoons by Bob Boze Bell, which originally appeared in New Times Weekly, $20. PO Box 4410, Cave Creek, AZ. 85327

ARIZONA HIGHWAYS BILLY THE KID ISSUE—cover story features Billy the Kid in Arizona by Bob Boze Bell. Polly bag protected covering. Perfect condition. $10. PO Box 4410, Cave Creek, AZ. 85327

Magazines

FRONTIER TIMES REPRINTS 1923-1945. 1965-1985. True West 1962-1999. Old West 1980-1999. Best offers. Details Tel/Fax 319-393-7674.
9/00

OLD WEST AND FRONTIER TIMES Longtime subscriber has collection for sale. Best offer. 210-673-0694
11/00

HUNTER'S *FRONTIER TIMES* All available–approximately 200 issues–$500. Plus, free, *A Complete Guide to Hunter's Frontier Times*, by James A. Browning and Janice B. McCravy 480-575-1881 or truewest.comm.

FOR THE SERIOUS WESTERN ENTHUSIAST... an opportunity to own *ALL available back issues of True West.* Approximatley 300 issues, uncirculated, for only $695. For a limited time we will also include a free hardback, limited edition of the exclusive *Western Reader's Guide*. (A select bibliography of non-fiction magazines, from 1953 - '91) by the late James Browning. 480-575-1881 or truewest.com.

Miscellaneous

SPOTTED PONY TRADERS: Buckskin, coats, dresses; Deer, elk leathers, furs, beads, supplies. FREE catalog. PO Box 277, Louisville, OH 44641. E-mail: spottedpony@worldnet.coll.net
4/01

DRUMS, SAGE, HAIRPIPE, plus other Native American craft supplies. Send $1.00 for price list. WILDERNESS CRAFTS, 31 French Rd., Dept. TW, Abbot, ME 04406
4/01

CRAZY HORSE POSTER, REPRINT of only known photo $3. Postpaid. Western Posters, P.O. Box 778-CH, Colfax, CA 95713
1/01

HUGE 50 PAGE CATALOG for only $2.00. Free appraisal of your relics with SASE & photos. Indian Shop, Box 246, Independence, KY 41051.
1/01

Free True West Back Issues!

CALLING ALL READERS... an opportunity to receive two FREE back issues of *True West*. It is just this simple: Send us a self-addressed, stamped ($3.20 postage) 9 X 12 envelope and receive two uncirculated issues of *True West*, straight from the vault. We pick the issues, all orders will be different. Please limit two free issues per person.
Send for your FREE back issues today!

Free True West, PO Box 8008, Cave Creek, AZ 85327.

Photographs

WESTERN PHOTOS - **Roy Rogers, Gene Autry, John Wayne. $9.95 a photo. Western Pictures, 1266 Julia Circle, Wooster, Ohio 44691.**
9/00

WILD BILL HICKOK PRINTS—rare, and in many case, exclusive photos of Wild West characters, including the recently discovered image of Wild Bill (below). Contact Bob McCubbin, PO Box 1484, El Paso, Texas. 79948.

Wild Wild Web

Visit these Western Web Sites

------ ★ ------

www.geocities.com/soHo/Den/3422

CartArt

The Old West art of Michael Carter. Pen-and-inks and watercolors of famous and not-so-famous Old West characters.

------ ★ ------

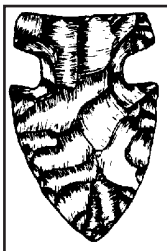
www.wa.net/~djmoyer/cowboy.htm

Cowboy Cliffhangers

A book that lists all B-Western serials from A to Z including cast, crew, release date, studio, directors, producers, chapter titles, running times and synopsis. $24.95 plus $3.50 S&H to Wild West Publishing, P.O. Box 42222, Tacoma, WA 98422

------ ★ ------

www.nativeamerican connection.com
Native American replica and authentic artifacts.
406-777-3087.



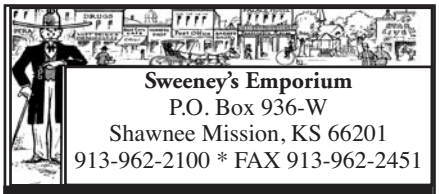
Guaranteed Authentic Arrowheads and Indian Relics For Sale
Also Books, Rockhound Supplies, and Civil War Relics

Catalog available—Send $2

BACK TO EARTH®
Rocks and Relics
Dept. 555, 17 N. LaSalle Drive,
So. Zanesville, Ohio 43701

BIG FREE CATALOG

LOST TREASURE, Ghost Town, Civil War, Collectable books, Old City, County, State, Military Maps. Free catalog, **Slocum Books, 800-521-4451**
http://rampages.onramp.net/-kbslocum



Sweeney's Emporium
P.O. Box 936-W
Shawnee Mission, KS 66201
913-962-2100 * FAX 913-962-2451

Western Americana Price List
50+ pages of antique Colt handguns
& 30 categories of Old West collectibles.
Nothing Modern.
Send $1 for a current edition.

http://www.sweeney-emporium.com

TRUE WEST 50/50 DEAL!

Classified ads! 50 words for 50 bucks an issue!

Number of issues ad will run _____ Ad category _____

Print or type your ad below. Show punctuation marks. For additional words attach a separate sheet.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Full payment must accompany all classified space orders. Deduct 10% for running in 3 consecutive issues and 15% for 12 issues. Zip codes are FREE. Up to 5 initial words highlighted in ***bold italic*** FREE. Full name and street address must accompany orders.

Name _____ ☐VISA ☐MC ☐AMEX

Firm _____ Card # _____

Address _____ Expires _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Mail to:

Name _____ **Collector's Corner**

Name _____ **P.O. Box 8008**
Cave Creek, AZ 85327

For deadline dates call *TRUE WEST* toll-free 1-888-687-1881. If ad arrives after the deadline date, we will insert it in the next available issue.

The Young Guns, 1956

Young Guns, 1989

COWBOY PRAYER

May your horse never stumble,
Your spurs never rust,
May your guts never grumble,
Your cinch never bust!

May your boots never pinch,
Your crops never fail,
While you eat lots of beans,
And stay out of JAIL!

"A classic is something that everybody wants to have read and nobody wants to read."

–MARK TWAIN

Nothing New Under The Sun Dept

Where the heart is willing, it will find a thousand ways; but where it is unwilling, it will find a thousand excuses.

–OLD VAQUERO SAYING

Being a hero is about the shortest-lived profession on Earth.

–WILL ROGERS

Historical Twins

Too Close for Comfort

Wild Bill Hickok, a dead aim..

Diamondbacks Pitcher Randy Johnson, a deadly arm.

More Bang for the Buck.

Now on the Web.

TRUE WEST
NO BULL
SINCE 1953

www.truewestmagazine.com